

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE**  
**STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SCC)**

Notes of a meeting of the **Staff Consultative Committee** held at 10.00am  
on Wednesday 14 February 2024 via Zoom & CH-205

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**PRESENT:**

University – Martin Sainsbury, Chief People & Culture Officer; Mark Hoffman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Andrew Cairns, Associate Director Workplace Relations, Governance & Policy; and Ruth Hartmann, Senior Employment Relations Specialist.

NTEU – Terrence Summers; David Rambaldi; Annika Westrenius; Ros Larkin; Roy Murcutt; and Jenny Whittard (NTEU Branch Organiser).

CPSU – Mark Smith; and Lisa Nelson (CPSU Industrial Officer).

Chair – Mark Smith

Guests: Simone Jordan, Indigenous Employment Partner (agenda item 1); Megan Clark, Associate Director Wellbeing, Health, and Safety (agenda item 5).

**APOLOGIES** – Ian Braithwaite (CPSU Organiser); Zain Hamid; Shell Dillon, and Cian Galea (NTEU Industrial Officer).

Notetaker: Alison Heitmeyer.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Acknowledgement of Country by Mark Smith.

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

- a) Review of Central Coast Campus - University to provide available documents regarding Gosford arrangements after this meeting.
- b) Organisational Change - University representatives reported that the post-implementation review for the Research & Innovation Division change is in progress and findings will be reported at a future SCC meeting.
- c) Your Voice Survey - presentation by Chief People & Culture Officer (CPCO), Martin Sainsbury.

**Action: University - distribute Your Voice presentation to Committee members.**

**1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT – STANDING ITEM**

Simone Jordan, Indigenous Employment Partner, Office of Indigenous Strategy and Leadership attended the meeting for this item to provide an update on the Maligagu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy including that the number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander now sits at 97, representing 3.11% of staff across the University. Ms Jordan explained that a transition in staffing at Wollotuka had impacted the data for this report.

An update was provided on current roles being advertised and the Wollotuka School-Based Cadetships, followed by a report on staff completing the Thirri Wirri Leadership program; information on community partnerships; and options being considered for recruitment including for Academic positions.

**2. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE – STANDING ITEM**

There was discussion regarding consultation for major workplace change set out in the Enterprise Agreements and other changes such as process improvements that are not likely to have a significant impact on staff. NTEU representatives recommended early communication and engagement with staff impacted by change.

- a) Pre-major workplace change reviews – University representatives noted a review involving a structural change impacting work units in Academic and Global Engagement & Partnerships Division is being considered. There are no significant impacts on staff identified at this time.
- b) Consultation on major workplace change – University representatives reported that there have been no definite decisions made to introduce major workplace change likely to have a significant impact on staff at this time.

- c) Post implementation reviews - (See business arising above for Research & Innovation Division). University representatives noted that further information on the reviews for Exercise & Sport Science and Office of Alumni & Philanthropy changes commenced under the 2018 EAs will be provided in due course.

### 3. 2023 EA IMPLEMENTATION – STANDING ITEM

- a) Review of decisions – pool of agreed inquiry officers/independent chairs

Nominations received from CPSU and University representatives. Nil received from NTEU at this time.

**Action: NTEU – provide nominations for inquiry officer / independent chairs.**

**Action: All - consider nominations of other parties and confirm agreement to establish pool of inquiry officers / independent chairs for appointment to relevant EA processes.**

- b) Research Code Breach – nominations for internal investigation panels

Nominations received from CPSU. Nil received from NTEU at this time.

NTEU requested that the University provide training to NTEU members, particularly Professional Staff on the role and responsibilities of internal investigation panels.

**Action: NTEU – provide nominations for Research Code Breach internal investigation panels.**

**Action: University – consider NTEU request for training for members on internal investigation panels.**

- c) Staff Consultative Committee (SCC) membership

University representatives confirmed that time release information had been provided to supervisors of the staff nominated by the NTEU and CPSU. NTEU to provide further nominations for a Teacher and another professional staff SCC member.

**Action: NTEU – provide nominations for SCC membership for 1 x Teacher and 1 x Professional Staff.**

Discussion followed on arrangements for co-opting other SCC members or allowing guests and observers to attend meetings. University representatives undertook to draft a protocols / terms of reference document for consideration and implementation.

