

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

TEACHERS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (TCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Teachers Consultative Committee** held at 3.00pm on Wednesday 16 March 2016 in the Helen Parr Room, The Chancellery.

PRESENT:

University –Seamus Fagan, Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies and Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering.

NTEU –Sue Hodgson, Ben Carter and Lance Dale (by phone)

APOLOGIES:

NTEU – Leza Pezzano and Paul Chojenta

Chair – Mark Kelly

Note-taker – Ruth Hartmann

Business arising from last meeting:

- *WHS audit of CTL Building* - Union representatives noted most items identified in the WHS report have been completed. However, issues with dangling cords in classrooms and the computer room power leads remain outstanding. University representatives will follow up and report back prior to next TCC meeting in May 2016.

Action: University - follow up on WHS audit items and report back prior to May 2016 TCC meeting
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The following agenda items were discussed:

1. ECHO RECORDINGS

Union representatives enquired whether the University policy on recording lectures applied to teachers in Newstep and Elicos.

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan responded that Newstep classes were recorded but Elicos has an 'opt-out' exemption. Associate Professor Fagan explained that all lecture and tutorials across the University are recorded and 'opt out' is only available for pedagogical reasons, for example, the interactive manner of Elicos classes not being suitable for recording.

Discussion followed as to what the recording are used for and whether they can be edited. Associate Professor Fagan explained that the recording were made available for students to access information from classes in which they are enrolled. Prior to being released there is an opportunity for the recording to be edited. NTEU representative, Lance Dale requested to be sent a copy of the policy document.

Action 1: University – forward copy of policy on recording lectures to Lance Dale
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2. STAFF PROFILE AND STUDENT NUMBERS

A report identifying the ratio of continuing, fixed-term/contingent and casual teachers employed in 2015 in particular locations across the University was circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting was discussed. There was discussion on the '1/3 rule' applying to teaching staff conversions. Union representatives commented that while this was the University's custom and practice it is not prescribed in the Teachers Enterprise Agreement.

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan responded that student numbers particularly in Elicos are volatile and can drop by 50-60%. The ratio of fixed-term/contingent and casual teacher appointments provides flexibility necessary for changing student demand and mitigates the risk of redundancy for continuing staff. Associate Professor Fagan encouraged Committee members to put forward an alternative methodology that allows flexibility in staffing.

The Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering undertook to discuss the 1/3 rule with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and report back at the next TCC meeting in May 2016.

Action 2: University – discuss 1/3 rule with DVC(A) and report back at May 2016 meeting.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan flagged a proposal for a Scholarly Teaching Fellow (STF) to be appointed in ELFS specifically for Indigenous enabling programs. Additional STF appointments are also being considered for Newstep.

NTEU representative Lance Dale requested that a written proposal regarding the STF positions be forwarded for consideration and response after consultation with staff.

Union representatives commented that descriptors for Newstep and Elicos convenors had been drafted at enterprise bargaining time. However, the descriptors had not been finalised or implemented. Associate Professor Fagan requested the draft descriptors be forwarded for consideration.

Discussion followed regarding room bookings required for orientation and exams. Union representatives commented that one-off room bookings for these activities was time consuming and put a lot of pressure on staff. University representatives noted a project was in train for timetabling with the PVC Learning and Teaching and will check whether on-off room bookings are part of the scope.

Action 3: (i) University – forward proposal for STF positions to NTEU for consideration and response.
(ii) Unions – forward draft Newstep and Elicos descriptors for consideration
(iii) University – check whether one-off room bookings are part of timetable project scope

The meeting closed at approximately 4pm