



All Staff Bargaining Update

Bargaining Meeting Thursday 24 November:

- Some significant progress made, however some areas remain under discussion, such as coverage of the Agreement.
- Management presented their counter-claims on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment, Academic Freedom and Union Rights
- Your NTEU Bargaining team presented on:
 - Family Violence Leave,
 - Gender Affirmation Leave,
 - Pandemic and Infectious Disease Leave, and
 - Breastfeeding Rights.

The next bargaining meeting on 15 December will include discussion of:

- Academic and Professional Staff Workloads
- The right to disconnect
- The right to work from home

Find out how you can get involved with the Bargaining Process!

In more detail...

Scope and coverage of the proposed agreement

We did not reach consensus with management on including all our colleagues in WAAPA and the Physical Fitness Centres into this Agreement. We reserved our right to do further research on this matter and revisit this issue at another bargaining meeting in the future.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment

There was general agreement in principle for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clauses, however we have yet to reach agreement on the number of days offered for ceremonial leave.

We believe that the university could position itself as an employer of choice by offering more generous entitlements for important cultural obligations such as the range of ceremonial leave.

We are urging management to offer **5 days paid and 10 days unpaid**. Management's offer remains at **3 days paid and 5 days unpaid**.

Management also questioned the inclusion in the clause that Indigeneity is a genuine occupational qualification, on the grounds that it was already incorporated into recruitment practices. We believe that including it in the Agreement sends a positive message of shared commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people considering a role at the university. Many current and potential employees consult the Staff Agreement to determine rights and entitlements of ECU staff.

We intend to revise the wording of the clause and present it in an amended form at the next meeting.

Academic Freedom

We reached an in principle agreement on the intellectual freedom clauses and feel that as presented they offer strong support for ECU staff to express even critical opinions of the university and its governance. The limit to academic freedom will align with what is limited by law (e.g. defamation, hate speech, etc).

Union Rights

The role and purpose of the **Joint Staff Consultative Committee (JSCC)** was agreed to in principle although we were disappointed that our attempts to formalise a greater level of workplace democracy were quashed. We raised the concern that much of the power that the JSCC will have to influence decision making at the university may rely too much on the 'goodwill' of management.

Presented by your Bargaining team at this meeting:

- Family and Domestic Violence Leave
- Gender Transition Leave
- Pandemic/Infectious Diseases Leave
- Breastfeeding rights and provision

During discussions around leave clauses, the area of most disagreement was around Pandemic/ Infectious Diseases leave. We are seeking more robust clauses that offer greater leave provisions and reflect the impact of changing workplace practices on staff, during and after a pandemic. We have argued strongly that ECU staff should not bear a disproportionate burden for the changing of work practices as well as the need for greater leave provisions in a post-pandemic world.

The proposed clauses were taken under advisement by management. They will present their counter clauses prior to the next meeting.

Next steps for us - and you!

The next Bargaining meeting will be held on **Thursday 15 December**. At that meeting we will be presenting clauses related to staff workloads, the right to disconnect and the right to work from home.

Workloads are of crucial concern to NTEU members, and indeed, many members of ECU staff. We will be seeking your support to ensure that we present a strong case.

Contact the NTEU ECU Branch

Please contact us if you are prepared to meet once again to express your concerns with current workload practices at ECU. We are also seeking staff who are willing to attend the next Bargaining Meeting to provide a perspective based on their lived experience at ECU.

We know the value of presenting personal stories based on your lived experience.

As well as contacting the Branch, please feel free to contact me on **0418 901 468** or via email to ndrew@ecu.edu.au

And as always, if you know someone thinking of joining, send them to our website to find out more about the NTEU: nteu.au

Or invite them to one of our **Union Coffee Conversation** meet-ups - we have a couple more dates in December at both metro campuses.

In solidarity and support -

Neil, and the NTEU ECU Branch Committee and Bargaining Team Members



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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the country on which we live and work, and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also acknowledge that this land was stolen, that a treaty or agreement for use of these lands is yet to be negotiated, and that a process of truth-telling is long overdue. As a union, NTEU commits to walking in solidarity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their struggles for justice, reparations and compensation.

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