

New agreement will benefit hundreds of lecturing staff trapped in temporary employment limbo, says IFUT

Thurs May 10th, 2017

New arrangements have been today (Thurs May 10th) formally agreed between the Irish University Association and the university based trade unions to address long-standing staffing issues dealt with in the 2016 Cush Report.

General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), Joan Donegan, welcomed the “significant progress related to employment contracts and terms and conditions for hundreds of university lecturers employed on temporary contracts and occasional hours.”

The issue was successfully raised by IFUT during the last round of pay talks, arising from which discussions were initiated involving the Department of Education and relevant trade unions in the sector.

The main areas of improvement include::

- A reduction in the waiting period for eligibility to a Contract of Indefinite Duration
- Sanctioning of additional hours to existing part-time lecturers
- Universities have been given the freedom to recruit lecturers on fixed-term or fixed-purpose contracts for non-state funded posts.

IFUT recently succeeded in securing the appointment of an Adjudicator (Kevin Duffy / Former Labour Court Chair) to examine all cases which fall under the remit of the Cush Report.

Joan Donegan said that many lecturing staff have been trapped in situations of uncertain employment, which is a source of great insecurity and, for example, can create major difficulties for those wishing to purchase a home, she said

“The new agreement, while not offering a full panacea, is a major step in the right direction and particularly in relation to those on temporary contracts and pathways for creating more significant and stable workloads for those on part-time contracts or occasional hours, she said”

The Department of Education and Skills has written to the Universities to confirm the implementation of recommendations, which are effective backdated to July 2016).

IFUT, along with the other Trade Unions involved in the Higher Education sector, are now pushing for a similar adjudication process in the few remaining Colleges that remain without a means of progressing disputes under Cush. These Colleges include Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, the Royal Irish Academy and the National College of Art and Design.

ENDS

For further information on this media release please contact:

John Gallagher - John Gallagher Consulting. Tel. 087 9369888

Joan Donegan - General Secretary, IFUT - 087 1315960