



Mr William Powell AM
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Date 8 July 2013
Our Ref JAR/ak/1307-007
Your Ref P-04-485
Email jim.bennett@colegwent.ac.uk
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Dear Mr Powell

Petition from Briony Knibbs
Zero hour and fixed term contracts in the FE sector

I am writing in response to your letter of 18 June 2013 requesting information from Coleg Gwent on zero hours and fixed term contracts in Further Education colleges. I am also aware of the letter sent to you by ColegauCymru on the same subject and would wish to add to this from the perspective of Coleg Gwent.

The flexibility required of Further Education colleges to meet the demands of our learners from all ages, backgrounds and needs is ever increasing, together with a need to do so in a cost effective and efficient way. In order to do this, we must make every effort to attract good staff, treat them favourably but also meet this demand in ever straightened circumstances. We, therefore, employ salaried, part-time, fixed term and hourly paid staff in the college. Coleg Gwent has "zero hours" contracts but I want to make it clear that these are used in the majority of cases to provide on an annual basis regular timetabled hours, not open ended, no commitment contracts as used in some industries. We consider the learner needs, quality and team management when we determine the mix of our contracted staff. We aim to have a proportionate mix, when financial considerations allow.

You asked for information on the following questions:

- 1 We use zero hour, as described above and fixed term contracts.
2a We have 374 hourly paid (zero hour contract) Lecturers and 229 Business Support staff employed on an hourly paid basis.
2b We have 48 staff employed on fixed term contracts.




Os gwelwch yn dda ymateb i / Please respond to:

Table with 8 columns representing different Coleg Gwent campuses and their contact information, with checkboxes for response.



- 3a 24% of our staff are hourly paid Lecturers on "zero hours" contracts. Hourly paid Business Support staff are employed on a variety of arrangements dependent on need.
- 3b 3% of staff are on fixed term contracts.
- 4 The use of zero hours contracts has increased if measured by the number of staff but reduced if measured by activity.
- 5 The use of fixed term contracts has increased due to success in getting external funding, need for short-term cover and short-term needs.
- 6 We aim to achieve the right balance between full-time, part-time and hourly paid and this is constantly evolving. We would aim to reduce the overall number.
- 7 With less economic certainty, the use of fixed term contracts may increase.
- 8 We take into account the immediate need, quality considerations, balance of staffing, efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- 9 Not in addition to those exposed in the letter from Dr J Graystone and in this letter.

Yours sincerely



Jim Bennett
Principal/Chief Executive
Pennaeth/Prif Weithredwr