



Meeting of the Human Resources Committee

**to be held on
Wednesday 04 March
2026 at 1300hrs via MS
Teams**

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the Human Resources Committee of North East Scotland College on Wednesday 04 March 2026 at 1:00pm via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Agenda Item		Paper
13-25	Apologies for Absence	
14-25	Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items	
15-25	Minute of Previous Meeting – 06/10/25	X
16-25	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting	X
17-25	Introduction Lindsey Hamilton Head of HR (Verbal Update)	
	Reserved Matters for Decision	
18-25	Strategic Risk Register (+ Presentation)	X
	Matters for Decision	
19-25	Equal Pay Statement and Policy (Annual Review)	X
20-25	Enhancing Committee Oversight of Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy	X
21-25	Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy KPI's	X
	Matters for Discussion	
22-25	People Services Enhancement Plan Update	X
23-25	HR Committee Evaluation	X
	Reserved Matters for Information	
24-25	Job Evaluation and National Bargaining (Verbal Update)	
	Matters for Information	
25-25	Revised National Recognition and Procedures Agreement	X
26-25	Payroll Audit (Verbal Update)	
27-25	Any Other Business	
28-25	Summation of Action and Date of Next Meeting The HR Committee will next meet on Tuesday 19 May 2026.	



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTE OF MEETING

DRAFT Minute of the Meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on Monday 06 October 2025 at 1400 hours via Microsoft Teams.

Agenda Item	<p>Present: Leona McDermid – Chair Jim Gifford – Vice Chair Susan Elston Neil Cowie Cindy Dempster Duncan Cockburn Emma Maclsaac</p> <p>In attendance: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal - People Services Lorna Doyle, Learning & Development Business Partner (for Agenda Item 09-25) Gwen Watt, Head of Student Support and Engagement (for Agenda Item 09-25) Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board Karen Fraser, Minute Secretary</p>
01-25	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were received in advance from G Lawrie.</p>
02-25	<p>Declaration of any Potential Conflicts of Interest in relation to any Agenda Items No declarations were shared.</p>
03-25	<p>Minute of Previous Meeting – May 2024 The Minute was approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
04-25	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Members noted that of the 5 matters arising, 4 had been addressed and were marked as completed and 1 was recorded as being in hand. Clarity was provided by K Donnelly regarding NI savings and pension impact.</p> <p>K Donnelly advised that she is no longer a member of the National Fair Working Group.</p>
	<p>Matters for Decision</p>
05-25	<p>Committee Terms of Reference The Draft Terms of Reference were presented for annual review. The receipt of regular updates on National Collective Bargaining and LJNC meetings was queried. The former was confirmed as being a standing item on Committee Agendas. A lack of local LJNC representation and the operational content of current LJNC meeting discussions were highlighted. It was agreed the ToR final two items under 1.3 would be amended.</p>

	<p>Decision = ToR approved as presented, subject to an alteration to the wording of the last 2 bullet points listed under 1.3 Remit. Action: Board Secretary to amend.</p>
06-25	<p>Committee Programme of Business AY2025/26 The Draft Programme of Business was presented for consideration. It was suggested that a Job Evaluation Update is added to each meeting Agenda as a For Information item. Decision = PoB accepted as presented, recognising that it can be added to or amended as circumstances dictate. Action: Board Secretary to include.</p>
	Matters for Discussion
07-25	<p>People Services Management Information (Annual Report) The Report was presented to provide Members with information regarding staff turnover, absence, and employee wellbeing and engagement during the period January – December 2024. Members noted progress with moving forward, but extraction of data using the Zellis payroll system remains challenging.</p> <p>Concerning the statistics on mental health-related conditions being the leading cause of absence, the availability of other benchmarking data was queried. In response, K Donnelly pinpointed work being undertaken by a group of HR professionals. Action: If available for the 04/02/26 Meeting, a sector wide Report will be shared For Information.</p> <p>The relevance of the statistic on the average number of days lost per employee was considered. K Donnelly noted that its' suitability has been debated by data collection analysts and welcomed alternative suggestions. Work on absence monitoring and intervention was confirmed as ongoing.</p> <p>The tables relating to leavers, their length of service and their reasons for departure (p.6) were raised. K Donnelly confirmed that any trends are being looking into. N Cowie reiterated a higher degree of focus on succession planning than ever undertaken previously will take place in the upcoming year.</p>
08-25	<p>People Services Enhancement Plan Update Members were directed to the Enhancement Plan Updates on the 8 strategic areas for AY2024/25 and for AY2025/26.</p> <p>It was noted that a previous recommendation to make the RAG ratings clearer had been applied, and a connection with the new Sub-Strategies was recognised. Explanations were provided in relation to each of the amber updates.</p> <p>In discussion, the lean headcount was addressed. N Cowie acknowledged the concern this may pose in key areas to deliver the College's ambitions over the next five years, with less people undertaking more work at every tier of the organisation.</p> <p>Recognising work-related stress and anxiety and associated absence, K Donnelly advised of a greater openness around mental health and a focus on keeping individuals in employment.</p> <p>A suggestion was put forward regarding clearly identifying the type of Reports required from PowerBI in advance of connectivity with the HR system being</p>

	<p>achieved. A decline in confidence with and failings in the contracted deliverables from Zellis were noted, monitoring of this was recommended.</p> <p>Regarding Area 5, K Donnelly confirmed compliance has been achieved owing to NESCol having key Policies in place.</p> <p>Regarding Area 8, it was confirmed that the Students' Association will now meet with members of SLT – as opposed to with members of ET only – on 4 occasions per AY.</p>
	Guest attendees G Watt and L Doyle joined the meeting at 2:46pm
09-25	<p>Equalities and Wellbeing Committee Update (Presentation) plus People Services Equalities Action Plan (G Watt/L Doyle)</p> <p>Via PowerPoint presentation, updates from the E&W Committee were summarised by G Watt.</p> <p>Discussion was invited and spotlighted the wellbeing of staff who are at the forefront of dealing with presented issues related to the 4 selected equality outcomes. G Watt confirmed that NESCol is well placed to offer support to impacted staff.</p> <p>In response to queries centred on men's mental health and on closing the mental health attainment gap, G Watt clarified that raising an awareness of support avenues is key.</p> <p>K Donnelly highlighted a period of transition for the E&W Committee, and recognised a need to clarify that it remains fit for purpose, in addition to identifying how People Services and Student Experience can work together more collaboratively.</p> <p>L Doyle proceeded to introduce People Services' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and highlighted a more streamlined approach to previous versions.</p> <p>Provided feedback identified a desire to remain focused on female progression, and in discussion, the timeline associated with the Action Plan was confirmed as running until 2027.</p>
	Guest attendees G Watt and L Doyle left the meeting at 3:20pm
	Matters for Information
10-25	Job Evaluation and National Bargaining (verbal update)
11-25	<p>Any Other Business Committee Function</p> <p>L McDermid gauged opinion on conversations held at recent 1:1 Meetings regarding the role of the HR Committee and the possibility of enhancing its decision-making and accountability. It was clarified that no rapid changes are being proposed, but rather a chance to consider its forward direction and it being fit for purpose.</p>

	<p>In response, the opportunity to tie-in with the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy and to augment the responsibility of the Committee was welcomed.</p> <p>The question as to whether the Committee should review the impact on staffing following any structural and VS changes was raised. It was confirmed that when these revisions are proposed, they are brought to the Committee for discussion.</p> <p>The appropriateness of reviewing all of the Regional Board Committees and to reflect upon their having a clear line of sight to the Sub-Strategies was mooted. Action: K Donnelly / L McDermid to continue discussion in Nov 2025.</p>
12-25	<p>Summation of Action and Date of Next Meeting A summation of actions was provided by S Lawrance.</p> <p>The HR Committee is next due to meet on Wednesday 04 February 2026.</p>
	Meeting ended at 3:36pm

Actions from the Human Resources Committee Meeting – 06 October 2025			
Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility of	Deadline
05-25/26	1.3 Remit: wording of the last 2 bullet points is to be amended	Board Secretary	ASAP
06-25/26	Programme of Business: Job Evaluation to be added as a standing item to Meeting Agendas	Board Secretary	ASAP
07-25/26	Benchmarking Absence Data: if available, to be shared for information at 04/02/26 Meeting	K Donnelly	04/02/26
10-25/26	National Bargaining:		
11-25/26	Committee Function: arrange a meeting with Committee Chair in Nov 2025 to continue discussion	K Donnelly	30/11/25

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

An update on matters arising from the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 06/10/25.

Agenda Item	
05-25	Action: 1.3 Remit: wording of the last 2 bullet points is to be amended.
	Status: Ongoing. Terms of Reference due to be reviewed ahead of May 2026 Committee.
06-25	Action: Programme of Business: Job Evaluation to be added as a standing item to Meeting Agendas.
	Status: Complete and on Agenda.
07-25	Action: Benchmarking Absence Data: if available, to be shared for information at next Meeting.
	Status: Ongoing. All information provided nationally but awaiting report.
10-25	Action: National Bargaining:
	Status:
11-25	Action: Committee Function: arrange a meeting with Committee Chair in Nov 2025 to continue discussion.
	Status: Complete and on Agenda.



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: Equal Pay Statement & Policy	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To enable the HR Committee to review and approve the Equal Pay Statement & Policy.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
2. Empowering People	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s) There are currently no risks on the College risk register which relate directly to this report.	
Executive Summary:	
<p>The College's Equal Pay Statement & Policy (Appendix 1) states that North East Scotland College is committed to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value for all employees. The College believes that staff should receive equal pay for work that is rated as the same, similar, equivalent, or of equal value, regardless of age; disability; ethnicity/race; gender reassignment; marital or civil partnership status; pregnancy or maternity; religion or belief (including no religion or belief); sex; or sexual orientation.</p> <p>No changes have been made to the Equal Pay Statement & Policy since it was presented to the HR Committee last year. As there have been no amendments to the policy, consultation with Trade Union representatives was not required.</p>	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee review and approve the Equal Pay Statement & Policy	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): The Equal Pay Statement & Policy is review annually by the HR Committee.	
Equality Impact Assessment:	

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence: This Equal Pay Statement and Policy commits the Colleges to equal pay practices.



EQUAL PAY STATEMENT & POLICY

Version Date: January 2024

Review Date: January 2028

Introduction

North East Scotland College (the "College") is committed to the principle of equal pay for doing 'equal work' (work that equal pay law classes as the same, similar, equivalent or of equal value) for all its employees.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the College may amend it at any time.

Equal Pay Statement

North East Scotland College is committed to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value for all its employees. The College believes that staff should receive equal pay for work that is rated as the same, similar, equivalent or of equal value regardless of: age; disability; ethnicity/race; gender reassignment; marital/civil partnership status; pregnancy; religion or belief (including no religion or belief); sex (gender); sexual orientation.

Legislative Framework and Definitions

The law relating to equal pay is governed by the Equality Act 2010.

For Support Staff, the College has implemented a transparent pay and grading system and uses the FEDRA job evaluation system (specifically designed for the FE and HE sectors) to ensure that our grading and pay outcomes are equitable and free from bias:

- "Work rated as equivalent" is defined as work which has achieved the same/or similar number of points under the College job evaluation scheme.
- "Work of equivalent value" is defined as work which is not similar but is broadly of equal value under headings such as skills and decision-making when compared using an agreed job evaluation scheme.

Lecturing Staff pay and grades are determined by National Bargaining.

Objectives and Values

To ensure a fair system of pay, the College works in partnership with recognised staff representatives and consults with the Local Joint Negotiating Committees. In addition, the College has signed the National Recognition and Procedures Agreement and as such will abide by the outcome of National Collective Bargaining.

The College's objectives relating to equal pay are to:

- Eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay
- Operate fair and just remuneration practices for staff, across all protected characteristics
- Take appropriate remedial action should the need arise
- Review other College policies to ensure consistency with equal pay principles

To achieve these objectives the College will:

- Determine staff salaries through agreed national mechanisms
- Determine pay through National Bargaining
- Work in consultation with the Local Joint Negotiating Committee
- Provide training and guidance for staff involved in determining pay
- Inform staff of how these practices work and how their own pay is determined
- Respond to grievances on equal pay
- Monitor pay statistics and gather other relevant information to assess the impact of this Policy
- Ensure that any differential in pay is due to a "material factor" such as, skills and qualifications, and levels of responsibility
- Publish information on the gender pay gap in the College and on occupational segregation (in relation to gender, disability and race/ethnicity)

Complaints

The College commits to responding promptly to any grievances or complaints on Equal Pay.

