

IFUT calls on UCC to withdraw cynical ‘exams threat’ letter to students

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The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), whose members have begun a series of strikes at UCC over researchers’ pay and conditions, has called on college management to withdraw a letter sent to students saying that industrial action by researchers at Tyndall National Institute threatens forthcoming examinations.

Mike Jennings, General Secretary of IFUT said that his members have given absolute assurances to UCC Students’ union that there will be no interference whatever with examinations.

“The college know this, yet they are attempting to cynically exploit students’ understandable anxiety in the pre-exam period in the most cynical way. They should immediately withdraw these allegation and apologise to students for the unnecessary upset caused,” he said.

UCC management, hiding behind legal letters, are deliberately seeking to create a new smokescreen to avoid putting procedures in place to address flagrant discrimination against researchers at Tyndall, Mike Jennings said.

“Researchers are being severely undermined by an ongoing refusal of the college, supported by the Department of Education, to resolve glaring pay anomalies that result in staff earning up to one-third less than they would if employed in other UCC Departments.”

The escalating dispute follows five years of failed attempts by staff to seek a negotiated settlement of their claims

Mike Jennings said that said that research staff in senior supervising roles are being paid less wages than junior doctorate temporary contract staff. In addition, permanent research staff are forced to accept the imposition of the public service pension levy and pay cuts - but are denied access to public service pay and conditions.

“IFUT, which together with SIPTU represents researchers at Tyndall, is seeking immediate installation of an agreed appeals process. “This will allow the widespread and gross anomalies on pay and conditions for research staff at Tyndall to be addressed without further delay,” Mike Jennings said.

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