

# CPSU USYD

## BARGAINING UPDATE

6 June 2017



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## UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY BARGAINING MEETING SUMMARY

On 1 June the CPSU talked to our clauses related to improving casual staff options for converting to ongoing employment. The university has tabled its own, which include accepted CPSU protections against the management manipulation of assigned casual hours to prevent a staff member from meeting the time requirements for conversion to ongoing employment.

We will properly examine the university clauses to ensure they capture what we wished to achieve before responding. However, in other related areas we believe the university has not offered enough change to ensure the type of improvements to casual workers conditions its rhetoric would have us believe it is willing to consider.

The CPSU talked to its draft Flexible Working Hours Arrangements clauses – the university responded with some acceptance. Disappointingly, we report the university appears to have rejected the most vital elements of our approach and this debate is certainly not over.

Preliminary discussions between the parties occurred regarding change management and bullying. However, as these were only added to the agenda late and information only circulated initially during the meeting itself, these discussions did not develop significantly. These discussions will continue in the next bargaining meeting, set for 15 June, where we expect to talk to CPSU draft clauses in these areas.



## **BARGAINING MEETING SUMMARY**

The university also responded to previously discussed CPSU claims:

- The university has rejected the CPSU claim that the university appoint an independent ombudsman to deal with staff complaints of a non-industrial nature. This refusal means the CPSU is likely to take such complaints to the NSW Ombudsman.
- The university has rejected the CPSU claim it make available the KPIs of all senior staff of the university executive. This will ensure staff perceptions and suspicions that some senior staff are tasked to reduce workforce numbers in order to attract their extremely substantial bonuses will continue to grow.
- The university has rejected the CPSU claim that it provide university-branded clothing to all university staff who wish to wear such clothing without cost to the staff member.
- The university rejected the CPSU claims for improvements in its efforts to ensure environmental sustainability in its operations and wishes to conduct

such discussions in the context of policy development. The CPSU continues to believe there is scope to include this in the agreement.

The CPSU also raised the issue of late notification of agenda items for coming meetings, and the last section of the meeting was devoted to gaining improvements in this organisation. All parties have agreed on a way forward we believe is likely to aid our organisation and preparedness for future meetings.

### **FURTHER DETAILS**

The CPSU talked to a clause intended to prevent managers from manipulating a casual staff member's contact hours for the purpose of avoiding obligations within the Enterprise Agreement. These obligations allow casual staff to convert to ongoing employment under certain conditions once they have worked for a certain period of time.

The university has released its own casual conversion clauses and appears to have made provision for CPSU concerns within these clauses. We will now closely examine these to determine whether they represent



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adequate protections prior to responding.

The CPSU talked to a draft change for EA clause 16 – employment information – in an attempt to ensure casual staff are made aware that they may be eligible for conversion when they have worked the time periods relevant in the agreement for this to occur. Feedback from casuals shows us many are not aware of this right to conversion.

The CPSU clause adjustments involve the university actively reminding casuals of their potential rights in this area when they have worked for long enough to be considered for conversion. The university was not willing to accept our guidance on this and maintain

that such staff should be able to check their rights themselves.

To the CPSU this sounds as though the university is not as serious as it claims to be regarding casual conversion. We do not believe the debate has concluded on this point, and we await further information from the university. However, the university has already indicated an unwillingness to accept our changes to the clause.

The CPSU spoke to our draft clauses designed to ensure casual staff whose application for conversion is refused because the university believes that the work that they do will cease within a reasonable timeframe. We have asked they have the right to re-

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apply for conversion in six months' time if the cessation of such activities has not occurred within six months. The university agreed to consider our clause. Currently staff must wait 12 months to re-apply for conversion irrespective of what happens in the meantime.

The CPSU made some preliminary statements regarding flexible working hours arrangements and entered some debate with the university. But as we are currently preparing a case for a "Review of Actions" appeal regarding a highly unpopular flexi-hours local arrangement in the university library, we deferred significant debate regarding the clauses until after this appeal, as the outcome may affect our approach to this issue.

We are however concerned the university is insisting on retaining staff ability to accumulate up to 42 hours of flexi-time without having any specific measures to ensure access to flexi-leave to work this

time back down in a timely manner. There are significant work health and safety issues attached to this, and in the last Agreement negotiating period in 2012, the CPSU was informed by the university that the key (and, they argued, adequate) workload protections professional staff have are provided by our limit of a 35-hour working week.

Where are these protections if we find ourselves increasingly under the pump and need to accumulate up to 42 hours of extra work to get our work done with no guarantee as to when we can take this accumulation as leave in order to recover from intense periods of extra work? We will take up this point again at the next meeting.

If you are experiencing an issue in your workplace and require CPSU assistance, please contact CPSU University of Sydney Branch President Grant Wheeler via [grant.wheeler@sydney.edu.au](mailto:grant.wheeler@sydney.edu.au), or on 0434 367 472, or contact the **CPSU/PSA Member Support Centre on 1300 772 67**

## CONTACTS

### **CPSU MEMBER SUPPORT CENTRE**

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*All members of the CPSU in NSW are also members of the Public Service Association. The PSA is the Associated body that manages and resources the CPSU in NSW.*