



**Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile
Irish Federation of University Teachers**

MEDIA RELEASE

**Researchers must be given same status as ‘research’,
says IFUT**

30 March 2012

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has said that while a major emphasis is continually placed on the importance of research in our Universities and third-level institutions, little or no attention is placed on the rights and conditions of researchers.

Speaking at a Forum organised by the Irish Research Staff Association today (Friday, 30 March) in the Mansion House, Dublin, IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings, said that that university institutions appear to regard their research staff as second-class citizens.

“There is, for instance, an unspoken but clearly systematic campaign by the Universities, fully backed by the Department of Education and Skills, to roll back protection and rights for research staff as stipulated in the 2003 Fixed-Term Workers Act.

“This was most clearly evident in the recent failed attempt by UCC to contest the rights of one of its researchers, which the college disgracefully pursued all the way to the High Court, ultimately at the taxpayers’ expense”, he said.

Mr Jennings said that James Connolly once stated that “‘Ireland, as distinct from her people, means nothing to me’. Our Universities seem to wish to dwell purely on the concept of ‘research’ while seeking to tread on the rights of the very people that they expect to deliver the research outcomes required”.

IFUT will shortly announce details of a Memorandum of Understanding and Co-operation with the Irish Research Staff Association.

In addition, the next meeting of the EU's Sectoral Social Dialogue on Higher Education will discuss research-related issues as the first item on its Agenda, at the instigation of IFUT, Mr Jennings said.

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