Responsibilities

The College's Senior Management and Board have a responsibility to promote an ethos and culture that reflects the commitments in this statement and policy.

Monitoring and Review

This Equal Pay Statement and Policy will be reviewed and monitored by the Assistant Principal of People Services to ensure that it remains effective.

Status:		Summary of changes
Approved by:	Executive Team January 2021 HR Committee April 2021	2025 – no changes to 2024 version, job titles updated. 2026 – no changes to the 2025 version.
Date of version:	January 2024	
Date of Consultation:	February 2021 (EIS & UNISON)	
Responsibility for Policy:	Assistant Principal of People Services	
Responsibility for Review:	Assistant Principal of People Services	
Review date:	January 2028	
DPIA date:	May 2022	
EIA date:	May 2022	

DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA)

<p>1. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to use personal data in any way? (Use may refer to collecting and gathering; storing electronically; storing by paper; sharing with other parties (internal or external to college); use of images as well as written information; retaining and archiving; or erasing, deleting and destroying)</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>2. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to use special category personal data in any way? (Special category data is data about: race; ethnic origin; politics; religion; trade union membership; genetics; biometrics (where used for ID purposes); health; sex life; or sexual orientation)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>3. Does the activity that this policy or procedure relates to involve the use of social media or a third-party system?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

If the answer is 'yes' to one or more of the above questions, the Data Protection Officer must be consulted.

<p>Date of DPO consultation:</p>	<p>03/05/2022</p>
<p>Description of outcome and actions required (if any):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity of Job Evaluation to be added to the People Services Register of Processing Activity (RoPA) • DPIA to be concluded for HR system 	
<p>DPIA screening/full DPIA required:</p>	<p>No –see above</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSEMENT (EIA)

Part 1. Background Information

Title of Policy:	Equal Pay Policy
Person Responsible:	Assistant Principal of People Services
Date of Assessment:	May 2022
What are the aims of the Policy?	Please refer to the introduction, equal pay statement and objectives detailed in the Equal Pay Policy
Who will this Policy impact upon?	This policy will impact on all staff, in that it aims to eliminate bias from the pay that staff receive

Part 2. Public Sector Equality Duty Comparison

(Consider the proposed action against each element of the PSED and describe potential impact, which may be positive, neutral or negative. Provide details of evidence.)

Need	Impact	Evidence
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Policy applies to all staff, in that it aims to eliminate bias from pay and promote equality of opportunity between all staff. The policy applies to staff who may be on maternity/paternity/shared parental leave or on sick leave. There is no age limit that applies to this policy All information is on the Intranet – arrangements need to be in place for staff unable to use these mediums –e.g. visually impaired. 	Consulted with LJNC.
Advancing Equality of Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Policy applies to all staff, in that it aims to eliminate bias from pay and promote equality of 	Consulted with LJNC.

EQUAL PAY STATEMENT & POLICY

	<p>opportunity between all staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy applies to staff who may be on maternity/paternity/shared parental leave or on sick leave. There is no age limit that applies to this policy 	
Promoting good relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Policy applies to all staff in that it aims to eliminate bias from pay and promote equality. This allows for all employees to gain equal pay for their work which promotes a respectful relationship between the college and its employees. 	Consulted with LJNC.

Part 3. Action & Outcome (Following initial assessment, describe any action that will be taken to address impact detected)

People Services will monitor both the data and process to ensure compliance with this policy.

Assistance will be given by People Services and Management for any reasonable adjustments which may be required in applying this Policy

With regards to equal pay, some consideration may need to be given to comparators for non-binary staff or to staff who consider themselves not to have a gender. Further data will need to be analysed to determine whether this may be an issue.

Sign-off *	
Name:	Elaine Reid
Position:	Senior HR Business Partner
Date of original EIA:	June 2016
Date EIA last reviewed:	May 2022

**Please note that an electronic sign-off is sufficient*



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: Enhancing Committee Oversight of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To seek the HR Committee's approval for proposed enhancements to its remit, including updated Terms of Reference and a revised Committee name, to strengthen governance of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy and related workstreams.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s) 2.1, 2.2, 6.1,6.2	
Executive Summary:	
<p>The College's Strategic Plan 2025-30 is underpinned by six sub-strategies, each co-owned by members of the Strategic Leadership Team. As part of strengthening governance arrangements for the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy - co-led by the Assistant Principal for Partnership & Communications and myself - this paper, alongside agenda item 21-25, proposes enhancements to the remit of the HR Committee to ensure robust and effective oversight of strategy delivery.</p> <p>To better align People Services activity with workforce priorities and internal communications, it is recommended that the HR Committee's remit be expanded to include reporting from the Assistant Principal Partnership & Communications. This enhancement will provide clearer visibility of workstreams that directly support the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy and enable more integrated oversight of culture, communications, organisational development, colleague engagement, and wellbeing.</p> <p>The proposed changes will strengthen the Committee's governance role and provide a more coherent view of progress toward the College's ambition to be a progressive employer and workplace of choice. Subject to the Committee's agreement, the revised remit will be submitted to the Regional Board for approval.</p>	

It is further proposed that the Terms of Reference for the Committee be updated for Academic Year 2026/27 and brought back to the HR Committee meeting in May, and -if agreed - presented to the Regional Board in June 2026. To reflect the broader scope of responsibilities, it is also proposed that the Committee be renamed the People and Partnerships Committee.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the HR Committee:

1. Approve the proposed updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference for Academic Year 2026/27 and agree that the revised Terms of Reference be returned to the Committee in May 2026 for final consideration; and
2. Recommend to the Regional Board (June 2026 meeting) that the updated Terms of Reference be approved; and
3. Approve the proposal to rename the Committee as the People and Partnerships Committee to reflect its broader remit.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval: NA

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence: This report is for information only.



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy KPI's	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To provide the HR Committee with the proposed framework for monitoring progress against the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy, including the key performance indicators that will support ongoing oversight.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
4. Delivering Excellence and Innovation	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s) 2.1, 2.2, 6.1,6.2	
<p>Executive Summary: The College has recently launched its Strategic Plan 2025–30, supported by six sub-strategies jointly owned by members of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). A detailed report outlining the governance and monitoring arrangements for the Strategic Plan and its sub-strategies will be presented at the next Regional Board meeting.</p> <p>In advance of this, and in my capacity as co-lead for the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy (Appendix 1) alongside Paul Smith, Assistant Principal – Planning & Communications, this paper provides an update to the Committee on the work already underway within relevant teams. It also proposes a framework through which the Committee can provide oversight, challenge, and guidance on the delivery of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy.</p> <p>The People Services teams have begun mapping the data currently available (Appendix 2), identifying additional data requirements, and outlining further actions necessary to support robust monitoring of the KPIs set out within the Sub-Strategy.</p> <p>It is proposed that the HR Committee receives an annual report summarising progress against the KPIs, key objectives, and the overarching ambition of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy – <i>'to be a progressive employer and workplace of choice - one that leads with fairness, flexibility, and support. We are committed to</i></p>	

empowering colleagues through trust, transparency, and open communication. By fostering an inclusive and caring workplace where every individual feels valued and motivated, we aim to deliver an exceptional experience for our students'.

To support this, the People Services Annual Report, presented each autumn, will be enhanced to fulfil the reporting requirements for the Sub-Strategy. This, alongside the regular updates provided through the People Services Enhancement Plan and People Services Team reports, will ensure the Committee has clear visibility and assurance regarding delivery of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy and relevant elements of other supporting strategies.

Recommendation: The HR Committee is asked to review and approve the proposed framework for overseeing and monitoring the delivery of the Our Colleagues Sub-Strategy.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval: NA

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence: This report is for information only.



**BRINGING
LEARNING
TO LIFE**



Strategic Plan

2025-2030



Sub-strategy: Our Colleagues



Our Ambition

Our ambition is to be a progressive employer and workplace of choice – one that leads with fairness, flexibility, and support. We are committed to empowering colleagues through trust, transparency, and open communication. By fostering an inclusive and caring workplace where every individual feels valued and motivated, we aim to deliver an exceptional experience for our students.

Linked to strategic objectives 1.1, 1.3, 5.1, 5.2 (see table in main strategic plan document).



Key Objectives

- 1.** To attract and retain talent by recruiting high-calibre candidates from diverse backgrounds. The ambition is to increase the size and quality of applicant pool for posts at all levels within the organisation and to provide existing employees with a platform to thrive.
- 2.** To enhance the employee experience and engagement by fostering a positive, inclusive and motivating work environment. Staff will be encouraged to co-design the workplace community and culture as well as being offered opportunities to actively shape and influence the strategic direction of services.
- 3.** To support meaningful learning and development through the provision of planned learning, training and career development. Meeting the aspirations of the organisation and individuals, the goal is to build transferable skills which help to future-proof the College and underpin succession planning.
- 4.** To enhance performance and productivity by aligning individual and team objectives with the College's overarching strategic objectives. Colleagues are central to the institution's success and effective performance management and targeted development is key to the evolution of NESCol's positive organisational culture.
- 5.** To enhance leadership, communication and culture by embedding a values-driven culture of trust through strong leadership and clear, transparent communication which encourages conversation and enables the voices of all employees to be heard. Modelling effective leadership behaviours at every level, being visible and committed to embodying the values outlined in our strategic plan, will provide the foundation for success.



What does success look like?

By 2030 we will have:



DELIVERED NEW INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT



MAINTAINED A STAFF ABSENCE OF LESS THAN 3.5% PER YEAR



Increased the diversity of the workforce at all levels

ESTABLISHED EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION MEASUREMENT MECHANISMS, DEMONSTRATING INCREASING LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT, SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYEE NET PROMOTER SCORE



Increased staff participation in wellbeing activities



DELIVERED A 12% INCREASE IN AVERAGE SHORTLISTED APPLICATIONS PER POST



INCREASED THE PROPORTION OF APPOINTMENTS OF INTERNAL SUCCESSORS FROM 46% IN 2024 TO 50%

REDUCED THE 'TIME TO HIRE' AND 'COST TO HIRE'

REDUCED STAFF TURNOVER FROM APPROXIMATELY 11% IN 2024 TO 7%

EARNED RECOGNITION AS A REGIONAL FAIR WORK EMPLOYER (LINKED WITH LOIP 2026-2036 TARGETS)

How will we achieve this?

Attract and retain talent

- **Enhancing recruitment activity and processes** – We will attract, engage, and retain a diverse and high-performing workforce by promoting the College as an employer of choice and demonstrating the inclusive culture at the heart of NESCol.
- **Building benefits for our colleagues** – We will expand and refine the employee benefits package and effectively promote that offer to potential candidates and existing staff.
- **Enhancing onboarding and induction processes** – We will ensure outstanding recruitment and onboarding processes that are efficient, transparent, and inclusive are central to the College's development.



Enhance the employee experience and engagement

- **Providing staff with a safe and open ways to communicate with senior leaders** – We will open up additional channels and ensure the communication loop is closed effectively, by providing clear and concise follow-up information and updates on actions.
- **Establishing an effective approach to employee feedback and co-design** – We will promote the unique perspectives of our staff body and ensures that all staff can influence positive change and strategic developments.
- **Enhancing the work environment by expanding progressive employment practices** – We will strive to improve work-life balance, recognise achievements of team members, support effective leadership at all levels of the organisation and foster employee engagement.



Support meaningful learning and development

- **Creating an environment where learning is encouraged and valued** – We will be committed to providing innovative, personalised, and accessible learning experiences to equip staff for success in an evolving workplace environment by.
- **Undertaking ongoing workforce planning** – We will identify the skills the College needs now and over the next five years and develop programmes and opportunities to address any identified skills gaps and deficits.
- **Ensuring digital skills development initiatives are aligned** – We will bring together the strategic objectives of the College and the changing digital landscape through innovative learning and development opportunities for staff, which will be personalised and technology-driven.



