

Minute of the meeting of the National Joint Negotiating Committee (NJNC) – Central Committee held on Thursday 11 September 2025 (1300-1500), at Colleges Scotland Offices, Argyll Court, Stirling.

In Attendance	
Chris Boyce	Staff Side
Hazel Coutts	“ “
Keir Greenaway	“ “
Thora Hands	“ “
Anne-Marie Harley	“ “ (Chair)
Eileen Imlah	“ “
Alison MacLean	“ “
Laura McLean	“ “
Colin Watson	“ “
Deborah Smith	“ “
Peter Woods	“ “
Sue Clyne	Management Side
Debbie Kerr	“ “
Chris O’Neil	“ “
Jon Vincent	“ “
David Watt	“ “
Sarah Collins	Staff Side Joint Secretary
John Anderson	Management Side Joint Secretary
Jillian Cheape	Secretariat
Anne Davidson	Note Taker

1/25 Welcome and Apologies

The Staff Side was in the chair and welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Charlie Montgomery, Richard Gordon and Chris Greensheids, Staff Side.

2/25 Minutes of Previous Meetings and Any Matters Arising

The minute of the meeting held on **Thursday 29 May 2025** was agreed.

No additional matters were raised.

3/25 National Recognition and Procedures Agreement (NRPA) Reform

The Staff Side introduced Paper 2 – Draft Revised NRA/NRPA for the College Sector and confirmed acceptance of the wording in the original proposals, with the only outstanding area being the definition of the secretariat. The Central Committee reviewed all areas highlighted in the paper to ensure both sides agreed what was the original wording.

The GMB advised that it requires full sight of the finalised draft NRA for Professional Services Staff (PSS) before it is able to confirm its agreement. It was agreed that this could be done electronically and without any requirement to return to the Central Committee.

The GMB raised a concern relating to withdrawal arrangements, whereby currently the reformed document allows for 12 months for Lecturing Staff (LS) and only 6 months for PSS. It was also noted that discussions had taken place at the Side Table (Support) meeting the day before relating to the Disputes Procedure and different arrangements for PSS and LS. It was agreed that the Joint Secretaries for PSS will have discussions in order to resolve the concerns raised.

It was noted Appendix 1 has still to be discussed with LS.

4/25 National Recognition and Procedures Agreement – Disputes Procedure

The Management Side confirmed that its view remains as set out in Paper 3, i.e. that the machinery of the NJNC, and in this particular case, the Disputes Resolution Process, only allows for the Support Staff Trade Unions to act as one collective body, i.e. as a single-table and not separately as individual trade unions. It was agreed that ways to note or hear individual trade union concerns could be looked at as part of future discussions relating to Appendix 2 – National Recognition Agreement (NRA) – PSS.

5/25 Policy Working Group Update

It was confirmed that the draft Grievance Policy is now complete, and that the Policy Working Group is now currently reviewing the model Procedure. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 2 October 2025.

6/25 Fair Work Working Group Update

The Staff Side confirmed that the Fair Work Working Group is meeting next week on Thursday 18 September 2025, with a representative: Sean Baillie from the Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC), who will deliver a training session on Fair Work.

7/25 Schedule of Meetings 2025/26

A schedule of meetings of the NJNC – Central Committee for Academic Year 2025/26 was shared and agreed, with locations to be confirmed by the Staff Side Secretary.

8/25 AOCB

The Staff Side wished to note its concern regarding the potential closure of the Alloa Campus of Forth Valley College and the associated potential job losses and detriment to an area of deprivation. This is an indication of the national funding crisis and its impact. It suggested that an alternative funding model needs to be examined for the sector.

The Staff Side also wished to express its concern in relation to the recent anti-immigration protests and sought support from the NJNC group regarding the potential development of a joint statement and in-house training measures to counter far-right messaging and its potential effect on the student and wider population.

The Management Side supported the Staff Side in relation to the need for such communications and training measures and stated it would refer this to Colleges Scotland, as this is a matter of advocacy, and as such sits within the remit of Colleges Scotland rather than College Employers Scotland.

9/25 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 4 December 2025**.

Action Monitoring Log

Thursday 12 September 2024				
Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date	Status
08.24	Revisit the current NJNC protocol that has been in place since 2014.	JS	December 2024	Complete
Thursday 20 March 2025				
Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date	Status
30.24	Monitor developments regarding Student Awards Funding and assess potential implications.	JS	Ongoing	Overtaken/Complete
Thursday 29 May 2025				
Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date	Status
34.24	Continue to engage with ACAS to secure a date for a meeting on Lessons Learned.	MS	June 2025	Overtaken/Complete
34.24	Provide the Central Committee with any updates on the implications of UNISON and Unite's withdrawal from the NRPA at a future Central Committee meeting.	JS	September 2025	Complete
37.24	Consider Management Side feedback on the proposed Health and Safety Subcommittee and reflect on the focus of stress risk assessment within the Sickness Absence Policy.	SS	September 2025	In Progress
38.24	Seek legal advice on the interpretation of "party" under the NRPA disputes process and revisit this discussion at the next Side Table (Support) meeting.	MS	June 2025	Complete
Thursday 11 September 2025				
Item	Action	Owner	Completion Date	Status
03.25	Definition of secretariat to be added to the draft NRPA.	MS	September 2025	Complete
03.25	Finalised NRPA document to be issued to GMB for review once complete.	JS	September 2025	Ongoing

03.25	Review common outstanding areas and agree amendments electronically out with the Central Committee.	MS/SS	September 2025	In Progress
03.25	PSS Joint Secretaries to have discussions regarding differing withdrawal arrangements.	JS	September 2025	In Progress
04.25	PSS Disputes procedure to be looked at within Appendix 2.	MS/SS	September 2025	In Progress
08.25	Refer the trade unions' concerns re anti-immigrant protests to Colleges Scotland to liaise regarding the development of a joint statement and in-house training.	SS/CS	September 2025	In Progress