

What's inside:

- Agreements on fixed-term and part-time employees and sexual orientation equality
- Team work and good communication result in a Swansea success
- New ATL courses for FE staff to meet the 30-hour CPD requirement
- AMiE update
- FE in Wales
- FE staff to be trained to spot terrorist activities in colleges
- ATL to visit a range of institutions in anticipation of the introduction of the diploma
- Mary Bousted tells ATL members of plight of Colombian trade unionists
- ATL seeks to secure future for members in Yorkshire Coast College

FE and sixth form pay update

Demands for a six percent pay rise for lecturers in England have been put to the employers by ATL and the other five unions on the National Joint Forum.

The six percent increase for 2008-09, or £1,500 a year, whichever is the greater, was part of a wider call for a minimum hourly rate of £7.38 and meaningful negotiations on establishing common conditions of service across all colleges. The catch-up claim aims to recoup losses from previous below inflation pay awards and comes at a time when food costs have risen by over four percent and housing costs by nearly five percent in the past 12 months. The claim also reflects the fact that lecturers' salaries are on average six percent lower than the equivalent salaries for school teachers.

UCU members went on strike on 24 April to demand the pay rise in England, but ATL was of the view that their industrial action was premature as the pay claim was not due to be submitted until 1 May.

At a meeting of the National Joint Forum on 1 May, ATL and the other unions rejected the employers' initial offer of 2.5% on all scales and allowances on the basis that it was an inadequate general percentage increase and it failed to include an underpinning element for low paid workers. ATL therefore expects both features to be addressed by the employers in making any revised offer at the next meeting in early June.

ATL joined with the other FE unions to urge their members to sign a petition to protest against the pay offer.

A claim for the same six percent increase, plus a minimum hourly rate of £7.38, has been made for lecturers in Wales. ATL, as part of the joint union claim in Wales, also asked for an increase in managers' annual leave to 39 days plus a transfer of managers from the APT&C pay spine to the management spine, with the removal of the bottom point on the management spine pay scale. ATL also called for negotiations on issues outstanding from 2007-08, including common conditions of service and job evaluation for support staff and managers.





Agreements on fixed-term and part-time employees and sexual orientation equality

Three new agreements on fixed-term employees, part-time employees and sexual orientation equality have been agreed by ATL, the other five recognised unions and the Association of Colleges.

The Joint Agreement on Guidelines for the Employment of Fixed-Term Employees in Further Education Colleges impacts significantly on ATL members as approximately 40%, some 34,715 of the FE teaching workforce, is employed on fixed-term contracts.

The agreement acknowledges that fixed-term employees have the right not to be treated less favourably than comparable permanent employees, especially in the terms of their contract of employment.

The agreement also specifies that fixed-term contracts should only be used where there is a genuine fixed-term need, for example, maternity cover or when the work is of a specialist short-term nature or when it is externally funded for a short-term period.

In the event that an employee reaches four years' service on consecutive fixed-term contracts, their employment will become permanent unless the further use of a fixed-term contract is justified on objective grounds.

The agreement also enshrines the important principle that part-time employees have the right not to be treated less favourably than comparable full-time employees, including: equal pay for work of equal value, holiday entitlement on a pro-rata basis, maternity leave, sick leave and continuing professional development (CPD) comparable with full-time employees.

The agreement has been developed for colleges to meet their legal obligations under the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003. These regulations set out a framework for eliminating discrimination in employment, or occupational inequalities, based on sexual orientation.

The agreement states that colleges will seek to provide a positive working environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation in relation to an individual's sexual orientation. Colleges should aim to create an environment in which employees feel safe to be 'out' at work.

All three agreements, and several others, can be found on ATL's website at: www.atl.org.uk/atl_en/help/A_Z/fe_agreements/national_collective_agreements.

Team work and good communication result in a Swansea success

Team work and good internal communications are the keys to success, according to David Hunt, who has grown the ATL branch at Swansea College from five to 100 members. Having taken over as chair in the days of AMMA, David now presides over one of ATL's largest branches in the UK. He said: "I remember when the then chair retired from teaching. She said her goodbyes and plonked our then few members' files on my desk, telling me to consider myself elected since, in her view, nobody else was likely to want to do the job! Now we have a dedicated committee of seven members, each of them offering different strengths."

