

**Resources and General Purposes Committee – 19th May 2025**

**Item 7 NCL College Registrar Update**

**This paper provides a summary of current and planned activity in the areas above to provide an update for the Resources and General Purposes Committee. Where the approval/ratification of the Committee is required, this is highlighted at the appropriate points.**

1. **NCL Strategy 2030**

An internal College wide consultation exercise has taken place over the last few months, which began with the Principal’s invitation to all staff to join him at strategy briefing drop-in sessions he was hosting at each of the three main campuses. These were later followed by further focus groups for staff suggestions and input which were coordinated by each of the campus leads. Additional engagement also took place with the trade unions, student representatives, Department Heads and a number of internal College committee members.

External engagement has been running concurrently involving the Lanarkshire Business Hub, NCL’s Honorary Appointees and Fellows and other key stakeholders such as the Chief Executive of North Lanarkshire Council, local MSPs and MPs, and representatives from NHS Lanarkshire.

The feedback has positive and extensive and builds upon the strategic pillars which were identified originally. The Executive Board is currently refining the proposals and illustrative projects with a view to seeking NCL Board members’ approval to the final Strategy 2030 document by no later than June 2025 and setting a formal launch date of 1st September 2025.

1. **Professional Services Review**

Phase 3 of the Professional Services Review is well underway and a summary is provided here.

ICT

Successful consultation has taken place for the ICT department, soon to be renamed as the IT department to reflect more common terminology. The team's work is vital as it underpins the college's ability to deliver high-quality education, facilitate effective communication and support operational efficiency.  The Review has taken into account the findings and recommendations of three important evaluations of the ICT service which have been undertaken recently:

* JISC Infrastructure Review
* Internal Audit conducted by WBG
* Barrier Networks Cyber Risk Technical Assessment

However, given the financial constraints on the College at this time, the additional staffing investment recommendations are challenging at this time and will therefore be revisited as a priority upon completion of the overall Professional Services Review.

External Funding & International Department

The External Funding & International Department is set to be renamed as Funding & International Development to reflect the team’s dual focus on securing external income and expanding the college’s international reach. As the funding landscape changes (eg the removal of EU funding and the introduction of more competitive, outcome-focused UK funding streams) the new structure refocuses the team around three broad priority areas:

* Funding Development
* International Development
* Project Delivery and Governance

To increase the team’s visibility and connection with departments across the College, it has also been proposed that a staffed base is established at Motherwell campus, complementing the current Coatbridge base. This will improve access, promote collaboration, and support the team’s refreshed identity.

The remaining Phase 3 and Phase 4 proposals around Estates, Finance, Catering, and Brand are at differing stages of development and consultation. The review is on target to be completed by the end of this academic year.

# **College Employers Scotland (CES)**

A meeting was held on 14th May 2025, where the following was discussed:

**3.1 National Recognition and Procedure Agreement**

The current National Recognition and Procedures Agreement (NRPA) has been in place between colleges and trade unions since approximately May 2015. UNISON and Unite formally communicated to all signatories on 19th March 2025 of their intention to resign from the current NRPA, and requested negotiations commence to complete a sole Support Staff NRPA. The other signatories to the NRPA, the EIS-FELA and the GMB, have expressed their opposition to the resignations of UNISON and Unite, and have stated that the current NRPA can continue to operate regardless of these resignations. The CES Team’s view, supported by legal advisers, is that the current NRPA cannot continue to operate for the GMB in the absence of UNISON and Unite.

At an extraordinary meeting with employers on 16th April, it was agreed that CES should:

* develop a new NRPA to take to the support staff trade unions to formally negotiate terms.
* aim to work towards a six-month notice period as requested by the trade unions, with the expectation that in real terms it could take nine to twelve months to develop a revised NRPA and finalise signatories.

GMB has subsequently requested to be part of the negotiations on the new support staff only NRPA, however the GMB has not yet formally resigned from the current NRPA.

No dates for formal negotiations have yet been arranged with the support staff trade unions.

At a meeting on 29th April, CES informed the EIS-FELA that, although the current NRPA can still operate for them regardless of the resignations of UNISON and Unite, there remains a need for it to reform in line with the recommendations of the Lessons Learned review.

