Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile
Irish Federation of University Teachers

MEDIA RELEASE

Contract Staff Liable to Enhanced Redundancy following Important Legal Precedents

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Contract staff employed by Irish universities now seem certain to have their redundancy settlements trebled on foot of important legal advances secured by the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT).

In one case, a Researcher in NUI Maynooth has been awarded four weeks pay per year of service (pys) on top of her statutory entitlement (two weeks pys) by the Labour Court, in a Determination that is binding on the university. The case was taken by IFUT.

In two other cases in UCC, a Rights Commissioner awarded six weeks pay per year of service to two contract employees who had been made redundant following the expiry of their contracts (the fact of the redundancy was not contested).

Mike Jennings, General Secretary of IFUT, who represented all of the claimants in these cases, said, "These cases make a strong legal point that when contract staff are made redundant, for instance, due to the expiry of their contracts, they must be paid exactly the same redundancy payments as permanent staff would have been paid had they been made redundant".

It is estimated that there are several thousand workers on contract in Irish universities and many thousands more throughout the Public Sector. This number is increasing due to current Government policy. Mr Jennings said, "What these important victories establish is that at least in the case of severance payments these workers must be treated equally. However, in many cases we believe that we can prove that the workers are in fact entitled in law to be made permanent".

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