

MOTIONS FOR ADC 2017

MOTIONS ON POLICY

1 Higher Education Funding

IFUT Conference notes the recent report of the Expert group on higher education funding (the Cassells report).

Conference regrets that the current Government has effectively ignored the report and failed to address the most serious crisis in the financing of higher education since the 1950s.

Conference further notes that public investment in higher education has failed to keep pace with rising student numbers; increasing demands by the state on higher education institutions to meet a wide range of economic and social objectives; and the requirements of the 'strategic dialogue' flowing from the Hunt Report. Public funding for universities as a proportion of institutional budgets is now at its lowest level since the 1950s.

Conference believes that the very modest increase in the higher education allocation in Budget 2017 is hopelessly inadequate to meet the day-to-day needs of higher education institutions, still less to allow further long-term development which is essential to meet societal demand.

Conference recognises that investment in higher education is a national imperative, to meet the continuing surge in societal demand for third-level courses; to underpin economic innovation and especially to advance knowledge for its own sake.

Conference calls for:

- implementation of Option One of the Cassells Report, involving a sustained, long-term expansion of public investment in higher education.
- Increased employer funding of higher education through the national training fund.
- ringfencing of a defined proportion of the income from corporation tax for higher education, as major transnational corporations such as Intel and

Facebook are among the leading beneficiaries of the above average output of highly qualified graduates from Irish third level institutions.

Proposer: Executive

2 Researchers

Conference notes the deliberate failure of the Department of Education and the government to address the endemic insecurity and consistently precarious working conditions experienced by postdoctoral researchers in third level institutions.

Conference condemns the exclusion of researchers from the Cush Report and the consistent attempt by the government to maintain inferior employment and working conditions for this group of highly qualified employees.

Conference further notes that the treatment of postdoctoral researchers is exceptional within the public service and amounts to the creation of a new category of employee with inferior rights and conditions.

Conference rejects the attempt by the Minister for Education to hide behind specious arguments of institutional autonomy when employment policy in HEIs is effectively driven by government policy.

Conference calls for

- the extension of the Cush Report to postdoctoral researchers forthwith;
- the development by the HEA of a coherent strategy for postdoctoral researcher careers which recognises the professional status and contribution of researchers;
- the ending of unacceptable managerial policies pursued by a number of Irish HEIs which are designed to facilitate the de facto removal of postdoctoral researchers on economic grounds under the guise of 'career development'.

Conference re-affirms the commitment of IFUT to represent postdoctoral researchers and campaign for the full vindication of basic entitlements for researchers within the public service.

Proposer: Trinity Branch

3 Research Careers

That this ADC calls on IFUT to establish a functioning fit-for-purpose and attractive Research Career framework, and to lobby the Government and State Funding Agencies for the establishment of nationally approved Statutory Researcher Pay scales in parity with Academic Scales at the national level.

Proposer: UCC Branch

4 Postdocs are not “Trainees”

That this ADC calls on IFUT to address the postdoc ‘trainee’ issue and engage with universities to ensure postdocs are recognised as professionals (by ensuring they are not designated as trainees in development roles) and to lobby funding agencies and the Government to make more funding available for senior postdocs, as it is a point of attrition of excellent research staff within the University Sector.

Proposer: UCC Branch

5 Tuition Fees for Postgraduate Programmes

That this ADC calls on all Irish universities to freeze and where possible reverse all recent tuition fee increases for Postgraduate Programmes, pending a full review of the impact of these tuition fee increases on students, where such impact might include not only financial but all aspects of the student experience.

Proposer: UCC Branch

6 Equality Standards in Universities

This ADC welcomes the significant equality developments such as centrally funded maternity cover which helped to gain UCD its recent Athena Swan Institutional Bronze Award. IFUT calls on the HEA to monitor and report on equality standards in Irish universities in order to ensure that the progress already achieved is sustained and developed further.

Proposer: UCD Branch

7 Equality

As a consequence of the changing role of our statutory mechanisms within the newly formed Workplace Relations Commission and their place in the continuum of equality processes, this Conference commits IFUT to strengthen the argument for a broad range of interventions for workplace conflict and the need for earlier, interest-based involvement in Equality cases.

Proposer: Executive

8 Support for Equality in NUIG

This ADC calls for formal recognition of the need for ongoing support of the five female Lecturers at NUIG who are involved in High Court and Labour Court cases involving breaches of promotion procedures and policy at the University.

Proposer: NUIG Branch

9 Unacceptable Treatment of Administrative, Library and Support Staff by TCD

Conference condemns the recent policy of Trinity College Dublin to offer no permanent contracts to new administrative/library/support staff and to replace permanent positions in these grades with fixed-term contracts of varying lengths leading to non-replacement of permanent staff in these areas (in breach of clause 3.3.5 of the PSA).

Conference expresses its full solidarity with IFUT members in the affected grades and notes with grave concern the detrimental effect of these policies upon our members (and members of other unions), and the undermining and undervaluing of members of the TCD community whose work and expertise are indispensable to the College's core activities of teaching and research.