No dates for formal negotiations on reforming the current NRPA have yet been put forward to the EIS-FELA.

## **3.2 Support Staff Pay Claim**

UNISON and Unite submitted a pay claim on 11th February 2025, for 2025/26 and 2026/27, requesting a flat £2000 increase, an increase in the overtime ceiling, a no compulsory redundancy guarantee, and an increase to first aid and standby allowances. GMB confirmed that the claim did not include them, but did give verbal confirmation that it supports the claim.

Side Table (Support) meetings during the interim period have seen negotiations continue alongside informal discussions, centring around a potential multi-year deal, with both sides moving closer to achieving agreement.

**3.3 Job Evaluation (JE)**

***Ballots***

UNISON and Unite held member ballots clarifying the employer’s position in respect of Pay Harmonisation and Back-pay. These ballots asked their membership, in light of these clarifications, if they wish to continue with National JE, but with a recommendation to accept.

It has been confirmed verbally by CES that the results of both ballots indicate that the majority of their members wish the National Job Evaluation Project to proceed. GMB advised CES that their members have been clear that they do not think the current proposal on job evaluation is sufficient.

***Timeline***

A draft High-level Activity (Headline and sub-tasks) and Timeline for the completion of the JE Project has been drafted but requires further review and discussion at a joint employers’ and support staff working group. The joint working group will also discuss six key themes that have been identified in separate discussions with each side.

***College preparation***

Colleges have been asked to start preparatory work to map job history from 2018, ensure Job Descriptions and Organisation Charts are updated and confirm the number of roles to be evaluated. This information will also be used to develop the Business Case.

**3.4 Support Staff National Facilities Time (NFT)**

The Support Staff Secretary has submitted a new NFT request for Academic Year 2025/26 which provides an allocation of time for all support staff trade unions (UNISON, Unite and GMB) based on the current allocation of seats in the current National Recognition and Procedures Agreement.

The new request confirms the NFT request is for NJNC meetings only (excluding Job Evaluation). The new request is for a total of 780 hours per year (UNISON 468 hours, UNITE 156 hours and GMB 156 hours) which is the equivalent of four hours per week, term time only*.*

This request has been agreed by UNISON and Unite only. The request was initially shared with GMB, but no formal response was given at that time, although it is understood that the GMB has increased their demands for NFT with the Support Staff Secretary.

The proposed NFT requirement has been substantially reduced from 9,100 hours to 780 hours per year for support staff.

**3.5 CES Strategy**

A draft set of new Strategic Objectives, and related outcomes, for CES was shared with employers on 14th May 2025. CES is seeking feedback in order to present a final draft for discussion and agreement at a CES meeting later in 2025.

# **4. Joint Negotiating Committee Update**

## **4.1 JNC Academic**

A meeting of the JNC Academic was held on 29th April 2025. Discussion topics covered:

* Absence Management Guidelines
* Academic Calendar for AY 2025/26\*
* Motherwell Campus Car Parking Proposals\*
* PSED Report\*
* Evaluation of Learning & Teaching
* Strategy 2030
* GTCS Registration

The next meeting of the JNC Academic has been scheduled for 27th May 2025.

**4.2 JNC Professional Services**

A meeting of the JNC Professional Services was held on 30th April 2025. Discussion topics overlapped with those at the JNC Academic, which are highlighted with an asterisk\*. Separately, the focus at this meeting was on:

* Professional Service Review
* Holiday Pay
* Callout Protocols

The next meeting of the JNC Professional Services has yet to be scheduled.

1. **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Report**

NCL’s Public Sector Equality Duty Report was successfully published on our website in time for the deadline on 30th April 2025. [​Mainstreaming Equality Outcomes 2025–2029 | New College Lanarkshire - New College Lanarkshire | New College Lanarkshire](https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/mainstreaming-equality-outcomes-2025-2029-public-sector-equality-duty-report-2025-2029/) A pdf version is also available to download.

# **Employment Tribunal Update**

There are six claimants in total and the claims remain sisted. However, discussions with UNISON are underway to find resolution.

Elaine Turkington

**College Registrar**

May 2025