

# VOTE NO at Melbourne Uni

**NTEU FIGHTBACK! WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2020**



**NTEU FIGHTBACK!**  
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**On June 10 all staff will be asked to vote on a variation to our enterprise agreement (EA). This variation will:**

- **Cut our pay by 2.2% - this is a permanent pay cut of one week's pay.**
- **Reduce redundancy pay for voluntary separations - abolition of minimum 14 weeks pay for professional staff and 20 weeks for academic staff, and the maximum pay for academic staff is reduced from 74 weeks to 52**
- **Reduce notice of redundancy for voluntary separation - from 8 weeks to just 4 weeks (5 weeks for people over 45)**

**In return, there is no guarantee that there will not be job losses. Indeed, in the University's own FAQs they state "we anticipate that jobs will be lost. We will do our best to minimise job losses, and under this proposal we will offer voluntary separation packages before forced redundancies are made."**

## What crisis?

University management are trying to present a dire financial situation to convince staff to give up their wages and conditions.

But the recently released 2019 annual report shows an institution in a strong position to withstand even a significant decline in revenue. The University holds total assets of \$8.6 billion (\$6.4 billion net assets). Underlying income was \$2.7 billion. A very recent study published by the CSHE, written by former senior man-

agers of the University concluded that "Melbourne is in a comparatively strong financial position with sufficient available cash and investments to cover all the potential fee losses for 2020"

## A dangerous precedent

So if there's no real financial justification for management's wage grab at Melbourne Uni, why are they doing it? One clear benefit to them is to establish a precedent for further attacks, both here and at other universities.

If the University wins a "non-union ballot" (a ballot to make changes to the Enterprise Agreement which the union does not agree to) they will take that as a signal that staff are willing to undermine wages and conditions that union members have collectively fought for over decades.

Negotiations for the next EA are scheduled to begin by April next year, before these "temporary" changes have concluded. If the University can claim a mandate from staff due to a Yes vote in this ballot, why would they not seek to make these, and other, cuts to future EAs?

So our vote on June 10 matters to our workmates here. Our vote also matters around the country. We are the first university to vote on a change to our EA. Vice Chancellors around the country are looking to see what happens at Melbourne, before deciding if they will attack wages and conditions at their universities. Staff at other universities will be strengthened to oppose changes to their own agreements if they see us defending ours.

A big Vote No also sends a signal to the national leadership of our union, the NTEU. They have emboldened university management by promoting a National Framework that included significant pay cuts. Vice Chancellors across the country have now taken up

the myth that we need wage cuts to save jobs. Our branch voted to reject this Framework on May 1. We should vote to reject these attacks as well.

No one can pretend that the next few years are going to be easy for staff in this sector. But we have a better chance of standing collectively against job losses if we beat this attack on the collectively-won existing conditions in our EA.

## What happens next?

We will vote on these variations on June 10. All staff are eligible to vote in this ballot. If a majority of people vote yes, our pay and conditions will change.

We should Vote NO in this ballot to protect our wages and conditions. Many workplace meetings have been convened to discuss the issues, get organised, and reject management's attacks on our workplace rights. This is the best possible answer to management's attacks.

**This leaflet is written by NTEU Fightback activists, as part of the broader campaign to Vote No to stop concessions, at Melbourne Uni and beyond.**

**Read more about the campaign against concessions around the country on the NTEU Fightback website: [www.nteufightback.site](http://www.nteufightback.site) and Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/NTEUfightback](https://www.facebook.com/NTEUfightback)**

**NTEU information opposing the Melbourne Uni variation, including detailed analysis of the clauses, is available on the branch website. Not a member? Vote No - and Join the Union!**

**PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR WORKMATES AND FRIENDS**

