

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

TEACHERS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (TCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Teachers Consultative Committee** held at 11:00 AM on Thursday 15 October 2015 in the Canberra Room, The Chancellery.

PRESENT:

University –Paul Munro, Seamus Fagan
NTEU –Sue Hodgson, Paul Chojenta and, Lance Dale

APOLOGIES:

University – Sharon Champness

Chair – Paul Munro University representative
Note-taker – Ruth Hartmann

The following agenda items were discussed:

1. REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES – STANDING ITEM

NTEU representative, Lance Dale noted that the Space Management Guidelines and the Recruitment of Casual Academic Staff Guidelines had been discussed at recent Academic Staff and Combined Staff Consultative Committees.

2. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE – STANDING ITEM

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan provided an update of the organisational change process of the International Office (now UON Global) with most required positions now filled. Associate Professor Fagan flagged that UON was experiencing a boom in international student numbers particularly from China and India. However, the numbers are unlikely to be sustained because of the short term nature of the courses that the students are enrolled into.

General discussion followed on ensuring continuity of staff numbers to handle increases in student numbers.

3. REPORT ON TEACHING RATIOS

The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Paul Munro explained that a report on teaching ratios was not yet available due to the appropriate Human Resources staff member being on leave. Mr Munro expected to be able to circulate the document to Committee members next week.

Action 3: University – provide report on teaching ratios in 1 week.

4. INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING SYSTEM (IELTS)

NTEU representatives sought information on IELTS marking work being transferred offshore, in particular whether this may; impact UON teaching staff; and impact the standardised quality of marking.

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan reported that UON is considering a new contract with IELTS. While the written testing work would be marked elsewhere UON staff would complete the speaking tests. Associate Professor Fagan explained that is casual marking work that is additional and does not impact on the day to day core work of the Centre's teaching staff. In situations where placement test scores were different to IELTS, Associate Professor Fagan understood that it was UON practice to use the IELTS score. However, IELTS must ensure efficacy and it is in their interest to have accurate testing.

5. WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Director, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan provided an update of Work, Health and Safety in the Language Centre noting that an audit is soon to be completed by the HR Health and Safety team.

Discussion followed on the process for reporting hazards and incidents through the online reporting system.

Action 5: - University – report back from Health and Safety audit at December meeting.

6. FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

There was discussion on the processes for varying days of work and requesting flexible work arrangements.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Secondments – there was discussion regarding international secondment arrangements for Language Centre staff.
- Annual Leave Loading - NTEU representatives enquired as to whether the Annual Leave Loading is paid in situations where a staff member is absent from work due to an external secondment arrangement.

Action 7: - University – report back to Committee members whether the Annual Leave Loading is paid in situations where a staff member is absent from work due to an external secondment arrangement.

- Timing of Christmas Shutdown - It was noted that the Language Centre resumes operations on 4 January 2016. However, the UON Christmas/New Year shutdown period is until 6 January 2016. Committee members discussed the impact of this on Centre staff including limited availability for food on campus and no resources to issue student cards during these 2 days. Advance details regarding Christmas closedown would assist management of the Centre. Union representatives sought advance details (at least 2 years in advance) of the closedown dates.

The meeting closed at approximately 12:00 pm