

Barnet & Southgate College Feedback

Following discussions between UNISON and the Director of Organisational Development at a Support Staff Interest Group meeting the effectiveness of the current curriculum administrative support was raised. Both former Colleges operate different administrative structures for the same service and so an urgent review was needed to identify best practice and harmonise systems across the merge organisation. UNISON offered to assist HR with an audit of curriculum administration to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current structures, understand the variety of roles and the requirements for this service going forward.

Valuable feedback, comments and suggestions have been received through 1-1 meetings with Academic/Service Heads, focus groups with Curriculum Managers, teaching staff, compliance team, central administration team as well as Senior Administrators from Wood Street, Grahame Park and Southgate Campus. Additionally, a questionnaire was sent to this group of staff for completion. UNISON has collected and analysed all the responses to provide a feedback of findings paper which was presented to the Executive Leadership Group for consideration before they produced the consultation paper for restructure of business support services through Barnet & Southgate College on 7 September 2012.

This audit allowed members the opportunity to voice their opinions on the work carried out on the operational level enabling members put forward suggestions of how the service could be improved for both staff and learners.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome aboard two new stewards, Jan Brennan GP UNISON Steward and Mary Ramsay SGC UNISON Steward. Together as a team we will be representing you at the S188 90 day's consultation meetings raising all your concerns and highlighting issues we have identified in the initial consultation paper. If staff would like representation at individual consultation meetings please contact your campus site UNISON steward. Together we aim to ensure that every member is fully represented at both group and individual staff consultation meetings.

In light of these challenging times I urge that each and every member to act as a recruiter which will help increase our total membership, please contact me for a membership form and for further information. I am happy to report that UNISON membership at all Campuses has significantly increased this academic year.

Feedback from S188 Consultation Meeting – 14 September 2012

- UNISON raised the issue of inequality of treatment with regards to the Voluntary Severance/Voluntary Redundancy scheme for business support staff in comparison to Heads and Manager VS/VR paper in relation to section 7.1 where it states that no employee taking VS/VR can return to work for the College for 6 months in comparison to the Heads and Managers it was 4 weeks. Following discussion with Management and UNISON we comprised and agreed that Business Support Staff would get the **same 4 week period** as this was still part of the same restructure and that future restructure VS/VR papers for all staff would then be a minimum of 12 months.
- UNISON also raised the issue regarding the consultation paper whereby Management were not following their own Organisational Change and Redeployment Management policy/guidelines where it clearly states in section 6.1 on Assimilation that staff would be assimilated into roles where:
 - there is very little change to job Description and person specification, broadly 70% of the duties and responsibilities remain the same.
 - there is no change to the grade and
 - the total number of posts stays the same or there are less people than posts.
- UNISON identified in the consultation paper that a number of jobs where people have been singled out to be assimilated despite there being a change grade (some an increase and some a decrease in grade), furthermore there were a number of jobs that should have been assimilated and were not despite meeting the above criteria. UNISON stated that we would submit a paper identifying all these posts and distribute to Management on 28 September 2012.
- UNISON highlighted that job evaluation had not taken place despite the previous management team assuring Barnet Staff that after merger all posts created post merger would undergo the new job evaluation scheme purchased by the College. Senior Management stated that there was not enough time to undergo a full job evaluation in the timescales that the College needed to adhere to, i.e. to complete all negotiations by December 2012. UNISON requested that Management provide us with the criteria that they have used to grade all the jobs stated in the consultation paper. Management agreed to provide this at the next consultation meeting.

- All Unions requested for a clear break down of savings to date since merger - that we needed some financial rationale/context. An explanation of how this cost efficiency exercise (approx 25% reduction in all depts) will impact on business/services. Management agreed to provide this at the next consultation meeting.
- Management informed us that the potential number of established staff that were at risk was 176 employees with the aim of making 28/29 full time equivalent reduction in support staff. All Unions asked that management provide a list of the total number of FTE support staff currently in post for September 2012, Management agreed to provide this.
- UNISON asked whether an impact assessment had been done and that we needed a copy of this assessment. Management said that this would be provided at the next meeting. UNISON also request clarity that despite all the jobs in the consultation paper stating that there were 1 full time equivalent that equal consideration would be given to *staff currently working on fractional basis part-time, term-time, job share etc.*
- UNISON queried the shape and pattern of schedules for all team group consultation meetings due to commence on Monday 17 September and agreed with Management to re-arrange all the meetings due to take place between Monday 17 Sept and Thurs 20 Sept with the aim of amalgamating some cross team meetings. This provided UNISON with the opportunity to arrange lunch time branch meetings at all sites to give members the opportunity to meet with all UNISON stewards to discuss issues and concerns regarding the initial consultation paper and for us to feedback. We urge that all members mention at their consultation meetings when was Job evaluation going to take place; what criteria were used for grading the jobs and the issues around assimilation and ring-fencing. All these lunch time branch meetings (run from 12 -1 and 1-2 pm) were very well attended at all sites and members appreciated the opportunity to meet their site UNISON steward.
- An email was sent to all members following these meetings highlighting and reinforcing the message that members needed to prepare for these meetings and that all staff needed to carefully read their proposed job description and person specification and raise any missing points or concerns regarding essential criteria in person specification.

UNISON will be organising an further lunch time branch meetings after the Interim Consultation paper is issued by Management and aim to keep members updated via Barnet e-news and staff emails.

Christalla Tsattala

Barnet & Southgate UNISON Senior Steward

