

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

ACADEMIC STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ASCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Academic Staff Consultative Committee** held at 1:00pm on Wednesday 15 April 2015 in The Finance Meeting Room, The Chancellery.

PRESENT:

University – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Andrew Parfitt, Pro Vice- Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts Professor John Germov, and Associate Director, Employee Relations Paul Munro.

NTEU – Dr Tom Griffiths, Associate Professor Suzanne Ryan, Jenny Whittard, Lance Dale

APOLOGIES:

University – Director People and Workforce Strategy, Sharon Champness

NTEU – Associate Professor Wayne Reynolds, Dr John Lewer, Dr Jenny Day, Associate Professor Wayne Reynolds

Chair – Professor Andrew Parfitt – University representative

Note-taker – Ruth Hartmann

1. ACADEMIC WORKLOAD

1.1 CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (WORKLOAD) GROUP

Associate Director Employee Relations, Mr Paul Munro reported that next meeting of the Consultative Committee (Workload) group is scheduled for 23 April 2015. At this meeting the Committee will review information regarding the workload models currently being used by each Faculty. Mr Munro undertook to distribute a summary of this information before the meeting.

Action 1.1: University – distribute summary of current workload models to Workload Group prior to 23 April meeting.
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1.2 PILOT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STAFF WORKLOAD PLANNER SOFTWARE

Associate Director Employee Relations Mr Paul Munro reported that the Staff Workload Planner software was demonstrated to the Consultative Committee (Workload) group on 18 March 2015.

Mr Munro reported that a demonstration of the software was also held with the Faculty of Health and Medicine on 8 April 2015. Further demonstrations will progress by faculty with the Faculty of Business and Law scheduled for 6 May 2015. At this stage the demonstrations are being held with Heads of School, School Executive Offices, Associate Directors Faculty and staff that would be required to handle workload information.

1.3 PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC WORKLOAD ALLOCATION MODELS (AWAM'S)

Discussion took place regarding the role of the Consultative Committee (Workload) group to view and provide feedback on current faculty workload models. NTEU representatives expressed concern that Heads of School (HOS) may not be aware of the process and noted that this could be problematic for the September 2015 deadline. NTEU representatives also enquired about the timeline for implementing the IT platform.

Associate Director, Employee Relations, Mr Paul Munro reported that the University had previously written to Pro Vice-Chancellors regarding the process and timetable for the development of AWAMs. The process and timetable was also discussed with Heads of School present at the Faculty of Health and Medicine software demonstration on 8 April 2015. The University undertook to prepare a further communication piece to PVCs and HOSs reporting on the dates and format of consultation. A reminder of the timetable for the development of AWAMs would also be included.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts, John Germov reported that July 2015 is the scheduled date for the IT platform to be implemented. Mr Munro commented that work to populate the software will continue regardless of the version.

NTEU representatives enquired as to the University's response were the Workload Group to receive a revised faculty model that had not been subject to consultation in the particular schools. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt indicated that the University would enforce the requirement for consultation.

Action 1.3: University – communicate to HOS and PVC dates and format of consultation regarding the role of the Consultative Committee (Workload) Group. Note to also include a reminder of the timetable for development of AWAMs.

2. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following matter was discussed in relation to this standing item:

2.1 PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS FRAMEWORK (PEF)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts, John Germov reported that Research Services are in the process of gathering data which will provide an indication of how academic staff are tracking in relation to the research metrics in the PEF. The data set will include research income, publications and RHD supervision, broken down by School and academic level. Professor Germov advised it is anticipated that the data capture will be complete at the end of April 2015 and a report will be generated. The University will provide the report to the next ASCC meeting in June 2015.

NTEU representatives enquired as to whether the PEF is being monitored and reviewed. Professor Germov responded that the PEF was piloted in 2014 and will be subject to review. This review would involve wide consultation.

The use of conference papers for the PEF was discussed. Professor Germov reported that restrictions on E1 conference papers have been changed following feedback.

