

Pay Update

The NASUWT has been engaged in talks with the Department for Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) in order to attempt to resolve the ongoing dispute. A number of meetings have occurred in the Autumn term. This has resulted in the DESC making a final offer in respect of the pay element of the dispute.

The DESC's final offer is for a one-off, non-consolidated payment in respect of the misapplication of the 2018/19 pay award, where the DESC followed the Secretary of State's decision, rather than the recommendation of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), resulting in members on the Upper Pay Scale and Leadership Ranges receiving a 2% and 1.5% increase respectively, rather than the 3.5% increase recommended by the STRB.

The DESC offer is for a differentiated award, as detailed below:

Unqualified Pay Range	£850 gross
Main Pay Range	£850 gross
Upper Pay Range	£1850 gross
Leadership Pay Range	£2850 gross

These amounts are gross and will be subject to normal tax and National Insurance deductions. Being non-consolidated, they are also non-pensionable and non-recurring.

Whilst the NASUWT is pleased that the DESC has finally recognised its misapplication of the 2018/19 award, the Union is bitterly disappointed that the Department has not made any attempt to address the historic erosion of teachers' pay, and these amounts represent a drop in the ocean compared to the real-terms reduction of more than 30% Manx teachers have suffered. This represents an annual shortfall of around £8,000 and cumulative loss of more than £30,000 for a teacher on M1, rising to an annual shortfall of around £13,000 and a cumulative loss of more than £50,000 for a UPR3 teacher, compared to if pay had kept pace with Isle of Man Retail Price Index (RPI) inflation.

Rather than address the pay erosion issues, the DESC has stated it will reopen talks 'when the longer-term financial situation following the pandemic is understood'. This is a very weak commitment which fails to guarantee any further increase in pay to account for the erosion suffered.

It should also be noted that the award relates only to teachers and not members at the University College Isle of Man (UCM) at this point. The NASUWT is continuing to press the DESC for proposals to apply equally to all members at UCM also.

The offer also fails to take into account the fact that the teaching profession went above and beyond the call of duty during the pandemic, with members giving up holidays to ensure that the children of key workers and the most vulnerable pupils continue to receive an education in very trying circumstances.

The NASUWT believes it cannot accept this award and end the dispute in respect of pay. However, the Union is keen to hear the views of members. Briefings via Zoom will also take place every day at 5pm from 16-20 November inclusive. All members are urged to attend one of these in order for the views of the membership to be ascertained and the next steps can be discussed. The link to join the briefing is:

<https://nasuwt-org-uk.zoom.us/j/91864137340?pwd=cFJsNWoweDhsTmJRTjFkclcyY1cudz09>

Meeting ID: 918 6413 7340

Passcode: 156156

This will also be posted on the Facebook group.

Members can also provide comments via email to nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk before Saturday 28 November.

For the avoidance of doubt, the NASUWT will not be suspending any of its action at the present time.

Other developments

Members will be aware that whilst other unions' disputes related solely to pay, the NASUWT's dispute also encompasses pensions and conditions of service in addition to pay, and talks between the DESC and the Union on these items have also been ongoing.

Despite the DESC's intransigence over pay, the NASUWT is pleased that progress has been made on a number of these issues.

The DESC has agreed to discontinue the current appraisal arrangements and performance-related pay (PRP). This is a major achievement for the NASUWT and its members as the DESC's system is one of the most draconian processes, and the Union has been a lone voice campaigning for the DESC to abandon PRP for many years.

The DESC has also committed to create a Partnership Forum to discuss education policy matters, including those highlighted by the Beamans Report, something again that the NASUWT has been campaigning for many years.

Additionally, the School Self-Review and Evaluation (SSRE) system and external validations will also be suspended for the current academic year, and further talks are scheduled around the Trade Union Recognition Agreement.

Members should be in no doubt that the achievements that have been secured to date are due to your steadfast support of the action short of strike action and all members are to be congratulated. There are, however, still many issues to be resolved and although progress is being made, pressure needs to be maintained. These include the longer-term pay mechanism to prevent a repeat of the scale of erosion we have seen, workload issues, and recognition at UCM, and members should still abide by all the action instructions in full.