Enhance performance and productivity

- **Using data-driven insights** – We will guide strategic decisions, improve processes and deliver measurable outcomes through the use of business intelligence and analytics.
- **Promoting the employee perspective in process review and self-evaluation** – We will ensure optimal efficiency and productivity in all refreshed and redesigned College services by harnessing the experiences and expertise of staff.
- **Building capacity for managers** – We will be consistent in the use of appraisal and development conversations.



Enhance leadership, communication and culture

- **Strengthening communication and leadership** – We will foster transparency, collaboration, and a co-designed culture of continuous improvement.
- **Implementing a review of internal communication and staff engagement** – We will appraise existing practices, considering best practice and implementing new approaches to strengthen effective two-way communication across the College.
- **Supporting managers to develop core skills** – We will facilitate formal management training and appropriately levelled leadership development, recognising the importance of a consistent approach and setting clear expectations of leadership behaviours.
- **Empowering individuals** – We will support each staff member to take ownership of personal and professional development, working in collaboration with managers to ensure skills are aligned to business need.



KPI	Base Line Yes/No	Actions Required to Report & Support	Responsibility	Review Period
Our Colleagues:				
Maintained a staff absence of less than 3.5% per year	Yes	Currently annual – Required to Report (RTR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on benchmarking. 2. Consider review & reporting periods. 3. Review of the Health and Attendance Policy. 4. Improved Management Reporting. 5. Implementing half day absence reporting. 	Lindsey & HR	To be determined
Increased the diversity of the workforce at all levels	Yes	Report annually and bi-annually in the Mainstreaming Report – RTR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jill to update as part of succession planning data and equities data. 2. Recruitment Project 	L&D and HR	Annually / bi-annually
Established employee satisfaction measurement mechanisms, demonstrating increasing levels of engagement, satisfaction and employee Net Promoter Score	Yes	Employee Voice Survey – RTR Other Surveys – for example Visible Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet the Principal – make more use of data received? 2. Recruitment Project including exit interviews 	TBC	Bi - annually
Increased staff participation in wellbeing activities	Yes	Numbers attending activities - RTR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at other measures including 2. Impact statements. 	TBC	Annually
Delivered a 12% in average shortlisted applications per post	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data needs to be collated 2. Action for the Recruitment project. 	HR	
Reduced the “time to Hire” and “cost to hire”	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baseline needs to be set. - RTR 2. Part of recruitment project. 	HR	
Earned recognition as a Regional Fair Work Employer	Yes	Currently annual – RTR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Areas for improvement from current position to be established. 2. Investigate the possibility of using FWE Self Evaluation Tool. 	All of People Services (KD lead)	Reviewed annually

February 26

1

Increased the proportion of appointments of internal successors from 46% in 2024 to 50%	Yes	Currently annual – RTR 1. Baseline needs to be reviewed 2. Include secondments; (increasing grades; chartered status/qualifications) 3. Will be part of the recruitment project 4. Data needs to be enhanced to include other measurements.	HR	Annual
Reduced staff turnover from approximately 11% to 7%	Yes	1. Data needs to be enhanced to include other measurements. 2. Part of recruitment the project.	HR	Annual
Digital Ambition:				
Annual progress reported across all five categories in the JISC Digital Elevation Tool with a goal of reaching “Elevate” level by 2030	Yes	Contribute to it each year in consultation with the Assistant Principal IT and Digital Services	KD and IH	Annual
Implemented a “Digital Competencies” staff training programme, with 100% of staff completing mandatory modules by 2030	Yes	1. SM agreed to change in measurement. 2. Repeat Digital Skills Check-in every two years for all staff. 3. Digital Skills Check – in completed by all new staff. 4. Reports to ITD-SG.	JL and IH	
Piloted AI-supported learning tools in multiple curriculum areas, with student engagement tracked	Yes	1. Provide regular updates on staff-related AI development.	LT	Twice year
Student Experience:				
To be discussed with ADP, JL and KD		TBC		



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: People Services AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 Enhancement Plan Update	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal – People Services	Contributor(s): People Services Teams
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To enable the HR Committee to consider and discuss the People Services Enhancement Plan Update for AY 2024-25 & 2025-26	
Linked to Strategic Theme: 1. Being Agile and Responsive	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s): 2.1	
Executive Summary: Appendix 1 is the People Services Enhancement Plan for AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 providing updates on the following 8 strategic areas that were identified in the AY 2024-25 & 2025-26 Our Evaluation outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Services Restructure • Develop a New People Strategy • Enhance access to and use of staff data in decision making • Develop a Learning Development and Learning Technology Strategy & Policy • Operational & Policy Reviews • Progress the People Services Equalities Action Plan • Sustainability • Students' Association 	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the HR Committee consider and note the information provided in this report.	

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval: It was agreed at the October 2024 HR Committee that the People Services Enhancement Plan should be for a period of 2 academic years. The Enhancement plan is updated at every HR Committee meeting and can be amended as required throughout the two years.

Equality Impact Assessment:

Positive Impact

Negative Impact

No Impact

Evidence:

This report is for information only.



Support Area Enhancement Plan Template AY 2024-26

Department/Team: People Services

Support Area AY 2024-26

SECTION 1 - ENHANCEMENT PLAN

In identifying the actions, it is important to **ensure that they address a specific area for improvement and are designed to positively impact on service delivery**. The actions should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound – and should seek to address any areas for improvement identified in commentaries

Please reference each Developmental Driver using the following coding:

Area for Improvement (from the self-evaluation) – Reference back to OurEvaluation (e.g. AI - 2)

Strategic Objective - Reference number from the [Strategic Plan](#) (e.g. SO1.1)

Supporting Strategy - Reference relevant [Supporting Strategies](#)

Reference to [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework](#) (e.g. TQEF3)

Reference risk from [Strategic Risk Register](#) (e.g. R2.1)

Reference the [Equality Outcomes](#) and/or Equality Enhancement Plan (EO)

You can add further areas for development as they arise; this enhancement plan should be continuously reviewed and augmented as required throughout the academic session. You are required however to formally evaluate progress and update the plan in **February** and final review between **July** and **September**. You should give a brief update of progress and evaluate your progress using the RAG status. The Director of Quality will review all updated enhancement plans as part of the college-wide quality assurance activity.

RAG Guidance

Green - colour the box green if the impact has been achieved or you are on target to achieve the desired impact.

Amber - colour the box amber if there is a chance you will not achieve the desired impact by June 2026.

Red - colour the box red if you feel there is a significant likelihood of not achieving the desired impact by June 2026.

Enhancement Plan Requirements

You **must** include at least one action for each of the **Equalities, Sustainability and Students' Association Partnership Agreement** themes in your enhancement plan and clearly link to areas for development recorded on OurEvaluation from AY2024-25 and AY2025-26

Support Area AY 2024-26

No.	Area for Development (Development Driver)	Impact (The intended difference to be made)	Action/s to be taken (Describe each activity you will undertake to have the desired impact)	By When & by Whom	Development Driver Code (e.g. AI1, E2, R1, TQEF3)
1	People Services Restructure	A full review of People Services will be undertaken in summer of 2025 to ensure that the services provided are aligned with the strategic objectives of the College.	1. The review will consider resources required and future succession planning. 2. The review will also consider how Learning & Development, Learning Technology and parts of the Quality team (the delivery of mandatory training) are structured to ensure that staff development is delivered in the most effective and efficient way.	August 2025: Assistant Principal – People Services.	SO 1, 5 People Services Strategy
<p>May 2025 Update: Additional resources have been approved for HR with a new HR Advisor being appointed and we are currently in the process of recruiting a Head of HR to lead the Payroll and HR teams. The wider service review will start in May 2025. Information gathering has started by having conversations with other colleges to learn more about how their Learning & Development and Learning Technology teams are structured.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update: A new Head of HR has been appointed. Lindsey Hamilton, currently at the University of Aberdeen, will be joining People Services before the end of December 2025. Potential restructuring options are being developed as part of a business case, which will first be reviewed by the Executive Team by the end of October 2025. This will be followed by broader discussions with stakeholders.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update: The People Services Review will work in tandem with the Vice Principal (Curriculum and Quality) and the Quality Team Review in relation to the Learning & Development and Learning Technologies teams. This will ensure that mandatory teaching qualifications, along with enhanced teaching and learning practices, are delivered in the most effective way. Both business cases will be going to ET on 10 March. It is intended that any structural changes will be implemented no later than August 2026</p>					

Support Area AY 2024-26

May 2026 Update:					
2	Develop a New People Strategy	A People Strategy aligned with the College’s Strategic Plan will support the College to attract, retain talent, and benefit employees. A strong people strategy fosters a work environment where employees feel engaged, supported, and motivated to perform at their best.	1. Contribute to the revision of the College’s Strategic Plan 2. Consult with People Services teams and stakeholders to develop a People Strategy aligned with the College’s Strategic Objectives.	August 2025; Assistant Principal – People Services.	Strategic Business Plan
May 2025 Update: A member of the Learning Technologies Team is on the College-wide group working on the new Strategic Plan and several members of People Services are on the working groups developing the supporting strategies. The Assistant Principal Marketing and Communications and the Assistant Principal People Services will facilitate the Strategic Plan Sub-Strategy Meeting: Our Colleagues on May 20, 2025.					
September 2025 Update: With the Strategic Plan and its associated sub-strategies — including Our Colleagues — now finalised, they will be submitted to the Board for approval on 30 September 2025. Following this, People Services will develop an operational plan that aligns with our strategic objectives and actively contributes to the Enhancement Plan as we move forward.					
February 2026 Update: This is complete with the launch of the College’s Strategic Plan 2025-30 and the six supporting sub-strategies.					
May 2026 Update:					
3	Enhance Access to and Use of Staff Data in Decision Making.	Data-driven decision making is essential for People Services, as it impacts every service and	1. Establish an API/Connector to and from the College’s HR Payroll	March 2025 - Aug 2026:	SO 4, 4.3, SO 4, 4.6, SO 4, 4.7, SO 4, 4.8

Support Area AY 2024-26

		<p>employee. People analytics helps clarify, identify, and guide actions across the College to achieve our strategic goals.</p>	<p>system to the College’s Power BI platform 2. Identify reporting required and the priorities of these being developed. 3. Actively use Power BI’s analytics tools to analyse the data, spot trends and provide the required management information to managers. Including KPIs such as turnover and absence. 4. Develop People Services team members in the use of Power BI and presenting the data in an informative and accessible way.</p>	<p>Assistant Principal – People Services; Senior HR Business Partner; People Services Teams.</p>	
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May 2025 Update:

Work is still ongoing to get the connectors that will enable data to transfer between the HR Payroll system and the College’s Power BI. The API connector has been established, however, there has been an issue with delays in updated data pulling across to the College systems in a consistent timeframe - when data is updated in Resourcelink there are often delays of up to 3-4 days in the updated pulling across to the College, it should happen instantly. Zellis have now confirmed that the issue is the result of a bug in the system. Last contact from Zellis was 22/04/2025 where they updated that their development team were now looking at getting the issue corrected. A further update on the progress of this will be provided to next HR Committee.

The Learning Technologies Team is also investigating the creation of additional PowerBI dashboards to extract more actionable data from Brightspace and make it available to curriculum teams.

Power BI training to be sourced and delivered to People Services team.

September 2025 Update:

The issue with data not pulling through consistently has been addressed in the latest R/L upgrade, implemented in mid-September. The problem now appears to be resolved, although we continue to monitor it for consistency.

Work on the Active Directory is still ongoing; however, progress has been delayed due to competing priorities and other issues. This will be picked up again as soon as possible.

Learning & Development will meet with the NESCol BI developer to discuss the training required for the team in preparation for HR/Payroll data becoming accessible within Power BI.

