



12 September 2023

Christine Robertson

Chief Executive Officer

Canberra Institute of Technology

Dear Christine

In July, AEU members across CIT met to consider CIT's current range of proposals to resolve CIT teachers' enterprise bargaining. We advised CIT that the package being put to us was not acceptable to members and would not be contemplated further unless pay and conditions were substantially improved.

Prior to our last bargaining meeting on 30 August 2023, the AEU put to CIT a range of proposals to finalise the enterprise bargaining process. Those proposals were presented without prejudice as an attempt to reach a viable compromise position. CIT's bargaining team advised that most of the proposals would not be acceptable to CIT.

More concerningly, CIT's bargaining team advised that CIT could not see any reason to seek additional funding from the ACT Government to cover any costs associated with meeting the AEU's claims. In light of this, we are writing to ensure that CIT has the motivation it requires to advocate for recognising the contribution of its teaching staff.

CIT teachers entered this round of enterprise bargaining following a tumultuous period, during which they have gone above and beyond to deliver education and training throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. In the context of uncertain leadership at CIT, teachers have been recognised for the outstanding services that they have delivered to the ACT community. Front line CIT staff have excelled while their workplace has been the subject of constant, negative media coverage related to the actions of the CIT Board and Executive.

Despite the excellent performance of CIT teachers under challenging circumstances, their claims for improved pay and meaningful limits on their workloads have not been met by CIT. While CIT has found additional resourcing to expand its senior executive structure, it has not provided the same support to CIT teaching staff.



While teachers in our schools have had their outstanding contributions recognised, CIT teachers face an inferior pay offer. Members in some parts of CIT report being paid less than the apprentices that they are training. Moreover, the pay deal proposed by CIT sees an experienced teacher nearly \$10,000 worse off compared to their school-based counterparts. College Directors, who shouldered the burden of keeping CIT functioning while senior management was in turmoil in 2022, are being asked to accept pay that is as much as \$50,000 less than a school principal despite undertaking work of similar complexity.

CIT's response on teacher salaries has, predictably, been that it will engage yet another consultant to conduct a review. CIT teachers have been burned by the Think Garden contracts, an apparent waste of millions of dollars that has damaged the standing of the institute with the community and industry. There is no reason for CIT teachers to trust that, this time, things will be different.

CIT teachers have told us that they cannot recruit and retain new teachers when they need them. They tell us that, alongside critical shortages of teaching and administrative staff, they are called on to work dozens of hours of unpaid overtime completing administrative or compliance activities. CIT consulted with staff on a proposal to address these issues by reforming the way time is counted under the Enterprise Agreement. Despite the attempts of our union to work with CIT on these issues through enterprise bargaining, we have been unable to come to a satisfactory resolution and CIT has not presented any formal proposal to sufficiently address teacher workload concerns.

Further, CIT persists with contemplating ill-considered and unworkable arrangements for staff accommodations at the Woden campus. This includes the absolutely insufficient provision for staff parking spaces and CIT's inability to confirm whether it proposes to implement hotdesking for teaching staff, a long-discredited management fad which is untested and inappropriate for education workspaces. The Woden campus, which ought to be something that CIT teachers are looking forward to, is now met with fear that it will be yet another embarrassment for the institute after the Think Garden debacle.

AEU CIT members have told me that they reject the current package on offer from CIT. They are frustrated to have been consulted on workload proposals and to have nothing come of it. They feel disrespected by the failure to come to a meaningful resolution on pay and workload claims.

Should CIT not provide a sufficiently improved position on the critical issues of pay and workloads by close of business on 15 September 2023, the AEU will seek approval from the Fair Work Commission to conduct an industrial action ballot.

Regards

Patrick Judge

Branch Secretary