Public job recruitment freeze hits TAFE sector



On 21 December 2015 the state government announced an immediate freeze on external recruitment until 30 June 2016 as part of budgetary corrective measures aimed at achieving further savings. The freeze will affect the provision of important public services across WA.

Given that the state government has exempted teacher recruitment for the 2016 school year from the freeze, it is extraordinary that this exemption does not also apply to TAFE lecturers - who clearly have a teaching role.

According to the procedures issued by the government the recruitment freeze means that:

- There will be no recruitment of new employees – permanent, fixed term or casual – into a TAFE college before 1 July 2016 unless a formal offer was made prior to 21 December 2015.
- Vacant positions may only be filled by existing employees within that college, from another college or from within thegeneral government public sector.
- Recruitment processes carried out in 2015 can continue to the point where a decision is made but no appointments can be offered prior to 1 July 2016.
- Existing fixed term contract employees may be issued with a further fixed term appointment in the same position, or in another position at the same level.

We need to know about the impact of the recruitment freeze Members need to contact the SSTUWA immediately if:

- Classes are scheduled but no lecturer is available to take the class.
- Classes or courses are cancelled as a result of a lecturer not being able to be appointed to take the class.
- Lecturers are being asked to take classes as overtime.
- Lecturers are asked to undertake excessive overtime as a result of the recruitment freeze.
- Students or lecturers experience any other consequence as a result of the recruitment freeze.
- A college has asked for an exemption and it has been granted.
- A college has asked for an exemption but it was refused.

Permanency and the recruitment freeze

Whilst the government's recruitment freeze will have implications for our permanency campaign in TAFE the SSTUWA will continue to fight for increased permanency throughout 2016. If you are interested in gaining permanency please contact Member Assist on (08) 9210 6060 or enquiries@sstuwa.org.au to obtain a copy of the TAFE information sheet*Gaining Permanency.*

Further reading

Relevant government documentation relating to the freeze can be found at:

Policy: http://bit.ly/1lUWMww

Procedures: http://bit.ly/1PGnBm7

Accrued professional development time (APDT)

Reminder: It is important that members fill in and submit the appropriate college APDT forms as early as possible at the beginning of each year to ensure that they are able to take full advantage of this entitlement.

Union members fought hard to win the entitlement of APDT for the 2008 Agreement. However, despite the onerous nature of professional development for lecturers, not enough take advantage of the provisions of this entitlement.

Clause 39 - Accrued Professional Development Time *of the Western Australian TAFE Lecturers' General Agreement 2014 states:*

39.1 A lecturer may elect to accrue up to 37.5 hours of time worked, in a calendar year, undertaking recognised Professional Development approved by his/her College and without relief, to be taken as accumulated time off during non-teaching weeks.

Professional development undertaken in your own time and in Professional Activities (PA) time can count towards accruing time off. In order to claim accrued time off, at least an equivalent amount of professional development must be undertaken in your own time as in PA time. For example: one hour of professional development claimed in Professional Activities (PA) time and one hour of professional development claimed in your own time = two hours accrued towards time-off.

For further information, including details of what is recognised as professional development for the purposes of APDT, please read the Memorandum of Understanding STERC Accrued Professional Development Time (APDT) Policy, which is found in the back of the Red Book or contact Member Assist.

Averaging

Reminder: Resolve any issues concerning averaging arrangements preferably during the consultation process.

The Western Australian TAFE Lecturers' General Agreement 2014 states that "lecturing hours may be averaged over periods of up to 21 calendar weeks in a semester". Any averaging hours arrangement must be negotiated and agreed. **Averaging arrangements cannot be backdated.**

Issues concerning averaging arrangements are best sorted prior to the commencement of the arrangement, usually at the beginning of each semester. During the consultation process, managers **must** present members concerned with a timetable that covers the proposed averaging period and this must be **PRIOR** to members being asked to agree to the arrangement.

Apart from your lecturing hours you are only required to be on site for 4.5 activities relating to delivery (ARD) and 4.5 PA hours per week. If your lecturing hours are less than 21 per week you can't be asked to make up the time doing other duties.

Beware of non-teaching weeks at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of any averaging period. Any week where you are required to undertake Professional Activities for the entire week, cannot form part of an averaging arrangement and are not considered teaching weeks. Check your calculation of total teaching hours. Your total will be: number of teaching weeks x 21 teaching hours.

Contact your campus union representative or Member Assist if you have concerns about averaging arrangements.

Establishing your SSTUWA branch and TAFE Committee representation

Reminder: Set up your union branch and elect your branch representatives for 2016 as soon as possible.

TAFE branches are able to nominate a representative to the TAFE Committee each year. Please ensure that the SSTUWA

Nomination Form is returned to the union by 5pm Tuesday 1 March 2016.

Information on setting up your branch and nomination forms can be found here: www.sstuwa.org.au/gettingorganised2016

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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