Support Area AY 2024-26

February 2026 Update:					
Little progress has been made since the September 2025 update. Meetings are now taking place with Procurement and relevant partners, including the Senior Contracts Manager at Zellis, to determine whether it is worthwhile investing further time before the contract is due for review in 2027. Progress from these discussions will be reported to the HR Committee in May.					
May 2026 Update:					
4	Develop a Learning Development and Learning Technology Strategy & Policy	A strong learning strategy improves employee skills and engagement, supporting the College's strategic objectives. Well-trained employees make better decisions, enhancing productivity and success.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Learning & Development & Learning Technology strategies, policies and procedures. 2. Support the implementation of the College's Digital Strategy. 3. Annual Programme of Business for L&D & LT. 4. Investigate areas to support income generation, exploring enhancement of distance-learning digital course materials and use of AI in education. 	December 2025 Learning Development Manager, Learning & Technologies Manger	SO 1, 1.1 SO2, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5,2.6 SO3, 3.8 SO4 People Services Strategy
May 2025 Update:					
<p>The Learning and Development Manager and Learning Technologies Manager met to discuss the team's programme of business for 2025. In April, a presentation was made to CQASS to outline plans for the Learning Technologies/Digital Futures Team in the coming months.</p> <p>A member of the Learning Technologies Team is trialling the paid AI tool, Microsoft Copilot, before a wider launch during 2025/26. Additionally, a pilot of the AI tool Teachermatic was completed in 2024/25, with a planned rollout during 2025/26. The team will create guidance for staff on how to maximize the benefits of these tools, highlighting their time-saving and efficiency features for daily tasks.</p> <p>The Learning Technologies Team will also participate in developing the College's Digital Strategy later in 2025. Furthermore, a Programme of Business for Learning Technologies is due to be created in 2025 and will be presented at the next HR Committee meeting.</p>					
September 2025 Update:					

Support Area AY 2024-26

Work will commence on the development of strategies, policies, and procedures for Learning Development and Learning Technologies. This will support the operationalisation of sub-strategic plans and align with the formalisation of the People Services structure.

A proposal will be presented to the Strategic Leadership Team in October 2025 to distribute a Digital Capabilities Self-Assessment Survey to all staff. The aim is to establish a benchmark of digital competency across the College—at institutional, team, and individual levels—enabling a strategically led programme of digital development to be implemented.

Subject to the outcomes of the departmental review, a separate Learning and Development programme of business or a new team-specific programme of business will be enhanced to support the College’s strategic objectives.

Progress continues on the rollout of Copilot Pro (initially 100 licences) and Teachermatic (also 100 licences). Work is also underway to assess the functionality of the free version of Copilot, which may be suitable for many staff. This could reduce the overall number of Pro licences required.

The Learning and Development and Learning Technologies team were honoured to receive the L&D Impact Award at the Charity Learning Consortium Scottish Awards Ceremony, held during their bi-annual conference. The award recognised the team’s contributions to enhancing induction and onboarding processes for new employees.

Significant progress has been made on the actions identified; however, the EBS/Brightspace data issues placed considerable pressure on the Learning Technology Team. The team was responsible for identifying and resolving issues. Much of the work involved investigating discrepancies, removing incorrect enrolments, recoding and recreating courses, and deleting obsolete course shells.

While the most critical fixes have now been completed, the process of cleaning up courses and enrolments remains ongoing. Rarely does a day pass without at least one team member working through spreadsheets to trace and address outstanding issues. This has diverted attention from planned activities and delayed the MyNESCol course reviews, which were intended to be completed early to allow teaching staff sufficient time to enhance their courses before transferring them into new shells.

The disruption also impacted course development timelines, resulting in missed deadlines with both the AI group and the Learning Lounge—although these have since been recovered. Additionally, the team now conducts daily manual checks to verify the accuracy of data feeds from the new system, a task that was not previously required.

February 2026 Update:

The progression of the Learning and Development Policy and Strategy has been impacted by the launch of the College’s Strategic Plan 2025-30, the Service Structure Review, and staff on maternity leave. The aim is still to have a Policy and Framework drafted for August 2026.

The Digital Discovery Check-In closed in December, with 532 responses received - equating to a 92.5% completion rate. The remaining 7.5% is accounted for by colleagues on long-term sick or maternity leave, as well as those without access to a digital device.

Headlines from the Digital Discovery Check-In:

Support Area AY 2024-26

- NESCol staff excel in: cyber resilience; digital communication; finding and organising digital content; IT literacy and digital productivity.
- NESCol staff perform well in: working with data; online collaboration; digital innovation.
- NESCol staff require further support in: digital wellbeing; supporting students with digital accessibility.

Data analysis at team level is underway. Two teams have been selected to pilot a new approach to working with Learning Technologies and Learning Development, focusing on how team-level reports are presented and what targeted learning interventions should be introduced following engagement with team managers.

Whole-college learning interventions were included in the Winter Development Day programme on 10 February, with sessions covering digital wellbeing, digital accessibility, and student progress tracking. These areas were identified as the lowest-confidence topics across the College. A total of 218 staff attended these sessions.

The rollout and promotion of Teachermatic has continued. As of 18 February 2026, 72 licences have been allocated, with 58 actively in use. The College has purchased 100 licences in total, and further promotion and training will take place during Block 2 to raise awareness and increase uptake.

The team also launched Respondus LockDown Browser in August 2025 and is continuing to raise awareness across curriculum teams of how this tool can support the delivery of secure online assessments.

Amy Wilson (Digital Learning Advisor) is currently seconded, until the end of June 2026, to the VocTech Ready to Return project for 3 days per week. This project will create an online course for adult returners covering Building your Support Network & Student Life; Study Skills; Digital Skills; Financing Your Way Through College; Planning your Pathway and a visit to the College. This has been in development since November 2025, and the project is now working with a group of students to pilot the course before the full launch later in 2026.

This has been developed with these external partners: Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, DYW (Developing the Young Workforce), SDS (Skills Development Scotland), SWAP (Scottish Wider Access Programme) East, the University of Aberdeen, and Robert Gordon University.

The course will help adult returners demonstrate improved confidence and readiness for further study, supported through structured learning activities delivered via MyNESCol Brightspace.

May 2026 Update

Support Area AY 2024-26

5	Operational & Policy Reviews	<p>These reviews will focus on three operational areas: Harassment/Grievance, Health & Attendance, and Recruitment. The goal is to ensure that the related policies, procedures, and practices are compliant, proactive, and suitable for their intended purpose.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the College is compliant with the new employment law legislation around harassment. 2. Review our grievance procedures to ensure support for all parties. 3. Professional development for the HR Team on supporting grievances. 4. Review our recruitment practices, including (but not limited to) incorporating actions identified from our equalities reporting. 5. Complete review of the College’s Health and Attendance Policy ensuring it is meeting staff and management requirements, and supports wellbeing and business delivery. 6. Management training to be enhanced for all three operational areas. 	<p>July 2026: Assistant Principal – People Services; HR Team; L&D Manager.</p>	<p>Our Evaluation - AI R2.1, R6.1</p>
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May 2025 Update:
 The newly recruited HR Advisor, starting in June 2025, will take the lead in ensuring our HR policies are up-to-date and compliant. Recruitment training for managers is being developed for rollout in 2025-26.
 Grievance training for the HR team was conducted by employment lawyers to ensure the advice provided to managers is both legally compliant and fit for purpose.

Support Area AY 2024-26

<p>September 2025 Update: Due to unforeseen staff absences and the retirement of a Senior HR Business Partner, progress on these actions has been limited since the May 2025 update. These actions will be a key priority for the incoming Head of HR to advance in early 2026.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update: Management learning opportunities will continue throughout 2025–26, with training for all managers focused on supporting neurodiverse colleagues. Inclusive Practices in the Workplace will be delivered by the Donaldson Trust to 60 managers over two days (16 and 17 April). This will be followed in May and June by Coaching Skills for Managers sessions delivered by CDN, with 34 managers nominated to participate.</p> <p>While good progress has been made in this area, it is unlikely that all actions outlined above will be completed by August 2026. Policy development and management remains a priority for the team, and this work is expected to be carried forward into the next Enhancement Plan.</p>					
<p>May 2026 Update:</p>					
6	Progress the People Services Equalities Action Plan	Ensuring People Services support and enable the College to embed equalities and demonstrate best practice.	1. Take forward findings and recommendations from recent equalities reports and the equalities survey.	July 2026: All People Services Teams.	SO 2 EO 1, 2, 3, 4 R 2.1, 2.3 People Services Strategy
<p>May 2025 Update: New People Services Equality Working Group being formed to lead on projects such as inclusive recruitment and take forward the actions identified in the Mainstreaming reports.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update: The former Recruitment Working Group has been reinstated under the refreshed title People Services Equalities Working Group, with an expanded remit to support the delivery of the Equalities Action Plan. Much of the Action Plan involves longer-term research and project-based work, which is now underway.</p> <p>An update on progress relating to staff equalities will be presented to the HR Committee of the Board in early October.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update: A presentation outlining the work of the Equalities and Wellbeing Committee, along with the People Services Equalities Action Plan, was provided to the HR Committee in October 2025. Going forward, it is proposed that Lindsey Hamilton, Head of HR, will co-chair the Equalities & Wellbeing Committee. As a result of this, and in light of the Service Structure Review, the ownership, development, delivery, and monitoring of the People Services Equalities Action Plan will be reviewed.</p>					

Support Area AY 2024-26

May 2026 Update:					
7	Sustainability	As a sustainable employer, we are committed to ensuring the College’s activities foster equality, build stronger communities, and improve the wellbeing of both staff and students, now and in the future.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to embed wellbeing into the College’s management culture. 2. Take a proactive and supportive approach to staff absence with an aim of reducing absence levels as a whole, but focusing on reducing absences due to work-related stress. 3. Progress the Employee Voice Group into the next phase. Take forward ideas to improve employee engagement from the staff survey. Prepare for the next Staff Engagement survey that will take place again in late 2025. 4. Continue to enhance and provide support for staff in relation to financial wellbeing. 	July 2026: L&D Manager; Senior HR Business Partners.	SO 2, 5.8 R 2.1 Wellbeing Strategy
<p>May 2025 Update:</p> <p>Employee Voice group meeting regularly, currently looking at the topic of visible leadership.</p> <p>Pension information session being held in June to support staff’s financial wellbeing.</p> <p>A proactive approach is being taken in managing staff sickness absence. The HR Advisor – Wellbeing is working closely with line managers in managing absence and taking a proactive approach by using the stress risk assessment proactively to keep staff in work instead of reactively once they have been off.</p> <p>Various new staff benefits including smart pay and refurbished technology have been introduced to help staff with financial wellbeing. We are also in the process of introducing a salary sacrifice scheme for staff to buy electric cars.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update: The first meeting of the Employee Voice Working Group for 2025/26 took place on 17 September 2025, with strong attendance and active engagement from members. The group is continuing its previous work on gathering employee feedback and fostering a positive workplace culture for the benefit of all staff.</p>					

Support Area AY 2024-26

Themes emerging from the Visible Leadership Survey were discussed, and moving forward, we will collaborate with both the Strategic Leadership Team and the Employee Voice Group to identify and implement appropriate actions.

The group also discussed plans for a new Staff Engagement Survey, scheduled for release in late 2025 or early 2026. Proposals for this survey will be presented to the Strategic Leadership Team in October.

Section 3 – *Empowering, Engaging & Wellbeing* – of the People Services Annual Report outlines the initiatives and actions undertaken throughout 2024. An update covering the first part of 2025 will be provided at the next HR Committee meeting.

We have seen a slight reduction in the number of days lost to absence from 2023 to 2024, both overall and specifically due to stress. However, further work is needed to proactively support managers and staff in reducing absence levels. To assist with this, a member of the People Services Team has arranged to attend management meetings—such as the Curriculum Managers Forum—to provide advice and support on managing absence within teams.

February 2026 Update

The Employee Voice Survey was co-created with the Employee Voice Group and launched in December 2025. With a prize draw included as an incentive, expectations were high for improved engagement. A total of 371 responses were received, up from 212 in 2023. This represents a 63.4% response rate, an increase from 36.2%.

Response rates by location:

- Aberdeen City: 64%
- Altens: 85%
- Fraserburgh: 56%
- SMA: 42%

An overview report was shared with all staff in early February. A more detailed analysis will be completed and shared with SLT, the Employee Voice Group, and wider staff once the full data set has been reviewed. SLT and the Employee Voice Group will work together to identify actions in response to the emerging themes.

The full analysis will be presented to the Executive Team in March 2026, with the final report scheduled for submission to the HR Committee in May 2026.