The branch communicates with its members via area representatives, emails and meetings, and holds an AGM in either May or June. David continued: "Over the years, our branch officials have been instrumental in helping to formulate and amend college policies, particularly in human resources. We successfully negotiated a facilities agreement with the college which affords our three main officers time to carry out their duties." David believes his success also lies with the reassurance felt by members in belonging to a large national association with high standards of professional advice, benefits and immediate support when necessary.



David Hunt, Swansea College.

New ATL courses for FE staff to meet the 30-hour CPD requirement

November
7th-8th
Chorley

ATL's new *Education and training programme* will be arriving with this month's edition of *Report* magazine, including first-class courses to support your professional and personal development. With new regulations for teaching staff in all colleges, and the requirement for Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded providers to undertake at least 30 hours of CPD each year to retain their professional status and membership of the Institute for Learning, ATL's courses focus on issues such as managing challenging behaviour, voice care and assertiveness.



ATL will be launching a new course this year specifically for the FE sector, entitled **Managing challenging behaviour in FE**. This two-day course will be held on Friday 7– Saturday 8 November 2008 in Chorley. Email: training@atl.org.uk for further information or to enrol.

Remember, members enrolling on ATL's CPD courses can also receive accreditation towards a Masters degree thanks to ATL's partnership with Edge Hill University.

As part of ATL's commitment to your CPD, ATL is asking FE members to complete a learning needs survey, which can be completed via the ATL website at: www.atl.org.uk. Please do complete this survey for us if you can as it will enable us to tailor our future courses more specifically to your learning needs.

AMiE update

The first President of ATL and ACM's joint venture, the Association of Managers in Education (AMiE), has been announced. Fiona Rawlings, the current President of ACM, will also serve as AMiE's President until the annual election in 2009. ATL and ACM continue to work closely to ensure AMiE launches in the autumn when members in leadership positions in schools, sixth forms and colleges will be able to access the benefits of both unions. For more details, visit: www.amie.uk.com.



Fiona Rawlings, AMiE President, Mary Bousted, ATL General Secretary, Peter Pendle, ACM Chief Executive and General Secretary and Julia Neal, ATL President at the launch of AMiE.

Update your details

My Membership

As a modern, progressive union, ATL is committed to providing the best possible service for our members. We need to keep your details up-to-date to ensure we can reach you with the most relevant and timely information. Check and amend your details with ATL by logging into the **My Membership** section of ATL's website at: www.atl.org.uk. Or simply send us an email at: membership@atl.org.uk to let us know your change of address, workplace, job role or phone and email contacts.

FE in Wales

Proposals for interventions in failing FE colleges, the future shape of 14-19 provision, and skills in Wales have been the subject of Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS)' consultations in recent months. Issued in response to the *Webb Report on the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales* and the *Leitch Review of Skills*, the consultation papers have been broadly welcomed by ATL. ATL Cymru surveyed all members in FE institutions to ensure that the voice of the profession was heard in our responses. Dr Philip Dixon, Director of ATL Cymru, said: "The first consultation, *Framework for Intervention in FE Institutions*, outlines proposals to tackle failing or coasting FE institutions, although with one possible exception, that situation has not prevailed in Wales for several years."

The consultations, *Skills that Work for Wales* and the *Proposals for a Learning and Skills Measure* will directly impact on members in colleges and schools. Dr Dixon continued: "ATL welcomes the broad thrust of the *Skills that Work for Wales* consultation, particularly the realisation that the whole curriculum requires changes to become more skills-focussed. We have concerns, however, about the dominance of the employer voice in determining future provision. We believe that the expertise and understanding of the college workforce needs to be given greater prominence, as well as the voices of employees as a whole.

"The *Learning and Skills Measure* has the potential to change 14-19 education forever in Wales by guaranteeing a broader-based academic and vocational menu for 14-19 year olds, and by placing a duty to cooperate on all institutions.

