

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR STAFF IN SIXTH FORM COLLEGES

STAFF SIDE

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Sixth Form Colleges Association
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28 June 2023

Dear Graham

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE TEACHERS' PAY FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

I attach the Staff Side pay claim for sixth form college teachers from September 2023. The Staff Side is happy to meet at the earliest mutually convenient date.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely



DARREN O'GRADY
Staff Side Secretary
Committee for Teaching Staff

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE TEACHERS' PAY AND CONDITIONS FROM SEPTEMBER 2023

This pay claim sets out the position of the Staff Side in relation to sixth form college teachers' pay and conditions from September 2023. The pay claim is set in the context of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement on 27 October 2021, on the outcome for 16 to 19 education funding, making available an extra £1.6 billion in 2024 to 2025 financial year compared with 2021 to 2022. This is in addition to the [£291m for 16 to 19 education in 2021 to 2022](#) and the [£400m that the government provided in 2020 to 2021](#).¹

Pay for sixth form college teachers has been increased in line with the offer made by the Employers' Side for 2022-23. The offer maintained the parity in teachers' pay between the sixth form college and school sectors at the minimum and maximum of the scales. However, with Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation at 12.6% in September 2022, this amounted to a large pay cut in real terms for all teachers. Therefore, the Staff Side could not agree to the pay offer and consequently many teachers have taken strike action since the last meeting of the Committee for Teaching Staff.

The Staff Side continues to believe that the pay of all teachers, whatever their sector, is too low and must be increased significantly. Since 2010, the value of teachers' pay in schools and sixth form colleges alike has fallen dramatically, both in real terms and by comparison to pay for graduate employment more generally. The cumulative effect since 2010 is that pay for a sixth form college teacher on pay spine point 9 has fallen by 26.5% relative to RPI inflation.

Costs that have increased by more than RPI inflation include energy and food. Electricity and gas price inflation eased in April 2023 but the rates were still 17.3% and 36.2% respectively. The inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages was 19.2% in March 2023, the highest rate since 1977, and it dropped only slightly in April to 19.1%.² Basics such as sliced bread, milk and cheese have increased by even more³, which underlines the severity of the cost-of-living crisis. It should also be noted that even if the rate of increase in inflation drops, prices will continue to rise and tax thresholds have been frozen.

On June 22nd it was announced that the Bank of England has raised interest rates to 5%; which will lead to a significant increase in mortgage payments for many teachers. HM Treasury's evidence to pay review bodies states that, 'a 1 percentage point rise in Bank rate would cost the average fixed-rate mortgage holder an extra £850 per year.'⁴ The ONS reports that around a third of adults in Great Britain are already finding it difficult to pay rent or mortgage payments.⁵ Without a pay rise in line with RPI inflation many sixth form college teachers will struggle to keep up with mortgage payments.

Teacher pay levels for both 2022-23 and 2023-24 need to be improved urgently, with increases above RPI inflation for both years. With inflation at its highest levels in over 40 years and the 2022-23 pay dispute unresolved, our members have suffered an enormous real terms cut to

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-how-it-works>

² [Cost of living insights - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/articles/shoppingpricescomparisonstool/2023-05-03>

⁴ [Economic Evidence January 2023 - final version PUBLISHED.pdf](#)

⁵ [Cost of living insights - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

their pay in the current academic year, which adds to the already major real terms pay cuts since 2010. Our members remain committed to the fight for a fair pay deal in 2022-23 and our disputes continue.

With inflation still at its highest level for decades and pay continuing to grow strongly in the wider economy, we and our members are also committed to a fair pay deal in 2023-24. Only the implementation of the pay increase above RPI for September 2022 for which we called in last year's pay claim can protect teacher living standards and ensure that we recruit, retain and value the teachers we need in the sector. Such an outcome would begin to repair the damage to teacher pay since 2010 but it would only be a start.

Such a settlement for 2022-23 must be followed by a pay increase for 2023-24 that is above RPI inflation for May 2023⁶, so that we not only protect teacher living standards from any further erosion but also begin to restore the pay lost in real terms since 2010. The employer must respond appropriately both to the 2022-23 increase we called for in last year's pay claim and to the increase we call for in 2023-24.

The Staff Side believes that the funding position of sixth form colleges means that significant pay increases are possible. Funding levels will be maintained in real terms until 2024-25 and further bolstered by the lagged funding deriving from the increased enrolment of students. The funding rate was increased from £4,188 to £4,542 for the 2022-23 college year and will be increased to £4,642 for 2023-24. Some colleges have also benefitted from the high value courses premium being increased from £400 to £600. Staff pay should be the first priority for college spending and investing in staff improves education, to the benefit of colleges who need to show students and parents that they put education first.

The efforts of the working party that discusses the long-standing issue of pay comparability in London and in particular the level of the Inner London allowance should continue. The high cost of living in London, particularly housing, means that there will continue to be recruitment and retention issues if this pay gap is not addressed. The DfE acknowledge this in providing an area cost uplift as research has shown that there is a clearly marked difference in the relative costs of delivery between London and the South East, and the rest of England.

London A (Inner London 20%)
London B (Outer London 12%)
Berkshire (fringe and non-fringe 12%)⁷

The Staff Side fully expects these area cost uplifts to translate directly into additional increases for all London allowances.

The value of all parties to the NJC working together for the greater good was demonstrated during the COVID-19 crisis. The challenge of supporting students through new ways of working and the significant increase in enrolment for recent academic years has increased teachers' workload. Therefore, the Staff Side believes that this is a particularly appropriate time to

⁶ The RPI inflation rate for May 2023 announced on 21 June was 11.3%. [Inflation and price indices - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/inflation-and-price-indices)

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-rates-and-formula/funding-guidance-for-young-people-2023-to-2024-rates-and-formula>

jointly discuss updated and strengthened joint guidance on workload and working time. This would benefit colleges, teachers and students.

In summary, the Staff Side proposes the following:

- **A pay increase that is above RPI rate of inflation in May 2023. This will be paid from 1 September 2023 on all pay points and allowances;**
- **An additional increase from 1 September 2023 on the London allowances;**
- **Joint discussions on workload and working time.**

Staff Side, Committee for Teaching Staff
June 2023