May 2026 Update:

8	Students' Association		1. Ensure that the Students' Association is involved in college-	July 2026: All People Services Teams.
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Support Area AY 2024-26

			<p>wide consultations proposing significant changes.</p> <p>2.A greater commitment to joint staff-and-students events.</p>		
<p>May 2025 Update:</p> <p>People Services are proactively working to involve the Students' Association in college-wide consultations. Recently, the Students' Association participated in a consultation regarding the toilets on the ground and lower ground floors of the Tower Block at Aberdeen City Campus.</p>					
<p>September 2025 Update:</p> <p>The Assistant Principal People Services, along with other members of the Strategic Leadership Team, will attend regular meetings with both the Student Association and the Executive Team. This engagement will enable People Services to explore opportunities for closer collaboration with the Student Association, ensuring that the student voice is meaningfully reflected in our work.</p> <p>The Learning & Development team recently participated in research examining how the student voice is incorporated into staff training. This prompted valuable reflection on how this aspect of the TQEF (Teaching Quality Enhancement Framework) is embedded within the People Team. The Learning & Development Manager will liaise with the CDN Professional Development Network to explore how TQEF is approached within their institution.</p>					
<p>February 2026 Update:</p> <p>Jill Leishman, L&D Manager and Laura Young, Quality Enhancement Manager are attending a sparqs session entitled: Embedding Student Partnership in Staff Development on 10th March 2026. Jill and Laura are meeting after the session to discuss next steps.</p>					
<p>May 2026 Update:</p>					

HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: Committee Evaluation Feedback	
Author: Susan Lawrance, Secretary to the Board	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item: For Decision <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved Item of Business <input type="checkbox"/>	
Purpose: To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider Members' feedback relating to the Committee's performance.	
Linked to Strategic Goal:	
Linked to Annual Priority:	
Executive Summary: Attached as Appendix 1 is feedback submitted by Committee Members on the performance of the Committee. The feedback was gathered through the use of an online anonymous questionnaire.	
Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee discuss the information provided and agree if any actions are required to strengthen the performance of the Committee.	
Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval (if applicable): None	
Equality Impact Assessment: Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidence:	

Responses Overview

Active

Responses

3



Average Time

06:52



Duration

79

Days



1. How satisfied are you with the meeting arrangements in supporting the Committee's effectiveness and remit?

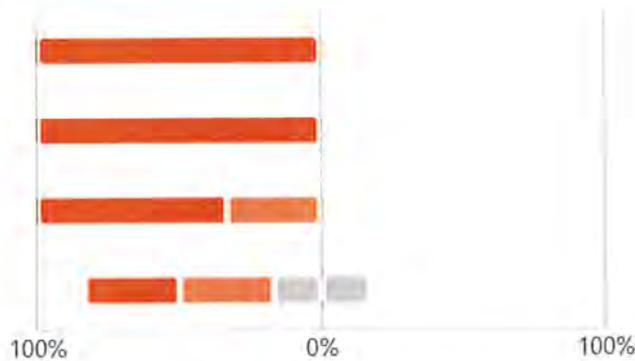
- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Frequency

Timing

Structure

Agenda items



2. Please share any comments or suggestions regarding meeting arrangements or proposed agenda items, including any items you may wish considered by Committee going forward.

2 Responses

Latest Responses

"Many reports are effectively operational - not sure what a..."

"with the new strategy in place and staffing structure there..."

3. How satisfied are you with the support and information provided to the Committee by the Executive team and others?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Well presented

Thorough & inclusive

Appropriate strategic level



4. Please share any comments or suggestions to improve support or information provided.

2 Responses

Latest Responses

- "As above, do some of these reports have to come to com..."
- "The reports and updates demonstrate the scope of work ..."

5. Do you agree that Committee Members are fully engaged, ensuring thorough discussion and constructive challenge of agenda items?

- Strongly Agree 3
- Agree 0
- Disagree 0



100%

6. Please share any suggestions to encourage further engagement among Committee Members.

2
Responses

Latest Responses

"Committee works well"

"Where appropriate members ask questions and seek to cl..."

7. Do you agree that the collective skills, knowledge, and experience of Committee Members enable effective governance?

- Strongly Agree 3
- Agree 0
- Disagree 0



8. Please comment on the Committee Members' collective skills, knowledge, and experience.

2
Responses

Latest Responses

"Mix of experiences seems to work well"

"There is a good mix of skills and experiences on the HR c... "

9. Reflecting on your own skills and experience, how do you contribute to the Committee's work, and how could this be enhanced?

2
Responses

Latest Responses

"Access to appropriate on-line CPD would be useful"

"Not sure at present, may become clearer once review of ... "

10. Do you have any additional feedback or suggestions to help improve the Committee's overall effectiveness?

1
Responses

Latest Responses
"Nothing at present"

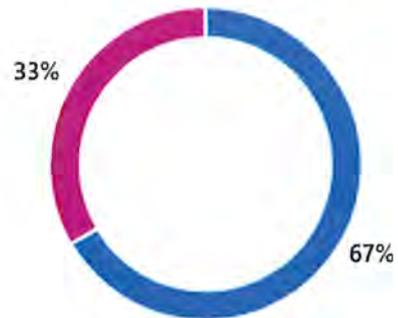
11. Do you agree that the Chair provides strong leadership, supporting the College's strategic ambitions?

● Strongly Agree	3
● Agree	0
● Disagree	0

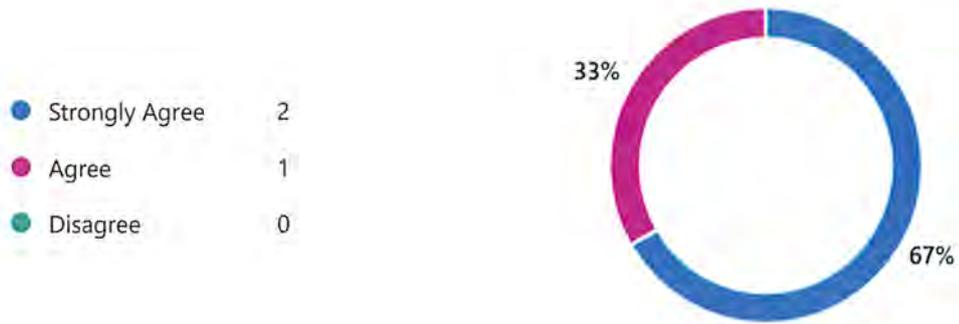


12. Do you agree the Chair communicates effectively, encouraging equal participation and constructive challenge?

● Strongly Agree	2
● Agree	1
● Disagree	0



13. Do you agree the Chair allows sufficient time for informed debate and clear decision-making?



14. Please share any additional comments on the Committee Chair's performance.

1
Responses

Latest Responses
"Committee is well run and works well"

HR Committee Annual Evaluation Survey – AY2024/25

Additional Comments

Qstn 2: Please share any comments or suggestions regarding meeting arrangements or proposed agenda items, including any items you may wish considered by Committee going forward.

- with the new strategy in place and staffing structure there is room to review the role and content of the committee to align effectively.
- Many reports are effectively operational - not sure what added value discussions at committee brings

Qstn 4: Please share any comments or suggestions to improve support or information provided.

- The reports and updates demonstrate the scope of work and reports provide an informed reflection of the work completed
- As above, do some of these reports have to come to committee?

Qstn 6: Please share any suggestions to encourage further engagement among Committee Members.

- Where appropriate members ask questions and seek to clarify effectively.
- Committee works well

Qstn 8: Please comment on the Committee Members' collective skills, knowledge and experience.

- There is a good mix of skills and experiences on the HR committee, this will need to be factored into any review of the function and scope of the committee.
- Mix of experiences seems to work well

Qstn 9: Reflecting on your own skills and experience, how do you contribute to the Committee's work, and how could this be enhanced?

- Not sure at present, may become clearer once review of HR Committee completed.
- Access to appropriate on-line CPD would be useful

Qstn 10: Do you have any additional feedback or suggestions to help improve the Committee's overall effectiveness?

- Nothing at present

Qstn 14: Please share any additional comments on the Committee Chair's performance.

- Committee is well run and works well

Thank you to Committee Members who completed the survey



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE	
Meeting of 04 March 2026	
Title: Revised National Recognitions and Procedures Agreement	
Author: Kimra Donnelly, Assistant Principal People Services	Contributor(s):
Type of Agenda Item:	
For Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reserved Item of Business	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purpose: To enable the HR Committee to review and consider the revised National Recognitions and Procedures Agreement.	
Linked to Strategic Theme:	
3. Advancing Partnership Working	
Linked to Strategic Risk(s) 2.2	
<p>In January 2025, the College Employers Scotland (CES) Team met with the recognised trade unions (EIS-FELA, UNISON, Unite and GMB) to review the National Recognition and Procedures Agreement (NRPA) (Appendix 1) as part of the Lessons Learned exercise led by the Minister for Further Education at the time. During this period, UNISON and Unite signalled their intention to resign from the NRPA (March 2025), prompting a wider review that could have resulted in separate agreements. However, a mutually acceptable position was ultimately reached, enabling the NRPA to be revised without any party withdrawing.</p> <p>The outcome of this reform work is a revised NRPA (Appendix 2), fully supported by all trade unions. The updated agreement establishes two distinct bargaining groups: Lecturing Staff and Professional Services Staff (previously Support Staff). Each group now has a standalone agreement within the revised NRPA. The former Central Committee has been removed.</p> <p>The revised NRPA also addresses key findings from the Strathesk Lessons Learned Report, particularly around behaviours and protocols. It now incorporates a commitment for all parties to operate in line with the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland and Fair Work principles, providing a constructive foundation for future negotiations.</p> <p>Summary of General Key Changes</p>	

- A revised and more clearly defined Glossary.
- Updated Introduction and Purpose, incorporating Fair Work and a shared commitment to student success.
- Inclusion of the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland.
- Integration of the NRPA Protocols (previously separate).
- Inclusion of the Joint Secretaries Referrals Protocol.
- Removal of the Central Committee, eliminating the need for joint sub-committees and reducing delays historically caused by this structure.
- “Side tables” are now referred to as committees.

Lecturing Staff – National Negotiating Committee (NNC-LS)

- Disputes process renamed Avoidance of Industrial Action Procedure.
- Link included to the EIS-FELA Facilities Time Agreement.

Professional Services Staff (formerly Support Staff)– National Negotiating Committee (NNC-PSS)

- Definition of single table bargaining included, confirming joint recognition of participating trade unions.
- UNISON remains the majority trade union with three seats.
- Notice period reduced from 12 to 6 months, with flexibility for jointly agreed variations.
- Disputes process simplified and now includes a formal Failure to Agree stage.
- Link to the Facilities Time Agreement added, with reference to an agreed annual schedule.

CES has confirmed that the revisions do not constitute a new agreement but a refinement of the existing NRPA developed jointly with trade unions. As the changes do not alter employer obligations, colleges are not impacted.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report.

Previous Committee Recommendation/Approval: NA

Equality Impact Assessment:

- Positive Impact**
- Negative Impact**
- No Impact**

Evidence: This report is for information only.

Recognition and Procedures Agreement Between

Scottish FE Colleges

And

The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), General Municipal & Boilermakers Union (GMB,) UNISON and UNITE the Union.

1 Introduction

In this agreement the following terms have the meanings assigned to them

Colleges	The colleges that are signatories to this Agreement; Argyll College, Ayrshire College, Borders College, City of Glasgow College, Dumfries and Galloway College, Dundee and Angus College, Edinburgh College, Fife College, Forth Valley College, Glasgow Clyde College, Glasgow Kelvin College, Inverness College, Lews Castle College, Moray College, New College Lanarkshire, Newbattle Abbey College, North East Scotland College, North Highland College, Orkney College, Perth College, Sabhal Mor Ostaig College, Shetland College, South Lanarkshire College, West College Scotland, West Lothian College, and West Highland College
Boards of Management	The governing bodies of the Colleges.
Defined Staff	Staff employed by the Colleges that are currently employed on contracts of employment negotiated through collective bargaining.
Unions	The Trade Unions recognised at some or all of the Colleges that are party to this Agreement are the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), General Municipal and Boilermakers Union (GMB), UNISON and UNITE.
Staff Side	The representatives appointed by the Unions that are authorised to negotiate with the Management Side on behalf of Defined staff.
Management Side	The representatives appointed by the Colleges that are authorised to negotiated with the Staff Side on behalf of the Colleges.
NJNC	National Joint Negotiating Committee – College Staff established by the NBDG Agreement (12.12.2013) and

	consisting of a standing Central Committee and two standing Side Tables.
Joint Secretaries	The Staff Side Secretary and the Management Side Secretary
Consult	The exchange of relevant information and the joint consideration of issues at a formative stage in the process in which the Colleges make a decision.
Negotiate	The process by which the Colleges and the Unions establish agreed terms on issues such as pay and terms and conditions of employment. The responsibility for decision making is jointly held between the Colleges and the Unions. It is distinct from consultation where the responsibility for decision making remains with the Colleges.
National Collective Agreement	Any agreement or agreements reached through the procedures set out in this Agreement covering Defined Staff.
Agreed Terms and Conditions	The terms and conditions of service which the Management Side and the Staff Side agree are within the scope and agree to negotiate from time to time.

