

Selling the framework - let's play bullshit bingo!

They say

We say

This is an unprecedented crisis!

Sure, but why should staff be made to pay for it?

We are appalled by the Liberal government's actions

Yes, aren't we all, and? We're not the ones who are selling a response to those actions which has been personally endorsed by Education Minister Dan Tehan.

If the framework isn't voted up at your campus management can make wide-spread redundancies as a cost-cutting measure or stand-down employees without pay.

But there are no guarantees that it will actually save jobs because redundancies can still be made if work is "no longer required". Provisions of the Fair Work Act mean that managers have hardly been interested in imposing stand-downs anyway. Gutting protections around "managing change" (clauses 42 and 43 of Heads of Agreement) mean management can fast track the major restructurings that lead to mass redundancies.

This will see casuals and fixed-term workers coming back to work

Not if they were already sacked, courses are 'consolidated', services remain closed and the work they had been doing is done by an ongoing employee.

This won't impact your workloads, current protections remain for workloads

Except for clause 21a. in Heads of Agreement says "This might include re-arranging an academic's workload for the year. This may result in the allocation of teaching and related duties beyond that permitted by those workload clauses".

We've made it more progressive by making sure the first \$30,000 of your salary is protected against pay cuts - bonus point if they say "we wanted it to be \$50,000".

But a 10% fraction (and pay) cut can be made across the board with no protection.

This is only temporary - after a year all your old pay and conditions will come back!

Except if there is a 6-month extension (clause 5) and your EBA period expires and this is all up for negotiation and it has been 'proved' that staff can manage to work on lower pay and higher workloads. At a workplace meeting at RMIT a union member who has seen a decade of "temporary" cuts in Greece shared their saying - "There is nothing as permanent as a 'temporary' cut".

Management wanted to go a lot further than this...

Yes, they always do that's why we have these things called unions to stop them. Pity that our union is selling this rather than fighting it.

Management will put their own variation to a vote with 24 hours' notice.

But the only thing stopping them with the framework is a flimsy MOU which is not a legally enforceable instrument. The union should put its resources into organising massive vote NO campaigns not giving away conditions over the bargaining table.

We haven't been negotiating in secret, we told you we were negotiating

But even if you slipped a line in an email somewhere, nothing was ever provided about what was on the negotiating table. In a normal bargaining period members get to set the limits and decide our log of claims to management before negotiations start, why have members been given zero input?

There's no alternative to the framework.

There is. We should resist every attempt to undermine what we now have in our enterprise agreements. We should be running a massive public campaign for government funding, disputing the bullshit of the VCs, and expanding workplace organisation by mobilising members behind every available administrative legal procedure that hinders management efforts to place the burden of the crisis on us. That's how we can build our industrial power for now and the future. Have we forgotten something? Oh yeah - you don't start the 'resistance' by demoralising your members and selling out their wages and conditions for threadbare promises.