

Edinburgh NAPIER UNIVERSITY BRANCH

AGM 2023 Minutes

Apologies – Sharon Nairn

1. Approval of the Minutes from AGM held 30 March 2022

No amendments; accepted as approved.

1. Secretary’s Report

Successful 2022 and 2023 dispute; through the branch’s clear position and standing firm on the need for a consolidated offer and equitable split, plus 35-hour week and 31 days annual leave parity for all – all achieved thanks to the efforts of members.

Grades 5-7 changed to 12-week notice period (HE standard practice) and Grade 4 four-week notice period protected by branch negotiation.

6 months backdated pay rise in March 2023 plus cash uplift distributed equitably to ensure everyone gets at least £1,250. Hours, annual leave, and notice periods to come in September 2023.

Local cases ongoing and policy reviews – branch stewards and committee all working hard and require support; please consider standing for the branch.

1. UNISON Update – Lorcan Mullen (Regional Organiser, Head of HE & FE)

Full parity of annual leave between professional services and academic staff is still to be achieved by the branch and will continue to be focus of negotiation.

Should take real pride that this branch – small in comparison to other Unison branches – took more industrial action in the past year than any other, leading the fight during this cost-of-living crisis.

Only 4 HE institutions out of 120 in the UK have a local consolidated deal with permanent changes like Napier (Glasgow, Bath Spa, Glasgow Caledonian).

Nationally, HE pay bargaining is hugely dysfunctional due to the UK-wide rather than Scottish local negotiations, and the running together of different academic years in negotiations, as well as English HE landscape.

Glasgow School of Art and Queen Margaret University to have action soon, with ballots likely for action to coincide with Freshers’ Week in other HE branches.

A new Unison organising team will be supporting Edinburgh Napier going forward, as Lorcan, Ruth and Adrian are being redeployed to support Unison members in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Derek led the branch and committee in thanking Lorcan and his team for their efforts and support over the past few years.

1. Treasurer’s Report

Significant expenditure due to strike action, with £106k income (£8.9k 2021), with expenditure of £124.8k (£1.6k 2021), leaving £18.8k deficit covered through accumulated funds, leaving total funds at year end at £28.3k.

Strike pay is covered by national Unison funding and rates determined by the NEC; under current circumstances any future strike action by the branch will continue to be supported by strike pay.

1. Branch Welfare Officer Report

Reminder to all members of the *There For You* funding and assistance – support for members beyond cash, including short holidays, funeral costs, and supporting purchase of white goods.

1. Election of Branch Committee
* Chair: Morag Cherry
* Secretary: Sharon Nairn
* Vice-Chair: Tori Spratt
* Treasurer: Stefan Lehneke
* Welfare Officer: Morag Cherry
* Health & Safety Officer: Jackie Graham / Stefan Lehneke
* Equalities Officer: Heather Armstrong
* Communications Officer: Kirsty Connell-Skinner
* Women’s Member Rep: Ella Taylor-Smith
* Stewards:

Henrietta Cameron; Georgina Jamieson; Tori Spratt; Derek Baird

1. Rule Change – Online Meetings

NEC granted dispensation for branches to hold AGMs and meetings online during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The rule change is to allow the branch the discretion to continue to host meetings online / hybrid as well as in-person, and to keep this under review.

This was discussed by branch members prior to a vote.

Votes for the status quo (physical meetings only) – no votes in favour

Unanimous support for rule change to enable physical, hybrid, and online meetings including AGMs.

1. Teams Site

SharePoint and Teams site set up for branch members with link issued to all members for use as a forum and communications tool.

The link will be circulated to branch members following the AGM.

1. JNCC – Items for Discussion

Now rescheduled from 8 March to 5 April 2023. Unison has two agenda items, currently scheduled is:

* Project VISION and hybrid working
* Staff workload, burnout, and inappropriate grade delegation

Please provide feedback to the committee to help finalise these papers.

1. Any Other Business

Concerns raised regarding online moderation of comments to Principal and SLT Question & Answer sessions; branch members should consider continuing to ask these questions and noting if these are responded to or not.

Members raised concerns about changes to job descriptions – to be followed up directly with relevant branch committee members.

1. Prize Draw

Lorcan drew the nomination forms and Paul Sim won the £50.

Meeting ended at 13:35