Action 2.1: University – distribute report regarding research metrics indicating progress academic staff performance at June 2015 ASCC meeting.

3. OFFICE CONFIGURATION AND RELOCATIONS PROPOSAL FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt reported that office prototype is still being planned and as yet there is no formal date for completion or viewing. He noted that the Legal Office had recently been renovated and configured with some open office spaces.

NTEU representatives expressed concern that the consultation with academic staff regarding the new office arrangements had not occurred. Discussion of this item highlighted practical issues including appropriate spaces to meet students and store gear. Professor Parfitt noted that these issues had been raised with the NeW Space Steering Committee and staff have the opportunity to provide feedback. The NTEU commented that staff had not been allowed to discuss the issue of open-plan offices.

Discussion on this item continued and included the concern by NTEU representatives that Level D and E academic staff are to have office space in the proposed configuration yet Program Convenors and other staff not at these level engage directly with students. The DVCA responded that this was a recruitment issue as it would be hard to recruit professorial staff without an office.

NTEU representatives requested the University to follow up on dates for the prototype and the process of consultation.

Action 3: University – follow up with Director Infrastructure and Facility Services Alan Tracey regarding date to view prototype and process of consultation for office configuration.

4. ACADEMIC PROMOTION

NTEU representatives requested follow up to discussion on Academic Promotion at 25 February 2015 ASCC meeting, in particular, clarification of the criteria used by the DVC(A) to review and accept recommendations of the Promotions Committee.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt responded that consistency is required for determining promotion recommendations. Professor Parfitt advised that the evidence, issues and grounds for approving/not approving an application are considered for each recommendation. Professor Parfitt noted that only a small number of Promotion Committee recommendations have not been approved. He also advised that promotions that have otherwise not been recommended by the panel may be approved by the DVC(A).

NTEU representatives enquired as to whether academic staff members could contact the DVC(A) regarding their promotion outcome. Professor Parfitt responded that seeking feedback would be recommended.

DVC(A) advised in response to a question from NTEU about review of the Promotions Policy and Procedure that revisions to Policy and Procedure are being undertaken and will be tabled at the next meeting of the ASCC.

Action 4: University – Report back at June meeting on revisions to the Promotions Policy and Procedure.

5. CONTEMPORANEOUS MARKING

NTEU representatives requested an update on the University's action item (from the ASCC meeting of 2/12/2014) to draft a communication piece to Heads of School and Executive Officers regarding the definition/interpretation of Contemporaneous Marking (this action was agreed to in order to address concerns raised by the NTEU about the application of Contemporaneous Marking).

Associate Director, Employee Relations, Mr Paul Munro reported that the advice is currently being drafted. It was agreed that the University will forward a copy of the draft advice to the NTEU for review, prior to it being distributed to Schools. The advice will include examples of Contemporaneous Marking to assist in the explanation.

Action 5: University – draft a communication piece on the definition/interpretation of Contemporaneous Marking to send to Heads of School and Executive Officers. Forward a copy of the draft advice to the NTEU for review, prior to it being distributed to Schools.

6. ACADEMIC ANNUAL LEAVE

NTEU representatives referred to discussion from the 11 February 2015 ASCC meeting regarding this item where it was noted that the forms for requesting the deferral of annual leave are confusing, particularly in relation to the timeframe/deadline.

Associate Director, Employee Relations, Mr Paul Munro reported that the University was not considering an IT software upgrade at this stage but is considering other methods to improve the process. Mr Munro will follow up with the Director, People and Workforce Strategy on this item and will report back at next meeting.

Action 6: University – follow up with the Director, People and Workforce Strategy regarding whether the forms for requesting the deferral of annual leave could be reviewed to improve process for requesting the deferral of annual leave.

7. ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION – ACADEMIC SPECIFIC

The University's EA Implementation Plan was distributed to Committee members.

The NTEU raised concern about the need to progress the implementation of the STF provisions of the new academic agreement. This need is compounded by the fact that a further 10 STF positions are pending the outcome of an initial trial of 10 STF positions. NTEU is keen to ensure that the trial is

underway in a timely fashion in order that there is maximum opportunity to deliver 10 additional positions during the life of the current agreement.