"ATL welcomes both these recommendations and continues to press for a review of the funding mechanism which encourages competition rather than collaboration." DCELLS is expected to publish its blueprint for change in the near future.



FE staff to be trained to spot terrorist activities in colleges

ATL has expressed concern over government plans for FE workers in England to be trained to spot potential terrorists in their colleges. In proposals currently out for consultation from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), FE staff will be briefed on identifying violent extremist literature and behaviour aimed at recruiting students into terrorist groups. The consultation proposes that college workers should watch out for students

with an interest in Al Qa'ida, the BNP or animal rights, and be vigilant over students' internet activities and use of external speakers.

ATL, however, has raised concerns that the proposals will create tension between FE staff and their students. The push for FE staff to monitor their students will lead to a break down in trust and will therefore fail to meet the wider context of the consultation, which is to promote

community cohesion and foster shared values. Instead, ATL supports the consultation's proposals to encourage colleges to tackle bullying, to create space for student debate and to provide inter-faith dialogue and facilities.

ATL has also urged the DIUS to consider widening the guidance to cover other issues of violence in the community, such as organised crime, drug running and human trafficking.

ATL to visit a range of institutions in anticipation of the introduction of the diploma

ATL will be taking to the road over the next few weeks to find out how institutions are working together to implement the new diploma. Norman Crowther, ATL's 14-19 policy advisor, will be visiting schools, pupil referral units, sixth form and FE colleges, universities and a local authority in Cambridge to learn how these different organisations have changed their practices in time for the start of the next academic year.

ATL has concerns that most institutions are not yet ready for the diploma as a survey conducted by ATL in March this year revealed that 55% of teachers and lecturers felt that they had not had sufficient training on implementing the diploma, while 50% felt they had not had sufficient time to prepare course work. Nearly 40% of respondents felt that their school or college did not have enough teaching staff or classroom space to teach the diploma courses.

As part of his tour, Norman will be talking to ATL members in teaching and management roles to hear first hand their views and experiences on implementing the changes. Outlining his aims, Norman said: "I'm interested in learning about the opportunities and

challenges facing ATL members in delivering 14-19 reform. What I hear on the ground will enable ATL to better support its members across England in implementing the new diploma."

In Wales, the Assembly Government has decided to delay the implementation of the diploma until 2009. When it is introduced they will become part of the suite of options available within the Welsh bac. Dr Phillip Dixon, ATL Cymru Director, said: "For once we are pleased that Wales is lagging a little behind England. It will give an opportunity for some of the teething problems to be sorted out and give staff more time to get to grips with the new content and approach."



ATL seeks to secure future for members in Yorkshire Coast College

Members at Yorkshire Coast College have elected a new ATL rep to voice concerns over their future following a damning OfSTED report. Staff have expressed fears for their jobs as a plan devised at a senior level to rescue the College in Scarborough has not been circulated to the workforce. In its report, OfSTED stated that teaching was satisfactory but gave the lowest marks possible in nine out of 11 areas of inspection. The Inspectorate also criticised management for failing to prevent the College's decline. No timescale has been given for the release of the rescue plan, although it is known that the LSC has agreed to fund elements of the plan's proposals for improvement.



Mary Bousted tells ATL members of plight of Colombian trade unionists



Arrest, torture and murder face Colombians seeking trade union rights, ATL General Secretary Mary Bousted told members at a meeting at Cambridge Regional College.

Ordinary citizens of the South American country are persecuted for organising, associating in groups or seeking collective representation, according to Dr Bousted, who spoke to 40 ATL members at the event in May.

Showing pictures of her trip to Colombia in August 2006,

Dr Bousted spoke about meeting the people and families of those who had suffered and died at the hands of the Colombian Government.

The event, which featured Fairtrade coffee from Colombia, was organised by ATL's Cambridge Regional College branch and also saw Niamh Sweeney taking over as branch chair from Chris Wilson.

A hog roast to celebrate the College's grade 2 OfSTED inspection was held the same evening for all the college staff.

