

University of Newcastle – Enterprise bargaining update

The 13th meeting of the Enterprise Bargaining teams was held on 18 April 2018.

Consultation

The previous meeting had spent some time considering a bundle of clauses based on Consultation, Professional Staff Consultative Committee, Representation, and Union Rights. These are all crucial to the implementation of the Agreement. Today we provided the university with a suite of clauses. The Fair Work Act contains a model clause on Consultation, including organisational change and change of hours/rosters, and we understand the Fair Work Commission expects to see that in our Agreement.

It is particularly important to the CPSU NSW that your delegates be recognised by the university as legitimate representatives of staff. In order to perform that function your delegates need to be resourced to act on your behalf, and you need the freedom to liaise with and brief your representatives. We put a number of initiatives up for consideration and are waiting on the university's responses.

There has been in recent months a strong campaign to raise the issue of Union Rights. We must be able to organise ourselves as a union of workers with democratic leadership through a workplace committee. The reality for most professional staff is that their work is time-bound and site-based and doesn't easily allow that interaction. We want that to change.

We want clearer access to promote the CPSU NSW to new staff during induction to ensure your colleagues are aware of the work the union does and encourage them to join you. You can also play your part in this by talking to new staff about the union. In earlier days we had a representative union committee of 20 that met monthly at lunch, and general union meetings that filled a lecture theatre; that is where we hope these initiatives will take us.

Career development opportunities

The unions support a claim to allow staff members to take on a fixed-term development opportunity without relinquishing their substantive ongoing position (which would need to be backfilled in their absence). Professional Staff are frequently keen to gain varied experience to broaden their employment base and this should be facilitated to the extent possible with the least detriment. The university will respond and may impose some restrictions on timing.

VSP moratorium

Discussion occurred on the current exclusion of two years from re-employment by the university where a severance has been paid to the person wishing to return. VSP is designed to provide income while out of work and gains an ATO concession, but in some circumstances it may be possible to repay in full or part in order to be re-employed at the university. The university is considering its position, particularly in regard to forced VSP.





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Coming discussions

Our next meeting will see a return at the university's request to Probation, Redeployment and Redundancy, Unsatisfactory Performance, Misconduct, and PRD; a full agenda.

Following that we expect to table a clause on HEW Classifications, and PAY will surely be up for a mention.

Become involved

Contact your bargaining representatives to discuss any concerns you have, and please feel free to request a workplace meeting. 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 by staff whose working lives are covered by the Agreement. Ask your colleagues to stand with you by joining CPSU NSW today.

<https://membership.psa.asn.au/Register>

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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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