

P-04-485 Abuse of Casual Contracts in Further Education – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Clerking team, 26.09.2013

My response to Colegau Cymru's Letter to the Chair of the Petitions Committee

- The new national contract will stop the use of 'zero hours' contracts but it will not stop the abuse of part time hourly paid contracts
- My fear is that the culture will become 1-108 contracts instead of 0-108 contracts (annual hours) and 1 guaranteed annual hour is hardly an improvement
- I understand the need for flexibility and am not asking for hourly paid contracts to be eradicated, only for them to be used responsibly and not successively for those with more than two years service and with sustainable hours
- In my personal experience, colleges are using these contracts to save money at the detriment to lecturers' financial security and general wellbeing
- Lecturers even with a minimum of 109 annual hours feel insecure knowing that at any point in the year their hours could be reduced with little notice to the equivalent of a 0.2 fractional contract. Even if this happens only on rare occasions, knowing that it *could* is unsettling.
- Some of my colleagues work a full timetable (25 weekly hours), yet are employed on a 109-420 annual hourly contract. They are working 840 annual hours which shows these contracts are not being used for their intended purpose i.e. for those who do between 4 and 12 hours a week.

My response to the letters from individual Colleges

- Although colleges such as Gower do review contracts annually, this is done on an ad hoc basis. I would like to see a procedure in place where staff who are reviewed but their contracts are not increased are provided with written justification of the reason for this so that they understand why perhaps one of their colleagues was chosen and they weren't. This gives

lecturers a road map so they can see where their careers are heading. The other issue is that sometimes fractions are given out that are below the number of hours that a lecturer has been teaching so even those who have been reviewed and increased still feel hard done by. This makes part time staff feel devalued compared to full time staff.

- It's pleasing to know that Llandrillo Menai transfer lecturers on fixed term contracts to permanent contracts after 4 years and it would be encouraging if all Colleges could do this.
- I find it very worrying that Coleg Powys employ such a high proportion of staff in a fixed term hourly paid capacity (55%). This makes me feel that as a sector the contribution staff in the FE sector make to young people's futures isn't recognised at all. As a sector, I can see young lecturers shying away from it which I find very sad. I would really like Welsh Government to consider how they can turn this situation around and put pressure on Colleges to use casual contracts responsibly and for their intended purposes.