The spirit and intention of this Agreement is to promote good working relations throughout the College Sector, through the work of the NJNC. The Boards of Management and Unions acknowledge a common interest in advancing the educational aims of Colleges and in establishing terms and conditions of service for Defined Staff to further these aims.

This recognition and procedures agreement (the Agreement) shall not detract from the right of communication between Colleges, Colleges Scotland, the Management Side or the Boards of Management with their Defined Staff and staff generally, and between the Unions and their members.

The signatory parties to this Agreement acknowledge the importance of establishing and maintaining confidence in the arrangements voluntarily established under this agreement and recognise the need to negotiate in good faith.

2 The Purpose of NJNC-CS

All trades unions recognised in the college sector will be guaranteed a seat at the negotiating table with membership allocated on a proportionate basis. The Colleges (i.e. the incorporated Further Education Colleges in Scotland together with Argyll College, Newbattle Abbey College, Orkney College, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, West Highland College, and Shetland College) hereby recognise the following unions; the Educational Institute of Scotland, GMB, Unite and Unison as the sole representatives of all Staff by the Colleges.

This Agreement hereby confirms that the Colleges and Unions will negotiate the Agreed Terms and Conditions of Service of Defined Staff employed by the Colleges through the NJNC.

This Agreement sets out the procedures by which the NJNC through its Central Committee or Side Tables negotiates the Agreed Terms and Conditions of Service of Defined Staff employed by the Colleges.

This Agreement recognises that Colleges will consult with the Unions through the NJNC to develop national policy guidance for implementation locally appropriate to the needs of each particular college and may issue national policy advice and may share best practice for Colleges or local collective bargaining arrangements.

Any National Collective Agreement made by the NJNC applying to Defined Staff terms and conditions of service will be implemented from the date specified in the written agreement. Agreements will be signed by the Joint Secretaries.

Terms and conditions of service of Defined Staff issued or agreed by the NJNC, under this agreement take precedence over any locally agreed terms and conditions of service.

3 NJNC Structures and Procedures

The NJNC will have a standing Central Committee at which all common terms and conditions are discussed, and two standing Side Tables. The Central Committee or Side Tables may agree to form sub-committees or working groups to look at specific tasks or occupational specific tasks.

The Central Committee

The functions of the Central Committee of the NJNC will be:

- to discuss broad issues relating to pay policy
- to negotiate and decide on Agreed Conditions of Service matters common to Defined Staff across the sector other than where matters are assigned to the standing sub committees
- to advise on equalities issues common to all employees across the sector
- to agree on matters which are best delegated to sub-committees which are unique to a particular occupational group
- to discuss, review and where appropriate reach agreement on matters referred by sub-committees
- to agree short life, cross cutting and special interest sub-committees
- to conduct other matters, such as research or information gathering processes and procedures, as are mutually agreed between the parties to this Agreement
- issue advice on the interpretation of any National Collective Agreements reached on request by anybody represented by the signatories to this Agreement.

Composition of the Central Committee

The Central Committee shall have 22 members, 10 Management Side Members and 12 Staff Side Members. The Management Side Members shall be appointed by the Board of Colleges Scotland and the Staff Side shall be appointed by the Unions on the following basis:

EIS	7 Members	UNITE	1 Member
UNISON	3 Members	GMB	1 Member

Each Side shall appoint a Chair and Secretary. The NJNC secretariat will be provided from the Management Side. The Management Side Secretary, with the Staff Side Secretary, shall be responsible for all administrative and organisational arrangements to support the work of the NJNC.

Meetings of the Central Committee and Side Tables shall be held as and when requested by either Side. The joint secretaries will make the arrangements for meetings.

All notices and agendas for meetings of the Central Committee or Side Tables will be issued 5 working days in advance of the date of the meeting.

The Central Committee or Side Tables may from time to time appoint from among its own members sub-committee(s), to discharge such functions as they may specify. This may also include working parties or commissioning research to support the discharge of the NJNC's functions.

The Central Committee or Side Tables may, by agreement, also invite advisors to attend and speak at a meeting. Any such person appointed acquires no formal rights or status other than the grounds on which they were invited to attend.

Any Side may send substitutes from a pre-notified pool if their nominated representatives are unable to attend a NJNC meeting.

The quorum for meetings of the Central Committee shall be four members of each Side provided that at least two trade unions are present that represent not less than 50% of the sector trade union membership. On the Management Side this shall require one chair and one principal to be in attendance.

Decisions will be by consensus and require a majority of each side.

The Side Tables

Matters that are unique to a particular bargaining group will be dealt with by the Side Tables. Matters may also be referred to the Side Table(s) by agreement of the Central Table or by the Management Side, the Lecturing Staff Trade Union or the Support Staff Trade Unions collectively in the ways set out below:

Within the Staff Side, prior to any agreement, the Lecturing Staff trade union or collectively the Support Staff trade unions may initiate referral of any matter to the side tables for negotiation and settlement.

Prior to any agreement the Management Side may also initiate referral of any matter to the Side Tables for negotiation and settlement.

The quorum for meetings of the Side Tables will be three members of each side with one principal and one chair on the Managements Side in attendance.

Side Table - Lecturing Staff

5 Management Side members, 5 Staff Side members (EIS)

- Responsible within its bargaining group for
 - Salaries matters unique to the bargaining group
 - Agreed Terms and conditions of Service unique to the bargaining group
 - Pensions matters unique to the bargaining group
 - Matters assigned by agreement of the Central Table

Decisions will be by consensus and require a majority of each Side.

Each Side will appoint a Chair; overall Chair of the Side Table – Lecturing Staff will be by rotation. Each Side will appoint a Secretary, overall secretariat will be provided from the Management Side.

Side Table - Support Staff

5 Management Side members, 5 Staff Side members (3 UNISON, 1 UNITE, 1 GMB)

- Responsible within its bargaining group to negotiate and decide on
 - Salaries matters unique to the bargaining group
 - Agreed Terms and Conditions of service unique to the bargaining group
 - Pensions matters unique to the bargaining group
 - Matters assigned by agreement of the central table

Decisions will be by consensus and require a majority of each Side.

Each Side will appoint a Chair; overall Chair of the Side Table – Support Staff will be by rotation. Each Side will appoint a Secretary, overall secretariat will be provided from the Management Side.

4 Scope

The Colleges agree to negotiate with the Unions at the NJNC on the undernoted Contractual Terms and Conditions of employment applying to members of the Colleges' Defined Staff.

Pay

Working hours

Class contact hours

Sick pay

Annual Leave

Maternity Policy

Paternity Policy

Family Friendly Policies

Transfer to permanent status

Grievance and disciplinary Policies

Additional terms and conditions can be included as agreed by the NJNC.

The scope of this Agreement will be reviewed annually

The Colleges agree to consult with the Unions at the NJNC on other matters on national policy, and both Sides agree to provide guidance for implementation locally, appropriate to the needs of each particular college. The NJNC may issue national policy advice and may share best practice for Colleges or local collective bargaining arrangements.

5 Agreements Reached

National Collective Agreements reached by the Central Committee will be set out in writing by the Joint Secretaries on behalf of the Central Committee. Agreements reached by a Side Table will be set out in writing as Circulars by the Side Table's Joint Secretaries on behalf of the Side Table.

National Collective Agreements reached at the Central Committee or Side Tables will be binding on the Colleges and the Unions. The signatories of each of the parties hereto confirm that they have the authority to bind the party that they represent. This Agreement is binding in honour but not legally enforceable. However, any National Collective Agreement varying the terms and conditions of Defined Staff will be legally enforceable.

The Management Side Secretary will be available to provide advice to the Boards of Management of Colleges and the Staff Side Secretary will be available to advise the Unions, on matters relating to agreements, including National Collective Agreements Circulars, guidance, or any other outcomes from the Central Committee and the Side Tables. In formulating such advice the Joint Secretaries may consult each other as they determine appropriate.

6 Effective Date

This Agreement shall take effect as soon as it has been signed on behalf of the Colleges and on behalf of the Unions.

7 Variations and Notice of Withdrawal

No variations to this Agreement may be made except by agreement of all the signatory parties.

A signatory party may withdraw from this Agreement provided it shall give twelve months' notice of its intention to do so in writing to the other parties.

Both Sides agree to review this Agreement on an annual basis to ensure that it meets the needs of the parties and the Sector.

8 Expenses

Any external expenses of the NJNC and other relevant expenditure must be agreed by the Central Committee or Side Tables in advance, including how the cost is borne by the two Sides.

9 Disputes

In the event of a dispute arising concerning negotiation or agreements reached under these procedures, the Unions agree to seek resolution through the disputes procedure as agreed by the NJNC and attached as Appendix 1 to this Agreement. The Unions further agree to refrain from industrial action until the agreed dispute procedures have been exhausted; the Colleges agree to maintain the *status quo ante* until the agreed dispute procedures have been exhausted.

10 Facilities Time

Attendance and participation in the work of NJNC, including any preparatory work and dissemination of outputs, shall be regarded as a trade union duty with reasonable facilities time provided by the Colleges. This is separate to any time off granted for local trade union duties

Signed by:

The Educational Institute of Scotland

General Municipal & Boilermakers (GMB)

Unison

Unite the Union

Argyll College

Ayrshire College

Borders College

City of Glasgow College

Dumfries and Galloway College

Dundee and Angus College

Edinburgh College

Fife College

Forth Valley College

Glasgow Clyde College

Glasgow Kelvin College

Inverness College

Lewis Castle College

Moray College

New College Lanarkshire

Newbattle Abbey College

North East Scotland College

North Highland College

Orkney College

Perth College

Sabhal Mor Ostaig College

Shetland College

South Lanarkshire College

West College Scotland

West Highland College

West Lothian College

Appendix 1 Dispute Resolution Procedure

The Colleges and the Unions are committed to striving for agreed outcomes. If, exceptionally, these cannot be achieved, any party may invoke the following dispute procedure:

- Where it appears that all scope for progress through normal procedures has been exhausted, either the Colleges or any Union may give formal notice to all parties that it is applying this dispute resolution procedure;
- Following receipt of such notification the parties i.e. of the Central Committee or Side Tables will agree meeting dates within 5 working days for at least two meetings to seek to resolve the dispute. Unless agreed otherwise, these meetings will take place within the following 10 working days;
- The focus of these meetings will be on reaching a settlement of the issue(s) in dispute. Such settlement should also seek to include recommendations on how similar disputes might be avoided in the future;
- Further meetings beyond this initial period may take place where that is agreed between the two sides;
- If it has not been possible to resolve the dispute through this series of meetings, the parties will consider whether third-party assistance – normally using ACAS for mediation and conciliation – would be helpful. The matter in dispute may, with the agreement of the parties, be referred to ACAS for conciliation. A decision on this should be taken within 5 working days of the second meeting;
- Throughout the period for dispute resolution meetings, and for any agreed third-party assistance, the Colleges will maintain the *status quo ante* and the Unions will refrain from taking any form of industrial action until the procedure has been fully exhausted;
- Outcomes from any stage in the procedure will be communicated jointly.

