

Full steam ahead at DCU!

Following discussions between IFUT and SIPTU a joint agreement has been reached on representation of staff in Dublin City University (DCU). The new agreement provides a very strong mandate for working together in a spirit of partnership to advance the cause of all trade union members in the university.

A joint high-level working group comprising of IFUT and SIPTU Officials will work together to ensure co-ordination of co-operation, while a joint union forum comprising of local elected representatives in DCU will meet monthly to discuss work on all issues that impact on members collectively. Both unions will deal with individual cases affecting their respective members separately.

A new joint initiative on education and training will also be introduced.

"The agreement marks a further major step in advancing the rights of all university staff in the college," IFUT General Secretary, Joan Donegan said in welcoming the new agreement.

"I see progress being achieved in DCU through the same joint and close working arrangements we share with SIPTU in other universities," she said. "A further key issue for both unions will be increasing union membership in DCU. This will be vital in terms of defending education as a public good and addressing precarious employment practices in the higher education sector."

"Finally, I wish to thank our members and in particular the IFUT committee in DCU for their forbearance and dedication during this uniquely difficult time. We can now all get back to the day job of ensuring that the best possible working conditions are delivered in DCU," Joan Donegan said.

Joint Statement on Co-operation between IFUT and SIPTU - DCU

IFUT and SIPTU recognise the huge challenges facing the trade union movement in organising workers in the third-level sector. The encroachment of business and neo-liberal values into the university has undermined the concept of education as a public good. At the same time there has been an attempt by university management to transpose work practices associated with neo liberalism, i.e. precarious and insecure working conditions across the university sector. This has led to a fragmentation of work resulting in negative consequences for workers in every category across the sector. Both Unions recognise that these challenges are best met by both Unions working together in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation. To this end the following actions have been agreed between IFUT and SIPTU:

High Level Joint Working Group

IFUT and SIPTU will each nominate 3 members to form a High-Level Joint Working-Group comprising of 6 members in total. This group will have responsibility for building cordial relations between both unions. The Working Group will meet at regular periods during the year, commencing with an inaugural meeting to be held on February 6th in IFUT offices. The High-Level Joint Working-Group will identify areas and issues where both unions can work together to advance university workers' interests. Any cooperative initiatives between the two unions will always be cognisant of the total autonomy and independence of each respective union.

DCU Joint Union Forum

A Joint Union Forum will be established in DCU. The IFUT and SIPTU section committees will each nominate 4 members to the DCU Joint Union Forum. The forum will consist of a total of 8 members. The Joint Union Forum will meet on a monthly basis during the course of the academic year. This body will have responsibility for dealing with issues, where it is agreed, that such issues affect members collectively. These issues will be referred to management from the Joint Union Forum.

Training

It is agreed between both Unions that there is merit in sharing education and training capabilities. Both Unions will jointly develop a 'section committee training module'. This will initially be rolled out in DCU. A review will take place after the completion of the module in DCU by activists. This review will be conducted by the High-Level Joint Working-Group with input from the section committees in DCU. It is the intention to make this training module available to other IFUT and SIPTU section committees on a joint basis if there is a desire from section committees on other university campuses.