**Action: University – prepare draft SCC protocols / terms of reference for circulation to SCC members.**

- d) Professional Staff Flextime Scheme / overtime / TOIL

In response to requests for further information/guidance on the new Flextime Scheme, University representatives advised that leadership training will be deployed shortly to be followed by a broader roll out. A systems solution is also in development.

- e) Incidence and scope of casual employment

University representatives undertook to prepare the employment report including casual and fixed-term data for presentation at a future SCC meeting.

**Action: University – prepare employment report for presentation at future SCC meeting.**

- f) Teachers Review of Staffing Ratio

University representatives undertook to prepare the Teachers employment report for presentation at a future SCC meeting.

**Action: University – prepare employment report for presentation at future SCC meeting.**

#### **4. POLICY REVIEW**

University representatives reported that the consultation period for staff to view and submit feedback on policies subject to review had been extended. NTEU representatives acknowledged the extension granted but noted they had requested a longer extension.

Andrew Cairns, Associate Director Workplace Relations, Governance and Policy provided an overview of the number of responses/comments received for each policy as follows:

- Code of Conduct – 7 responses
- Conflict of Interest – 4 responses
- Outside Work – 0 responses
- Resolving Workplace Concerns and Grievances – 3 responses
- Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination – 4 responses
- Space Management – 30 responses.

CPCO Martin Sainsbury advised that the revised policies are progressing through usual approval processes and a communications plan is being developed to support awareness of policy changes and actions required e.g. declaring conflicts on interest.

Mr Cairns also reported that a new Sexual Assault and Sexual Harm Policy is currently in development, with consultation workshops to commence next week.

#### **5. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY – STANDING ITEM**

Associate Director, Wellbeing, Health & Safety, Megan Clark attended for this item to discuss the Q4 Workplace Health and Safety Report circulated to Committee members prior to this meeting. Ms Clarke noted a positive shift in safety culture throughout 2023 activated by beneficial events including Stress Less Week, Safe Work Month, and Mental Health month. It was also noted that all senior executive safety walks and talks were completed and early intervention programs such as EAP and physio referral programs were well received.

Discussion followed on the EAP provider NewPsych's annual report that found the University's participation data is consistent with other employers.

Ms Clarke also reported that there will be an election for a Health and Safety Representative at Ourimbah in coming weeks and that the University Return to Work Program will be going to consultation on the Policy Bulletin Board in the coming weeks.

#### **6. ACADEMIC SPECIFIC ITEMS**

- a) EA implementation: Promotions appeal committee – NTEU nominations confirmed as Terry Summers and Alistair Rolls. NTEU to advise of any other nominations as soon as practicable.
- b) EA implementation: Academic decasualisation program – CPCO Martin Sainsbury reported that following the EA approval late last year the financial budget has now been finalised and staffing profile data will be reviewed to identify the 14 FTE positions to be created under the program. University representatives will provide further details to NTEU when more information on the positions is available. Mr Sainsbury confirmed that the University maintains its commitment to completing the program during the nominal term of the 2023 Agreement.
- c) EA implementation: Academic Workload de-identified work allocation report for 2023 – University representatives noted data was reported at the extraordinary SCC meeting on 7 December and is available on the Academic Excellence site. University and NTEU representatives to follow up on available data out of session.
- d) EA implementation: Academic Workload work allocation reports for 2023 – see c) above.
- e) EA implementation: Academic Workload student/staff ratios for 2023 – University to present data at future SCC meeting. There was discussion on reporting of staff exits and replacements in staff profiles with the University to follow up out of session with NTEU representatives.
- f) EA implementation: Academic Workload AWAM approvals - NTEU representatives requested that the University report on changes (if any) made to AWAMs with consideration to NTEU recommendations. University to follow up with Academic Excellence team and report out of session.

- g) EA implementation: Academic Workload course allocation reports – University and NTEU representatives to follow up out of session on availability of reports.
- h) EA implementation: Academic Workload individual staff allocations - University and NTEU representatives to follow up out of session on reports available on the Academic Excellence site.

***Action Item: NTEU – provide nominations for promotions appeal committees.***

***Other items to be followed up out of session as listed above.***

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

CPCO Martin Sainsbury advised the Committee that UniSuper now has a dedicated onsite person at Callaghan Campus for staff to meet in person for superannuation queries.

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***Meeting ended approx. 11.45am***