Conference calls upon TCD to reverse these policies which are inequitable, of dubious legality and utterly detrimental to the well-being of staff in the affected grades and indeed to the wider college community.

Conference also condemns the decision by the college authorities to suspend the operation during the current academic year of the progression/promotion committees for administrative/library/support staff. Conference calls upon TCD to convene the relevant progression/promotion committees at the earliest possible opportunity (with retrospective provision for successful candidates).

Conference further notes with concern the proposed job evaluation process currently under consideration, which is sweeping in its scope and carries the risk of a severe erosion of terms and conditions of employment for IFUT members in administrative/library/support roles.

Conference further calls upon the college authorities to engage in meaningful consultation on the proposed job evaluation process and not to proceed with the implementation of the evaluation process in the absence of agreement with IFUT and other unions representing the relevant grades.

Proposer: Trinity Branch

10 Charter for Casuals

That this ADC calls on all branches of IFUT to implement the '*Charter for Casuals*' and to seek accurate data from their HEIs on the numbers, rates and demographics of all casually employed academic staff.

Proposer: UCC Branch

11 Casualisation in Universities

That this ADC calls on the Executive of IFUT to allocate funds to the carrying out of a discrete piece of research to establish the current situation as regards casualization across

Irish Universities and Colleges. The terms of reference of the research should seek to establish the extent of casualized teaching and research staff across Irish HE.

Proposer: UCC Branch

12 Casualisation in Higher Education

This ADC notes the ongoing move to casualisation across the Higher Education sector and the research area in particular, with the move to fixed-term-only contracts with "training" for postdocs to avoid the fixed-term workers act. We call on IFUT to campaign against casualisation and for the creation of career paths to permanent employment for postdocs and researchers.

Proposer: NUIG Branch

13 Appointments to University/College Committees

Participation in committees, and particularly participation as Chair or officer, is of importance for promotion in Irish universities. In UCD, chairing a committee has been explicitly listed as a marker of Leadership under Contribution for staff promotion. Therefore there is a need to ensure equality of access to such roles, not just gender balance in committee membership as stated in the Equality Action Plan. In order to ensure equality and fairness in the allocation of committee leadership roles, ADC calls on IFUT to lobby Irish universities to ensure that the appointments process to University/College committees (both for ordinary membership and in particular for the roles of Chair or other officer positions) is open and transparent.

Proposer: UCD Branch

14 Closure of the Church of Ireland College of Education

This ADC deplores the way in which CICE was closed, the chaotic manner in which CICE staff and students were moved to DCU and the continued failure of the Church of Ireland authorities to ensure equitable consideration for them.

This ADC acknowledges the significant personal and professional losses experienced by IFUT members in CICE following incorporation into DCU. It notes that there are a considerable number of outstanding issues to be resolved for IFUT members, some of which have been referred to the WRC. It also notes the enormous additional workload for all members during the period prior to incorporation and the fact that some commitments made then have yet to be realised. It calls on the relevant Church of Ireland authorities, through Archbishop Michael Jackson, to acknowledge their responsibility for the losses incurred by the CICE staff and students on incorporation of CICE into DCU, and to engage immediately

and meaningfully with IFUT on the issue of appropriate compensation for IFUT members who formerly worked in CICE.

This ADC expresses solidarity with IMPACT members who are former staff of CICE in their on-going efforts to resolve serious outstanding issues in relation to the incorporation process.

This ADC acknowledges the work of the Church of Ireland College of Education Staff Support Group (CICESG) and urges all IFUT members to support, where appropriate and possible, the efforts of this group to highlight issues on behalf of former CICE staff.

This ADC calls on DCU to engage with IFUT members formerly of CICE on the significant losses being experienced as a result of incorporation.

Proposer: CICE-DCU Branch

15 Higher Education in Palestine

This ADC gives a warm welcome to our guest Dr Amjad Barham representing the Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUUPE).

We extend our solidarity to all of those who are struggling in the most difficult of circumstances to provide the entitlement and the gift of higher education to all citizens throughout the region and, in particular, in the occupied territories.

We call upon the worldwide community of academics and researchers to support trade unions such as PFUUPE so that, despite the dreadful hardships which are being inflicted upon the people in this region, the children and young adults of Palestine will enjoy the benefits of education up to the level of their individual ambitions, needs and capabilities.

Proposer: Executive

16 Union Rights in DCU

This conference notes that IFUT members in DCU have voted overwhelmingly (105 to 1) to continue to demand the right to collective bargaining and the enjoyment of full trade union rights in that university.

The ADC instructs the General Secretary to prioritise this issue in the coming year.

Proposer: Executive

17 Re-grading and Promotions

This ADC calls on the Department of Education and Skills to sanction the regrading and promotion of former CICE academic staff in line with the recommendations made to the DES following the CICE internal academic promotions process conducted prior to incorporation.

Proposer: CICE-DCU Branch