

MOTIONS FOR ADC 2019

MOTIONS ON POLICY

1 Casual/Precarious Employment

That IFUT redoubles its efforts to organise and represent casual/precarious academic staff in the Irish universities, while supporting such staff to gain visibility and speak out on their concerns.

Proposer: UCC Branch Committee

2 Precarious Employment

Universities are using precarious employment practices to shift the burden of risk onto staff. These practices include, but are not limited to extended probation contracts and employing staff on an hourly basis to avoid issuing contracts. IFUT should take national level action to address and publicise the continued and unacceptable proliferation of precarious work in the University sector and the stress this places on members.

Proposers: Robert Galavan, Aileen O'Carroll, Liam MacAmhlaigh, MU Branch Committee

3 Precarious Employment / OneGalway and OneCork Movements

This ADC notes that IFUT is part of the OneGalway and OneCork movements, where the Unions and Civil society campaigning organisations come together to work on common causes affecting our whole communities. These issues include precarious work and homelessness, affecting IFUT members.

Precarity is a major problem in the University sector, with the majority of those teaching earning hourly rates as PTTAs, and as researchers with no security of tenure by design. These are already active campaigns within IFUT, and via the One Movement we all come together in Solidarity to fight this together. In this spirit, we support the precarity campaigns in OneGalway.

As part of the work against Precarious employment in Galway, the OneGalway movement has been campaigning for tips in the hospitality sector to go to staff as customers intend. We note that Private Members bill has been put before the Seanad, and we call on IFUT to support this, and the OneGalway and OneCork movements generally.

Proposer: NUIG Branch Committee

4 IFUT'S Membership Structure in Relation to Members in Precarious Employment

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This ADC calls for IFUT to consider its membership structure to reflect the current precarious nature of the job for members who are required to change institutions to remain employed. Specifically, it calls to make it as easy as possible for members who change institution to transfer their membership to the relevant branch and for those members who are temporarily unemployed to retain their membership.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

5 IFUT's Commitment to Precarious Workers

This ADC calls for IFUT to reaffirm its commitment to precarious workers, short-term contract workers, fixed and specific term and calls on universities to give pay restoration to hourly paid and precarious employees.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

6 Third-Level Boycott of the WRC Adjudication Process

Traditionally issues related to regularisation of individual staff contracts were dealt by adjudication at the WRC under the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act. Adjudication provides that the outcome of that process can be appealed to the Labour Court where the eventual decision becomes binding on both parties.

The Department of Education has now instructed university HR departments to refer such cases to conciliation at the WRC. This is on the basis that appeals to the Labour Court from this process are non-binding. The University Sector is now effectively boycotting the WRC adjudication process when dealing with precarious staff contracts which makes the entire process meaningless.

This ADC calls for IFUT to ensure that the WRC Adjudication process is accepted by the university HR departments as the appropriate mechanism to deal with individual industrial relations cases.

Proposer: Executive

7 Metricisation of the Higher Education Sector

This ADC calls on IFUT to fight the metricisation of the HE Sector in Ireland and to lobby to ensure that the practice of measuring faculty members' academic performance through simple metrics/performance indicators is not allowed to become embedded in the management practices of Irish universities. This ADC stresses the importance of recognising that academic careers are and should remain multi-faceted in nature and consequently impossible to quantify with simplistic measures.

Proposer: Executive

8 Funding of Higher Education

IFUT calls on government, political parties and other stakeholders to engage urgently with the recommendations of the Cassells report (*Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding Higher Education*. Report of the Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education, March 2016) in order to fully restore public funding to the Irish universities and ensure the continuation of higher education as a high quality public good, accessible to all, regardless of ability to pay.

Proposer: UCC Branch Committee

9 IFUT Membership of Eurodoc

Conference notes that on April 3rd 2019 IFUT was voted in as the official representative of postdoctoral researchers in Ireland at the federation

Eurodoc is the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers. It is an international federation of 29 national organisations of PhD candidates, and more generally of young researchers from 28 countries of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

Eurodoc's objectives are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters of education, research, and professional development of their careers.
- To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and the standards of research activity in Europe.
- To promote the circulation of information on issues regarding young researchers; organize events, take part in debates and assist in the elaboration of policies about Higher Education and Research in Europe.
- To establish and promote co-operation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers within Europe.

Eurodoc are actively representing Early Career Researchers (ECRs) to UNESCO, the Directorate-General (DG) for Research and Innovation (RTD), Council of Europe, Expert Group (EG) for Education and Skills under Open Science (OS) at the EC, MEP Dan Nica who is responsible for drafting the legislation for HorizonEU (successor to H2020), EUA, the European Parliament, Nature Careers and various other stakeholder organisations.

Conference calls on members to engage with Eurodoc to help achieve common goals.

Proposer: TCD Branch Committee

10 Collective-Bargaining Rights for IFUT Members in DCU

That this ADC welcomes the recent agreement between IFUT and SIPTU that provides for the establishment of mechanisms which will vindicate the collective-bargaining rights of IFUT members at DCU. Further, ADC echoes the DCU Branch Committee in acknowledging the work of the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary, and the solidarity of colleagues in all IFUT branches, both of which were so vital to this achievement.

Proposer: DCU Branch Committee

Seconder: Sue Miller, Chairperson, DCU Branch Committee

11 Academic Freedom

This ADC notes the threats to academic freedom in Hungary under the government of Prime Minister Orbán. The ADC notes in particular the 2017 law which has seen the independent Central European University effectively forced out of Hungary, as well as the 2018 decree which gives the government powers to prevent universities from offering politically unpopular programmes. This ADC calls on the Hungarian government to uphold academic freedom as explicitly guaranteed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee

12 Grading - "Below the Bar"

This ADC calls for IFUT to campaign vigorously for Universities to scrap the "below the bar" grade for Lecturers/Assistant Professors, when it is used, as it is in UCD, to pay people performing the same role on different pay scales.

Proposer: UCD Branch Committee