



Joint FE trade union statement on the Association of Colleges (AoC) recommendation on pay and related matters in England

The joint trade unions met with the college employers' representatives from the AoC on 21 September under the national joint forum agreement. We wrote to the AoC following the meeting.

The AoC made an offer on pay and related matters that do not meet the expectations of the joint union pay claim submitted in March.

The offer made on 21 September contains a conditional recommendation on pay and also covers Further Education national bargaining, workload and Foundation Living Wage accreditation.

On pay, the AoC are recommending those employers that can pay 6.5% make that offer locally with a caveat statement that some colleges will offer less. While the headline figure mirrors that for teachers in England, the lack of a mechanism for its implementation in all colleges is highly problematic. The non-binding nature of pay outcomes does little to address the cost-of-living crisis faced by our members and pay differentials within and between colleges.

All staff need a pay rise and the joint unions' view is that all staff should get at least 6.5%, not only those where employers offer it, and employers that can pay more should pay more

On national bargaining, we need binding pay outcomes and a new sector level negotiating and funding framework that leads to this. The AoC have offered talks but there is a need for urgency and a commitment to make progress on both matters as soon as possible. Pressing repeat next year is not acceptable

On living wage accreditation, our core position is that the NJF should have a reasonable expectation that employers would be accredited. The lack of this commitment is problematic.

On workload, the working group set up last year has stalled and it is some way off concluding its work and making some recommendations.

The joint TU remain committed to seeking a negotiated outcome to this year's pay round.

We have offered to meet the AoC again on 11 and 18 October to discuss any further considerations they have on pay and to agree on how to progress the national bargaining framework.

For the avoidance of doubt, the live disputes continue.