The National Recognition and Procedures Agreement

for the

College Sector in Scotland

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1. Signatories

Lecturing Staff (Appendix 1):

This National Recognition and Procedures Agreement (NRPA) for Lecturing Staff (LS) (**Appendix 1**) is agreed by the **EIS-FELA** and the undernoted colleges:

Ayrshire College	Borders College
City of Glasgow College	Dumfries and Galloway College
Dundee and Angus College	Edinburgh College
Fife College	Forth Valley College
Glasgow Clyde College	Glasgow Kelvin College
UHI Argyll	UHI Inverness
UHI Moray	Newbattle Abbey College
New College Lanarkshire	North East Scotland College
UHI North, West and Hebrides	UHI Perth
UHI Shetland	South Lanarkshire College
West College Scotland	West Lothian College

Professional Services Staff (Appendix 2)

This National Recognition Agreement (NRA) for Professional Services Staff (PSS) (**Appendix 2**) is agreed by **UNISON, Unite the Union, the GMB** and the undernoted colleges:

Ayrshire College	Borders College
City of Glasgow College	Dumfries and Galloway College
Dundee and Angus College	Edinburgh College
Fife College	Forth Valley College
Glasgow Clyde College	Glasgow Kelvin College
UHI Argyll	UHI Inverness
UHI Moray	Newbattle Abbey College
New College Lanarkshire	North East Scotland College
UHI North, West and Hebrides	UHI Perth
South Lanarkshire College	West College Scotland
West Lothian College	

2. Glossary

In this Agreement, the following terms have the meanings assigned to them:

The National Recognition and Procedures Agreement for the College Sector in Scotland	The National Recognition and Procedures Agreement for the College Sector in Scotland is the overarching structure and procedures for the respective agreements for the Lecturing Staff (Appendix 1) and the Professional Services Staff (Appendix 2) .
Colleges	The Colleges who are the signatory parties to the Agreements for the Lecturing Staff (Appendix 1) and the Professional Services Staff (Appendix 2).
Boards of Management	The governing bodies of the Colleges.
College Employers Scotland (CES)	The representative body for the Colleges, for the purposes of National Bargaining.
Defined Staff	For the purposes of Appendix 1 , all Lecturing Staff (LS) directly employed by the Colleges who are engaged on terms and conditions which have been collectively agreed nationally with the Trade Unions.

	For the purposes of Appendix 2 , all Professional Services Staff (PSS) directly employed by the Colleges who are engaged on terms and conditions which have been collectively agreed nationally with the Trade Unions.
Trade Unions	The Trade Unions who are the signatory parties to, and recognised by these Agreements, namely the EIS-FELA (for Lecturing Staff – Appendix 1) and UNISON, Unite the Union and the GMB (for Professional Services Staff – Appendix 2).
Staff Representatives	The representatives delegated by the Trade Unions to negotiate with the Management Representatives on behalf of Defined Staff.
Management Representatives	The representatives who are appointed annually at the first meeting in the Academic Year by CES, and who are authorised to negotiate with the Staff Representatives on behalf of the Colleges.
National Negotiating Committee – LS	The NNC – LS is the combined body of Lecturing Staff Representatives and Management Representatives, acting jointly to provide the means of negotiations, and to further the work and outcomes of matters within the scope of the agreement.
National Negotiating Committee – PSS	The NNC – PSS is the combined body of Professional Services Staff Representatives and Management Representatives, acting jointly to provide the means of negotiations, and to further the work and outcomes of matters within the scope of the agreement.
Joint Secretaries	The Staff Secretary for the Lecturing Staff, the Staff Secretary for Professional Services Staff and the Management Secretary.
National Collective Agreements	Any agreements reached through the respective procedures set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, covering the Defined Staff.
Agreed Terms and Conditions	The nationally agreed Terms and Conditions of Service of Defined Staff, or subsequently as agreed through the NNC – LS and NNC – PSS.
The Agreements	The National Agreements set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for the College Sector in Scotland.
Consult	The exchange of relevant information and the joint consideration of issues at a formative stage in the process in which the Colleges make a decision.
Negotiate	The process by which the Colleges and the Unions establish agreed terms on issues such as pay and terms and conditions of employment. The responsibility for decision making is jointly held between the Colleges and the Unions. It is distinct from consultation where the responsibility for decision making remains with the Colleges.
Secretariat	The Secretariat function is provided by CES and supports the Joint Secretaries with administrative and organisational support for the NNC. The Secretariat also ensures the NNC website is updated regularly.

3. Introduction

The spirit and intention of the Agreements are to promote excellent joint working relations throughout the College Sector.

The **NRPA – LS (Appendix 1)** establishes the structure and procedures for the National Agreement pertaining to Lecturing Staff.

The **NRA – PSS (Appendix 2)** establishes the structure and procedures for the National Agreement pertaining to Professional Services Staff.

Both National Agreements will ensure that the Scottish Government's Fair Work Policy underpins its work, the policies and agreements reached.

The Colleges and their Boards of Management, along with the Trade Unions acknowledge a common interest in advancing the educational aims of the Colleges, the success of college students, and the furtherment of employment terms and conditions for its staff, through the agreed Terms and Conditions and working practices, to further these aims.

These Agreements shall not detract from the right of communication between College Employers Scotland (CES) and its members, individual Colleges and their staff, or between the Trade Unions and their members.

The signatory parties to the Agreement acknowledge the importance of establishing and maintaining confidence in the arrangements, voluntarily established under the Agreements and recognise the need to negotiate in good faith.

The Agreements are not legally enforceable but signing of the Agreements demonstrates a commitment by all parties to adhere to its terms.

The parties responsible for any amendments to **Appendix 1** are the EIS-FELA and the signatory colleges (represented by CES).

The parties responsible for any amendments to **Appendix 2** are UNISON, Unite the Union, the GMB and the signatory colleges (represented by CES).

Additionally, all parties agree to conduct their relationship, agreements and procedures in line with the 'Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland'.

4. The Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland

All involved in the structures, processes and procedures of the National Agreements, commit to operate under the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland (“the Principles”).

These Principles are outlined as follows:

1. **Selflessness**: Colleges are public bodies, so all parties to the National Agreements must bear in mind the public interest during their discussions.
2. **Integrity**: All individuals attending the committees of the National Agreements should avoid any outside interests that may seek to inappropriately influence them and their discussions. If any doubt, individuals should declare outside interests.
3. **Objectivity**: During negotiations, all individuals should seek to put across their points fairly and on merit, using evidence and avoiding any personal insults and/or anecdotal commentary.
4. **Accountability**: All individuals to the negotiations are accountable to their respective members, and it is accepted that negotiators (i.e. the Management and Staff Representatives) especially must submit themselves to the scrutiny of their members in order to ensure good governance.
5. **Openness**: Negotiations themselves should take place in an open and transparent manner, while respecting the confidentiality of discussions. Relevant information should not be withheld from the other parties unless there are clear reasons outlined for doing so.
6. **Honesty**: All individuals taking part in the negotiations should be truthful and not deliberately seek to mislead the other parties.
7. **Leadership**: All individuals taking part in the negotiations should exemplify the Principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the Principles during meetings and challenge poor behaviour if it occurs.
8. **Duty**: All individuals have a duty to uphold and act in accordance with the law and the broader public interest. Furthermore, all individuals have a duty not to bring the machinery of the National Agreements into disrepute.
9. **Respect**: All individuals must behave in a respectful manner to one another during meetings. This means contributions should be thoughtful, polite and considerate.

During any meetings, the Chair of the meeting has the authority to:

- Remind members of their obligations under the Principles.
- Point out any behaviour that they find contradictory to the Principles.
- As a last resort, close or suspend the meeting if any behaviours contradictory to the Principles persists.

5. The National Recognition and Procedures Agreements Protocols

a) Arranging Meetings

- Meetings for each staff group shall be arranged through the respective Joint Secretaries.
- Meeting dates will be agreed with the Staff Side Secretaries and the Management Representatives via the Secretariat.

b) Agenda

- Agenda items should normally be presented by the Joint Secretaries to the Secretariat in writing no later than **eight** working days before the meeting.
- The Secretariat will draft and issue the agenda to the Joint Secretaries for agreement.
- Where appropriate, agenda items should have accompanying papers, unless agreed by the Joint Secretaries (and agreement should not be unduly withheld).
- The agenda and papers will be issued **five** working days in advance of each meeting.
- There should be no papers tabled on the day of meetings, unless agreed by the Joint Secretaries.

c) Papers

All papers provided for discussion by the Joint Secretaries shall be clearly marked/classified as set out below:

- **CONFIDENTIAL/RESTRICTED** – not for circulation/distribution beyond nominated attendees.
- **CONFIDENTIAL/LIMITED** – for sharing, as appropriate, with Trade Union and College Employers Scotland members only but still under confidential cover.

If the paper is not marked, it is suitable for general distribution/reporting.

d) Record of Meetings

- Minutes of meetings will be prepared by the Secretariat.
- Draft minutes will normally be circulated to the respective Joint Secretaries no later than **10** working days after each meeting and will have the status CONFIDENTIAL/LIMITED.
- The draft minute, once agreed by the Joint Secretaries, will be formally presented to the next meeting for formal agreement.
- The Secretariat will then arrange for the agreed minute to be added to the National Negotiating Committee website.
- Any joint matters agreed for communication from the minutes will be clearly identified which might include joint position statements, which will be agreed in advance of release through the Joint Secretaries.

e) Conduct of Meetings

- Each meeting shall appoint a Chair – the role of chairing each meeting shall rotate, unless otherwise agreed.
- The quorum for meetings shall set out within the respective agreement.

6. The Joint Secretaries Referrals Protocol

All Circulars and National Agreements contain a clause which advises that any queries or points of clarification (Referrals) should be directed to the Joint Secretaries in the first instance.

For LS Agreements and Circulars, these would be the Lecturing Staff Secretary and Management Secretary.

For PSS Agreements and Circulars, these would be the PSS Staff Secretary and Management Secretary.

Overall administrative support for the Joint Secretary Referrals is provided by the CES Secretariat.

All LS Referrals should be submitted to the Management Secretary and LS Staff Secretary at the same time.

All PSS Referrals should be submitted to the Management Secretary and PSS Staff Secretary at the same time.

Referrals should be sent to both Joint Secretaries simultaneously, copying in College Employers Scotland – ces@collegeemployersscotland.ac.uk for secretarial purposes. Where only one Secretary receives a Referral, this should be forwarded to the other respective Secretary. All Referrals will be acknowledged by the CES Secretariat. Both Staff Side Secretaries should have knowledge of all outstanding Referrals.

Referrals should come from the recognised trade union branch(es) or authorised college management representatives only, and preferably as a joint Referral. Individuals cannot make Referrals. Any initial queries from staff members should be routed through their own college HR department and/or trade union, in the first instance. Referrals from trade unions and/or colleges should normally only be made after local procedures have been exhausted. Where there is a failure to deal with matters timeously at a local level, authority may be sought from the Joint Secretaries to refer the matter without exhausting local procedures. Authorisation will not be unreasonably withheld.

To assist with the effective and efficient process of Referrals, any Referral should contain the following information:

- Detail on the nature of the Referral, including the Circular and/or National Agreements that the originating party/parties believe may have been breached or require clarification.
- A summary of the processes/procedures used at a local college level that have been exhausted, including any proposed resolutions and the final positions of both sides before the “failure to agree”.
- Confirmation of whether both parties related to the Referral are aware that there has been a Referral, so the Secretaries can ascertain the views of both sides in any request for clarification.

Where a Referral is received from only one party, they will be advised the Referral will be shared with the other party. The other party will be asked for their submission and/or comments on the Referral.

Consideration of Referrals by the Secretaries will be undertaken based on the evidence submitted in relation to the relevant Circular/Agreement. The Secretaries can ask for further information from either or both parties if required. Any subsequent information received will be shared with both parties to the Referral.

The NNC Secretaries Referral outcome is binding on all parties. If the Joint Secretaries fail to reach an agreement on a Referral outcome, then the Joint Secretaries will decide whether the Referral should be discussed at either the NNC – LS or NNC – PSS.

National Recognition and Procedures Agreement for Lecturing Staff (NRPA – LS)

1. Purpose

The Agreement hereby confirms that the Colleges and the Trade Unions will negotiate on those matters within the Scope of the Agreement (as set out in section 2 below).

The Agreement sets out the procedures by which CES and the EIS-FELA shall negotiate matters within the Scope of the Agreement.

Any Agreement reached shall apply to the Defined Staff and will be implemented from the date specified.

Any Agreement reached will take precedence over any locally agreed terms and conditions, or any other terms and conditions agreed in respect of the Defined Staff under previous national bargaining arrangements.

2. Scope

CES agree to negotiate with the EIS-FELA on the undernoted Contractual Terms and Conditions of employment applying to Defined Staff.

