

2 November 2017

University of Newcastle enterprise bargaining update

The fourth meeting of the Enterprise Bargaining teams was held on 25 October 2017.

Domestic violence leave

The university responded to the claims presented at the previous meeting, indicating it was not prepared to increase the leave period available to staff experiencing domestic violence situations. The university advised there was “no need” to increase the provision because no situation had come to its attention where the current provision had been insufficient. Management was unpersuaded there was no cost implication due to the fact it was unaware of anyone utilising the provision to date and did not accept our argument that it was important to demonstrate a real commitment to support staff experiencing these difficulties.

This clause remains unresolved.

Organisational change

A joint unions claim was presented for this clause, which incorporated requests to extend the consultation to stakeholders. This claim was refused by the university. A request was also made to extend or improve the consultation process. The university agreed to consider providing for a separate Q&A session a few days after the initial briefing session to allow staff to ask questions once they had had a proper opportunity to examine the proposal.

The CPSU ask for an addition to the clause to tighten the circumstances allowable as a one-person change process.

This request was due to a number of circumstances where we consider this provision has been misused. The university rejected this claim.

This clause remains unresolved.

Annual leave

After preliminary discussions at the previous meeting the university presented a clause to allow the cashing out of annual leave. It did not take on board any of the feedback given at the previous meeting by the bargaining reps. The university’s proposal would allow staff to cash in two weeks of their annual leave every year so long as they kept a balance of four weeks. The CPSU has a philosophical objection to the introduction of any provision which undermines the basic entitlement to time away from the workplace. The right to annual leave was a hard won battle fought by the union movement over a long period of time. We suggested restricting the provision to staff experiencing financial hardship.

The CPSU also flagged concerns regarding the current direction to take leave provisions, particularly in light of the recent announcement to increase the closedown this year to require 6 days of rec leave. We will table our proposed change for the next meeting.

This clause remains unresolved.

Incapacity

Some minor changes were agreed to this clause to fix an anomaly around referral to medical professionals.





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Next meeting

For discussion at the next meeting will be:

- » Paid parental leave
- » Indigenous clause – university response
- » LGBTI – university response
- » Responses to other outstanding issues.
- » Get involved

Please take the time to read through your current agreement and let us know where you see opportunities for improvement. You can ensure your comments are taken on board by raising them with your representatives. At the end of the negotiation you will be asked to vote on the package and we want that to be an informed and deliberate vote. Ask your colleagues to stand with you by joining the CPSU NSW today.

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Please note:

CPSU NSW members are also members of the Public Service Association of NSW. The PSA is the Associated Body for, and resources and manages, the CPSU NSW.

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