

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Staff Consultative Committee** held at 10.00am on Wednesday 21 April 2021 in Meeting Room 206 The Chancellery Building, Callaghan.

PRESENT:

University – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Mark Hoffman; Chief People and Culture Officer, Martin Sainsbury; Mark Wylie; Mark Kelly; Lesley Phillips; and Lisa Fairlie.

NTEU – Alistair Rolls; Terry Summers; Emma Joel; David Rambaldi; Paul Chojenta; Mark Rubin and, Jenny Whittard.

CPSU – Lisa Nelson and Mark Smith

Chair – Mark Kelly

Note-taker – Ruth Hartmann

BUSINESS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

- **Space Management policy review** – Chief People and Culture Officer, Martin Sainsbury reported that IFS had intended for this policy to be reviewed by now, however, other IFS priorities such as the decamping of the Hunter Building had delayed this. A review is now scheduled for the second half of 2021.

Union representatives enquired as to current arrangements applying to work space allocation with the policy being rescinded. University representatives will follow up and report back outside of the regular Committee meeting schedule.

- **Academic Excellence** – Mr Sainsbury reported that the consultation period for the revised framework was open to staff from December 2020 to February 2021. Feedback received via the portal and direct email was reviewed and consolidated into 10 themes and has helped shape the key academic performance indicators. A draft Foundation for Inspiring People document has been developed integrating 4 elements:
 - Academic performance and planning (PRD)
 - Key performance indicators
 - Dashboard (dynamic reporting tool)
 - Organisational values.

PVCs and HOSs are currently reviewing draft that will be presented to EC in the coming months.

NTEU representatives sought further information about the development of KPIs, including how publications, research income and HDR loads would be included, and how these would be applied for the different Academic Levels. University representatives suggested that an out

of session meeting be scheduled potentially with PVC Academic Excellence to discuss these items. .

NTEU representatives sought clarification about the impact this process, as well as the impact of current change process, will have on the PRD process for Academic staff and queried whether PRD should be suspended.

Mr Sainsbury responded that PRD should not be a once-a-year process and given links to other programs such as SSP and promotion, it was not likely that PRD would be suspended. He noted that PRD is the appropriate process for focusing conversations to reflect pressures and give clarity on expectations.

- **Superannuation** – Mark Kelly, Associate Director HR reported that a response had been provided regarding superannuation entitlements for fractional fixed term staff under the 2018 Enterprise Agreements. Historic arrangements are now being reviewed. University representatives will follow up and report back out of session.

1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Lindsay Hardy, Indigenous Employment Partner, attended for this item and provided an update on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy, projects and initiatives as follows:

- Next meeting of the Indigenous Employment Committee is scheduled for 24 June 2021
- Indigenous staff institutional head count is currently 87 fulltime staff and 21 casual staff. Mr Hardy will continue to advocate on behalf of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff members whilst the Schools and Divisions change processes are implemented.
- Recent on-country staff forum provided valuable networking opportunity. Looking to schedule another later in the year as well as separate forums for academic and professional staff.
- Cultural Capability Framework continuing to be rolled out with IT Services staff forum to be held on-country next week.
- Number of working groups established looking at initiatives such as Student as Staff modelled on the Indigenous cadetship program

Discussion followed regarding any potential impact on the 3.9% Indigenous employment target from the current organisational change program. Mr. Hardy's view was that the number of Indigenous appointments would likely increase given his team's continuing work with Schools and Divisions to recruit identified positions and potential decrease in total staff numbers across the university as a result of change implementation.

Union representatives requested a follow-up report on Indigenous staff numbers be provided after implementation of the change processes.

Action 1: University – report on ATSI employment post-organisational change.

2. ADAPATBILITY FRAMEWORK

Mr Sainsbury presented an overview of the University's Adaptability Framework that has been designed to help all levels of leadership to communicate change and assist all staff to better engage

with change including using consistent terminology aligned to the PROSCI methodology. A full day session on the framework has been offered to Committee members on 29 April.