NTEU representatives expressed interest in being part of a working party to progress the implementation of Scholarly Teaching Fellows (STFs).

University representatives indicated that they would hold discussions with Schools that have a high concentration of casual staff regarding scope for STFs. The University highlighted, however, that the appointment of STFs should not disadvantage existing casual staff. The University will report back at the next ASCC meeting regarding a plan for STFs.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Andrew Parfitt reported that the University has been nominated for an award from Department of Defence in regarding the inclusion of the Defence Reserves Leave Clause in the University's enterprise agreements.

The University advised that reports requested by NTEU representatives at the last meeting regarding the incidence of Personal Leave for Domestic Violence and SSP have not been completed. The University will report on this information at the next meeting.

NTEU representatives enquired as to the application of the SSP "two month rule" for international travel. Professor Parfitt advised that the two month requirement may be reduced depending on individual circumstances.

Action 7:

- i. University – discuss scope for STFS with Heads of Schools and report back at next meeting (10 June 2015).
- ii. University – consider providing a report on the payment of accommodation assistance for SSP in 2014.
- iii. University – consider providing periodic reports on the use of Personal Leave in relation to domestic violence and Requests for Flexible Working Arrangements. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring confidentiality, particularly in relation to domestic violence.

8. USE OF SEARCH FIRMS FOR PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

This item follows from last meeting in relation to the use of international search firms for Professorial appointments. Based on advice of the Director, People and Workforce Strategy, the Associate Director, Employee Relations Mr Paul Munro reported that search firm are to be used for Head of School appointments. NTEU representatives advised that as far as they were aware, the University does not mandate that international search firms must be used for Professorial appointments, other than for Heads of School. This was confirmed by Professor Germov. Associate Director, Employee Relations, Mr Munro undertook to clarify this item with the Director, People and Workforce.

Action 8: University – Follow up to ascertain whether the use of international search firms are compulsory for Professorial appointments.

9. UON ACADEMY

The Pro Vice- Chancellor, Faculty of Education and Arts, John Germov reported on several UON Academy initiatives underway, which are detailed below:

1. Appointment process improvement for casual academic staff being piloted with two schools (Newcastle Business School and School of Education)
2. Meetings with School Leadership Groups to discuss changes to the contemporaneous marking clause in the 2014 Enterprise Agreement
3. Roadshow to promote Academy initiatives and upcoming Academy plans, as well as collating information regarding marking payments for casual academic staff with the purpose of establishing an institution-wide marking guideline.
4. Attendance at BLASST Conference to network and learn about best-practice initiatives across the sector regarding casual academic programs (attended by 2 HRS staff and 1 staff member from CTL).
5. Development of a position description / role guideline for Course Coordinators to emphasise leadership of casual academics and aligning workforce development initiatives with role requirements (joint collaboration between SPP, CTL and HRS).

Discussion followed regarding the UON Academy being an online only presence that is administered by the Workforce Strategy and Transformation team. NTEU representatives requested information on the Academy particularly whether the hotline number for casual staff is confidential. The University undertook to report back at the next meeting with this information. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Andrew Parfitt suggested that members of the Workforce Strategy and Transformation team attend the next meeting to present details regarding the Academy.

NTEU representatives noted Professor Germov's appointment as the Convenor of Strategic Planning, with particular responsibility for consultation on the draft New Futures strategic plan, and expressed concern regarding the effect of this on his role as Academy champion. Professor Germov responded that at present his role is limited to driving communication for the roll-out of New Futures, for which he has professional staff support, and he did not envisage this adversely impacting the development of the UON Academy.

Action 9: i. University – Share guideline for Course Coordinators regarding management of casual staff at next meeting (10 June 2015). ii. Arrange presentation from Workforce Strategy and Transformation team regarding UoN Academy.
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Meeting closed approximately 2.30pm
