



**College  
Employers  
Scotland**

POSITION PROFILE

**Head of  
National Bargaining**



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Thank you for your interest in this exciting opportunity to join College Employers Scotland, the forum through which National Bargaining is being implemented by the college sector.

As the Director of College Employers Scotland, I am keen to ensure we effectively support our members to achieve their collective ambitions and ensure they have the workforce and resources to deliver excellence for students. As a result, and having decided to bring in additional resources to directly support and progress the National Bargaining agenda, College Employers Scotland is looking to recruit a Head of National Bargaining to oversee all negotiations regarding both support and lecturing staff.

Scotland's colleges have a long and proud history; they are situated right across the length and breadth of our country, providing training, learning, and skills for all our communities. We have over 236,000 students studying in Scotland's colleges each year from all backgrounds with over 94% achieving their qualifications and moving on to positive destinations of further study, training, or employment.

The college sector in Scotland enables people from all walks of life, all backgrounds, and all ages, to obtain qualifications and skills that can improve their lives, and further their careers. It also plays an intrinsic role in helping the Scottish Government deliver its ambitions for increased inclusivity and sustainable economic growth in Scotland. Collaboration is essential if Scotland is to continue building a world-class education system, and the college sector is committed to working with partners across the public, private, third sector, and trade unions to capitalise on societal transformations, digital innovations, and changing demands in education.

Operating in a small team but with a national remit, this role will play a leading role in all aspects of National Bargaining and interactions with support staff and lecturing staff trade unions, whilst also directly supporting a sector involved in increasing inclusive and sustainable economic growth in Scotland.

If you share my passion and desire to ensure the employers' contribution to the national agenda is both valued and impactful, I would love to receive your application.



Gavin Donoghue,  
Director – College Employers Scotland





Colleges Scotland, the policy organisation, is the collective voice for the college sector, and as the membership body, represents all 24 colleges in Scotland and the three strategic regional bodies, delivering further education provision and around a quarter of all higher education in Scotland.

Colleges Scotland was awarded funding, from the Scottish Funding Council's Strategic Funds, in August 2016 to establish the Employers' Association (now known as College Employers Scotland) and is the body through which the Scottish Government's Policy of National Bargaining is delivered and implemented by the collective employers in the college sector, in partnership with the trade unions.

College Employers Scotland represents 22 colleges that have signed a National Recognition and Procedures Agreement (NRPA). The NRPA sets out the procedures by which the National Joint Negotiation Committee (NJNC) undertake negotiations. It was established to jointly agree terms on issues, such as pay and terms and conditions, in partnership with the trade unions (EIS, GMB, UNISON and UNITE). Negotiations take place through the NJNC's Central Committee or side tables.

The NJNC Central Committee consists of 22 members comprising of 10 employer representatives (management side) and 12 staff side representatives from all four trade unions. The Central Committee negotiates on matters that impact all staff in the college sector. In addition to the Central Committee, there are two side tables – one for lecturing staff matters and one for support staff. The side tables comprise of 10 members – five employers' representatives (management side) and five trade union representatives (staff side). The side tables negotiate on all matters unique to the individual bargaining group.

Colleges Scotland has four core values that underpin its work:

- **Respect** – we will act with respect, integrity, openness, and honesty
- **Support** – we will strive for excellence, provide effective leadership, understand and respond to the needs of colleges and regional strategic bodies
- **Trust** – we will use truthfulness as the guiding principle for everything we do and it is essential to our success
- **Inclusivity** – we will advocate diversity and equality





<b>Role:</b>	Head of National Bargaining
<b>Direct Reports:</b>	Senior HR Policy Officer & HR Policy Officer

## Role Overview

Ensuring College Employers Scotland effectively supports members to achieve their collective ambitions, the successful candidate will operate at a national level and lead the National Bargaining agenda for both support and lecturing staff.

College Employers Scotland operates a hybrid working policy and whilst this post is based in Stirling, it is envisaged that the successful candidate would not necessarily need to be in the office on a full-time basis.