Action 2: University – circulate presentation to Committee members. .
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3. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE – STANDING ITEM

University representatives reported on the following change processes:

3.1 COLLEGE PVC UNITS

Currently in implementation. Working through recruitment of new positions.

NTEU flagged issues with timing and inconsistent advice from HR Business Partners regarding recruitment for new positions in the College change process.

Mr Sainsbury responded that questions and issues should be escalated to Employee Relations or his office as required to ensure consistent and concise information.

3.2 DIVISIONS

Submission period closed on 16 April 2021. Change team are collating feedback and responses.

NTEU representatives sought information as to the process for reviewing the submissions and, for providing further information where staff had requested further information or discussion with relevant management lines.

University representatives responded that submissions will be collated by the Enabling Change team and reviewed in consultation with heads of portfolios who in turn will follow up with respective staff.

3.3 SCHOOLS

Submission period extended to 30 April 2021.

3.4 IT SERVICES

Currently in implementation. 17 staff detached; 10 VSP elections; 8 redeployment elections; 1 external employment election; and 9 active external recruitment processes in progress following completion of internal processes.

4. FINANCIAL BRIEFING

University representatives reported that an all-staff financial briefing is scheduled on 27 April 2021.

5. TEACHING BLOCKS

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Mark Hoffman reported that the University is considering a six week teaching block model, however, prior to any implementation there would be appropriate consultation with staff and students.

Discussion followed regarding consideration of programs that are currently delivered in non-semester/trimester blocks. Professor Hoffman noted some preliminary discussions had commenced regarding programs that are heavily prescribed by external bodies. These constraints would be considered further in a consultation period likely to occur over 6 months from mid 2021.

NTEU representatives expressed concern that compressed 6 weeks blocks may impact on research.

Professor Hoffman explained that different modelling is to be considered, and a compressed teaching model would allow for academic staff to have non-teaching blocks available for research work.

NTEU representatives also flagged potential impacts that this change may have on staff across the university, including professional staff in Divisions and Colleges.

6. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Associate Director, Wellbeing Health & Safety, Megan Clarke presented an update on WHS including a report of EAP access. The presentation will be forwarded to Committee members.

Action 6: University – circulate WHS presentation to Committee members

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

7. CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE AND REVIEW

Union representatives reported concerns from staff that some tasks and responsibilities included in PDs, particularly professional staff PDs issued as part of the change program, do not align with the HEW classification descriptors (schedule to the Professional Staff EA 2018) and, sought clarification about the process for evaluating the HEW level of these new or changed roles.

University representatives noted that ‘provisional’ PDs were issued for the current change program and staff were able to provide feedback during the submission period. HR Services will now review and evaluate the PDs according to HEW level. The primary method for job evaluation is against the Classification Descriptors and the Mercer point systems may be used as a secondary measure.

University representatives proposed to schedule a further information session on the Mercer evaluation methodology for Committee members.

Action 7: University – schedule information session on Mercer job evaluation for Committee members.

8. OVERTIME AND TOIL

NTEU representatives flagged issues with inconsistent application of overtime, flex-time and TOIL as well as management of workload in Student Central.

NTEU representatives requested a further meeting to discuss the EA and WHS issues raised by staff on this matter, noting concern these ongoing issues will potentially be exacerbated by the current change proposals.

Mr Sainsbury noted the concerns and undertook to work through the items with the DVC-A and work unit leaders outside the Committee meeting.

ACADEMIC STAFF

9. REVIEWS IN SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Professor Hoffman reported that external reviews of Oral Health and Podiatry have been completed, however, the results would not be released to staff without input from the new PVC College Health Medicine and Wellbeing. He confirmed that recommendations of the reviews that may impact on staffing would be considered in an organisational change process separate to the current Schools change.

TEACHERS

10. ENABLING PROGRAMS

NTEU representatives requested a separate meeting be scheduled to discuss cessation of the Newstep program and impact on current teaching staff. The complexity of translating staff across EAs with different conditions of employment was noted.

Action 10: University – schedule separate meeting to discuss enabling program staffing

11. OTHER BUSINESS

No other items discussed.

Meeting closed at approx. 12.00PM