The NNC – LS is responsible within its bargaining group for:

- Salary matters unique to the bargaining group
- Agreed Terms and Conditions of Service unique to the bargaining group
- Pension matters unique to the bargaining group.

Including

- Pay
- Working hours
- Class contact hours
- Sick pay
- Absence Management
- Annual Leave
- Maternity Policy
- Paternity Policy
- Family Friendly Policies
- Transfer to permanent status
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policies
- Professional Development.

Additional terms and conditions can be included as agreed.

CES agree to consult with the EIS-FELA on other matters on national policy, and both agree joint guidance for implementation locally, appropriate to the needs of each particular college. The NNC – LS may issue national policy advice and may share best practice for Colleges or local collective bargaining arrangements.

3. NNC – LS – Structures and Procedures

The NNC – LS shall have up to twelve members, made up of up to five Management Representatives and up to seven Staff Representatives.

The quorum for meetings of the NNC – LS shall be three Management and four Staff Representatives.

One full-time Official from either Side, excluding the Secretariat, by agreement, may also attend in an *ex-officio* capacity, and does not count towards the quorum.

The Management Representatives shall be appointed annually by CES, and the Staff Representatives shall be appointed by the Trade Union. All Representatives will have authority to negotiate and consult on behalf of their side. The names of appointed Representatives will be shared at the first meeting of each Academic Year. This does not preclude either side from appointing a cover Representative where one of the appointed cannot attend.

Decisions will be by consensus between both Sides.

Each Side will appoint a Chair; by rotation. Each Side will appoint a Secretary, and the overall Secretariat will be provided by the Management Side.

The NNC – LS may, by joint agreement, also invite advisors and/or observers to attend and/or speak at a meeting. Any such person invited to attend has no formal rights or status. This may also include working parties or commissioning research to support the discharge of the NNC – LS functions.

A schedule of NNC – LS meetings will be agreed by the Joint Secretaries, of which there will be five per Academic Year; and exceptional meetings may be called by either side.

4. Agreements Reached

The Agreements reached by the NNC – LS will be set out in writing by the Joint Secretaries as Circulars, on behalf of the NNC – LS.

The Agreements reached will be binding on all signatory Colleges and the Trade Union. The signatories of each of the parties hereto confirm that they have the authority to bind the party that they represent. This Agreement is binding in honour but not legally enforceable. However, any collective Agreement varying the terms and conditions of Defined Staff will be legally enforceable.

5. Effective Date

The Agreement shall take effect on **1 March 2026**.

6. Variations and Notice of Withdrawal

No variations to this Agreement may be made except by agreement of all the signatory parties.

A signatory party may withdraw from this Agreement provided it shall give twelve months' notice of its intention to do so in writing to the other parties. Variations to this notice period can be agreed by the signatory parties.

The NRPA – LS will be reviewed by agreement of all parties to ensure that it meets the needs of the parties and the sector and continues to operate effectively.

7. Expenses

The general cost of maintaining the NNC – LS and its secretariat function is borne by CES.

Any external expenses and other relevant expenditure must be agreed by the NNC – LS in advance, including how the cost is borne.

8. Disputes

In the event of a dispute arising concerning negotiation or agreements reached under these procedures, the EIS-FELA agree to seek resolution through the disputes procedure as agreed and attached as **Annex 1** to this Agreement. The EIS-FELA further agree to refrain from industrial action until the agreed Avoidance of Industrial Action Procedures have been exhausted; the Colleges agree to maintain the *status quo ante* until the agreed dispute procedures have been exhausted.

9. Facilities Time

[See EIS-FELA – Facilities Time Agreement](#)

Avoidance of Industrial Action Procedure for the NNC – LS

The Colleges and the EIS-FELA are committed to striving for agreed outcomes. If, exceptionally, these cannot be achieved, the EIS-FELA may invoke the following Avoidance of Industrial Action Procedure (AIAP) which gives rise to a dispute:

- Where it appears that all scope for progress through normal procedures has been exhausted, the EIS-FELA shall give formal notice that it is applying this AIAP.
- Following receipt of such notification the parties will agree meeting dates within **five** working days for at least two meetings to seek to resolve the dispute. Unless agreed otherwise, these meetings will take place within the following **10** working days.
- The focus of these meetings will be on reaching a settlement of the issue(s) in dispute. Such a settlement should also seek to include recommendations on how similar disputes might be avoided in the future.
- Further meetings beyond this initial period may take place where that is agreed between the two sides.
- If it has not been possible to resolve the dispute through this series of meetings, the parties will consider whether third-party assistance – normally using ACAS for mediation and conciliation – would be helpful. The matter in dispute may, with the agreement of the parties, be referred to ACAS for conciliation. A decision on this should be taken within **five** working days of the second meeting.
- Throughout the period of dispute resolution meetings, and for any agreed third-party assistance, the Colleges will maintain the *status quo ante* and the Trade Unions will refrain from taking any form of industrial action until the procedure has been fully exhausted.
- Outcomes from any stage in the procedure will be communicated jointly.

National Recognition Agreement for Professional Services Staff (NRA – PSS)

1. Purpose

The Agreement hereby confirms that the Colleges and the Trade Unions will negotiate on those matters within the Scope of the Agreement (as set out in section 2 below).

The agreement acknowledges that the signatory Trade Unions are jointly recognised and shall co-operate with each other in a way that shall maintain stable and effective single table bargaining arrangements.

The Agreement sets out the procedures by which CES and the Trade Unions shall negotiate matters within the Scope of the Agreement.

Any Agreement reached shall apply to the Defined Staff and will be implemented from the date specified.

Any Agreement reached will take precedence over any locally agreed terms and conditions, or any other terms and conditions agreed in respect of the Defined Staff under previous national bargaining arrangements.

2. Scope

It is agreed that the matters contained within the National Agreement Terms and Conditions (Professional Services Staff) – *previously (Support Staff)* i.e. within Circular STS 03/22 will be subject to negotiation between the Management and Staff Representatives in respect of the Defined Staff and comprise “the Scope of the Agreement”.

Any new matters added to the Scope of the Agreement must be jointly agreed and set out within an Agreement.

The National Negotiating Committee (NNC) – PSS may also issue national policy guidance and there is an expectation that this will be taken account of locally with reference to the individual requirements of each individual college and on the understanding that colleges will not act in direct contradiction of any national policy guidance.

3. NNC – PSS – Structures and Procedures

The NNC – PSS shall have up to ten members, made up of up to five Management Representatives and up to five Staff Representatives.

The Management Representatives shall be appointed annually by CES, and the Staff Representatives shall be appointed by the Trade Unions.

The Staff Representatives’ appointments shall be on the following basis:

UNISON	3 Members
UNITE	1 Member
GMB	1 Member

The quorum for meetings of the NNC – PSS shall be three Management and three Staff Representatives, with the Staff having at least two Trade Unions represented.

One full-time official per Trade Union may also attend in an *ex-officio* capacity and does not count towards the quorum.

Procedures and Administration

The Secretariat will be provided by CES.

Each meeting shall appoint a Chair, and the role of chairing each meeting shall rotate between Staff and Management Representatives, unless otherwise agreed.

In any meeting, the Chair's role is to facilitate discussions in an impartial manner in accordance with the 'Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland' and the NRA Protocol.

The Management Secretary and the Staff Secretary shall be responsible for all administrative and organisational arrangements to support the work of the NNC – PSS and shall become the Joint Secretaries.

Meetings shall be held in line with a pre-agreed meeting schedule, unless by agreement of the Joint Secretaries, and any business tabled must be within the Scope of the Agreement.

The NNC – PSS may, by joint agreement, also invite advisors and/or observers to attend and/or speak at a meeting. Any such person invited to attend has no formal rights or status.

4. Agreements Reached

All National Collective Agreements reached by the NNC – PSS will be set out in writing in the form of a Circular drafted, agreed and issued by the Joint Secretaries on behalf of the NNC – PSS.

All National Collective Agreements reached at the NNC – PSS will be binding on the signatory Colleges and the Trade Unions.

Colleges will ensure that any National Collective Agreements specifying and varying the terms and conditions of employment of the Defined Staff will be incorporated into individual contracts of employment of the Defined Staff.

The Management Secretary will be available to provide advice to CES members, and the Staff Secretary will be available to advise their members on matters relating to National Collective Agreements, circulars, guidance, or any other outcomes from the NNC – PSS.

All joint Referrals on the interpretation of Circulars should follow the NRA Joint Secretaries Referrals Protocol.

5. Role of the Joint Secretaries

The Joint Secretaries are central to the Agreement. The NNC – PSS will promote an effective and constructive approach to their joint working relationship, encouraging the same of all their appointed representatives.

The Management Secretary shall be appointed by CES in accordance with its internal processes.

The Staff Secretary shall be appointed by the majority Trade Union, unless agreed otherwise by the Trade Unions.

The Circulars used to implement the National Agreements are drafted, agreed and issued on behalf of the NNC – PSS.

General advice provided on circulars, and the decisions reached on queries and referrals related to Circulars, are the preserve of the Joint Secretaries working together. The Joint Secretaries may seek further supporting background and information if required.

6. Effective Date

The Agreement shall take effect on **1 March 2026**.

7. Variations and Notice of Withdrawal

No variations to the Agreement may be made except by joint agreement of NNC – PSS.

A signatory party may withdraw from this Agreement provided it shall give six months' notice of its intention to do so in writing to all the other parties. Variations to this notice period can be jointly agreed by the NNC – PSS.

The NNC – PSS agree to review the Agreement on a biennial basis to ensure that it continues to operate effectively.

8. Costs

The general cost of maintaining the NNC – PSS and its secretariat function is borne by CES.

Any other expenses of the NNC – PSS must be agreed in advance, including how the cost is borne.

9. Dispute Resolution

In the event of a dispute arising, concerning negotiations or agreements under the Scope of the Agreement, then the Management or Staff Representatives may invoke the following dispute procedure.

1. Either the Management or Staff Representatives should give formal notice that it is invoking this dispute resolution procedure.
2. Both the Management and Staff Representatives should then seek to agree a date for a meeting to resolve the dispute. A first meeting should take place within **10** working days of receiving the dispute notification.
3. If resolution of the dispute is not achieved at or following the first meeting, then there should be agreement of a date for a second meeting, within **10** working days of the first meeting.
4. Both the Management and Staff Representatives will jointly consider whether third-party assistance – such as ACAS – would be helpful, if initial meetings have not resolved the dispute.
5. Throughout the period of dispute resolution meetings, and for any agreed third-party assistance, the Colleges will maintain the *status quo ante* and the Trade Unions will refrain from taking any form of industrial action until the procedure has been fully exhausted.
6. Either the Management or Staff Representatives may declare the dispute procedure is exhausted and there is a formal Failure to Agree if (1) resolution is not achieved after the dispute meetings and (2) no agreement is reached on seeking third party assistance or if such third-party assistance does not lead to a resolution of the dispute.
7. Both CES and Trade Unions agree not to use this procedure to circumvent meaningful National Bargaining.

Once a Failure to Agree is declared, then in accordance with Point 5 of the Dispute Resolution Procedure, the dispute procedure is at an end, and the matter will be kept and filed as a matter of record within the NNC – PSS.

A new dispute cannot be invoked under the dispute's procedures on the same matter for a 12-month period from the date of the Failure to Agree is invoked, unless exceptionally agreed by the Joint Secretaries. This does not prejudice the Trade Unions right to take lawful industrial action.

All formal outcomes from the Failure to Agree will be communicated jointly by the Joint Secretaries.

10. National Facilities Time

An annual schedule of NNC – PSS meetings will be agreed by the Joint Secretaries.

Based on the annual schedule of NNC – PSS meetings, National Facilities Time will be agreed annually by CES and the NNC – PSS. This will be provided on a proportional split of NNC – PSS related work, as set out in the [NNC – PSS National Facilities Time Agreement](#).

Colleges with named national Staff Representatives attending the NNC – PSS will be reimbursed for National Facilities Time provided for attendance at meetings of the NNC – PSS; travel time; consultation with members; preparatory work and work related to the dissemination of outputs.

Other requirements for National Facilities Time for exceptional purposes shall be discussed and jointly agreed at a NNC – PSS meeting.