## Key priorities:

- Ensure College Employers Scotland builds and maintains effective and productive relationships with relevant trade union officials.
- Develop and secure agreement on both a strategic and operational level to support the national programme of National Bargaining
- Through established negotiation mechanisms, develop, agree and implement appropriate pay and grading models for Scotland's colleges
- Establish, agree and implement national conditions of service for Scotland's colleges workforce
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with all key stakeholders, providing influence on priority issues and creating sustainable partnerships.
- Ensure effective interaction with Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council & other key stakeholders
- Work collaboratively with other members of College Employers Scotland, and Colleges Scotland, to ensure key policy areas are in support of strategic aims and objectives
- Deputise for the Director of College Employers Scotland, at a national level, on key policy areas

## Duties and Responsibilities:

- Lead, manage and motivate both the Senior HR Policy Officer and HR Policy Officer who have direct involvement with relevant working groups and undertaking associated administration and policy work
- As the employers' Head of National Bargaining, you will steer complex negotiations between trade unions and the employers' appointed management side representatives within the NJNC by:
  - Developing the priorities and the negotiation parameters from the management side's perspective
  - Leading on all negotiations at relevant side table associated with either support or lecturing staff



- Leading on Central Committee matters by developing the priorities and negotiating parameters
  - Providing robust reports to the Director of Colleges Employers Scotland, NRPA member colleges and relevant stakeholders, on developments associated with National Bargaining
  - Representing colleges and the sector by developing and maintaining relationships with the national trade unions of the NJNC, priority partners, lay representatives and stakeholders including the Scottish Government
- Liaise and lead discussions with the trade unions in relation to pay claims and other matters covered by the National Recognition and Procedures Agreement
  - Provide effective ongoing advice to the college sector on employment matters including all aspects of the National Bargaining agenda and issues emerging from negotiations and other relevant external factors
  - Effectively engage with a range of senior stakeholders within the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council, trade unions and the principal and chairs of Scotland's colleges
  - Effectively engage with the Chair of College Employers Scotland and appropriate networks such as the College Principals' Group, Strategic HR Network and the Finance Development Network
  - Represent the sector on key policy areas, as delegated by the Director of College Employers Scotland, at a national level, ensuring College Employers Scotland's contribution to the National Bargaining agenda is valued, impactful and measurable
  - Implement agreed national actions and activities
  - Effectively engage and consult members on pertinent employment related issues
  - Gather and distribute appropriate robust statistical information and related sector HR data to support National Bargaining
  - Use robust analytical information to facilitate discussions and inform ongoing costs and funding requirements
  - Liaise with communications colleagues to produce regular reports to the sector and relevant stakeholders, on developments relating to National Bargaining
  - Lead on specific projects as delegated by the Director of Colleges Employers Scotland such as Job Evaluation for support staff and Professional Registration for lecturing staff
  - Implement and deliver proactive strategies and lead campaigns to ensure the achievement of College Employers Scotland's strategic aims





The successful candidate will be an experienced HR professional and a solution focused negotiator with the ability to demonstrate a track record of success in both trade union negotiations and dispute resolution. You will have relevant experience of, and a passion for, the consultation processes. An accomplished communicator, you will have credibility when engaging with both internal and external stakeholders.

## Skills and Experience:

- Strong employment legislation knowledge encompassing pay systems, pay bargaining, employment relations, workforce development systems and benchmarking processes
- Relevant experience of successfully managing and mitigating employment relation issues and risks
- Experience of trade union negotiations and managing disputes
- Proven ability to motivate and support both individuals and teams
- Experience of leading the development, implementation and delivery of large scale projects
- Proven track record in building and maintaining excellent and strategic working relationships with a range of stakeholders
- Exceptional planning and project management skills
- The ability to proactively support and advise committees and working groups
- Knowledge of Scotland's college sector is desirable but not essential

## Personal Attributes:

- A pragmatic problem solver who delivers to a high performance level
- The ability to operate effectively and rationally in a highly politicised environment
- Highly skilled negotiator with a record of achieving successful outcomes
- Intellectual flexibility to move easily between significant detail and the bigger picture
- A high level of interpersonal, communication (verbal and written) and influencing skills
- The ability to lead, manage and deliver a range of complex tasks, projects and services
- Absolute personal integrity and an awareness of the public profile of the organisation and the issues involved
- Willingness to listen and take opinions of members and external stakeholders into account
- Significant personal drive and resilience
- Tact, diplomacy and the ability to build and sustain relationships with colleagues at all levels
- Flexible in approach and able to respond creatively to new developments and to adjust priorities accordingly





Salary:	£65,988
Pension:	Local Government Pension Scheme
Holidays:	46 Days Holiday (33 Flexible and 13 Public)

## The Recruitment Process

The recruitment for this position is being managed by our advising consultants, Livingston James.

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV to [douglasadam@livingstonjames.com](mailto:douglasadam@livingstonjames.com).

*College Employers Scotland is an equal opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity.*

