



24/05/2021

Mr Conrad Mewton
Senior Business Affairs Executive
Pact
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Dear Conrad

Pact/Bectu TV Drama Agreement

Bectu would like to invite PACT to immediately open negotiations on updating the terms and conditions of the PACT/BECTU TV Drama Agreement 2017. I will detail the points the union would like to discuss below.

Firstly, I would like to reflect on the past 14 months; the pandemic has been extremely challenging for everyone in our industry with much of the burden being placed on freelance workers. Despite equally contributing to tax revenue, many of our members, unlike permanently employed UK workers, have not received any financial government support. Suffering significant debt and depleted savings, some have even unfortunately lost their homes.

The pandemic has exacerbated both the financial and employment rights divide between freelance workers and those on permanent contracts. I am sure we can agree freelance workers are the backbone of the television industry and deserve to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

We know both Pact and Bectu had envisaged the agreement being updated by now but circumstances – not least the pandemic – have got in the way and a re-visit to the 2017 agreement is now long overdue. However, now our members have returned to work, we believe it is time the agreement is revised and improved, to ensure the terms of the agreement are protected and our member's hard work, dedication and loyalty to this industry are compensated appropriately. We believe safeguarding and modernising these terms is pivotal to improving our members well-being and mental health as well as protecting the industry from attrition of experienced and skilled crew.

This is the list of issues we would like to discuss

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1. **Withdrawal of PACT guidance** – This has been one of the primary sources of friction on set. The Pact guidance in our opinion varies the terms of the agreement. This has had a damaging effect on the agreement and the relationship between crew and production. We therefore request that the guidance is immediately removed so we can begin negotiations in good faith. This must be withdrawn before we commence talks.
2. **Better terms for above £5m budget bands** – The growth in streaming content and HETV has accelerated since the agreement was signed in 2017. As a result we would like the agreement to reflect how the market has changed.
3. **Prep & Wrap** – The union seeks alignment with the MMP terms. Prep and wrap has been exploited by some productions who have incorrectly imposed prep and wrap across all departments contributing to excessive working hours.
4. **Unsocial hours** – We accept that it can be unavoidable to work at night, weekends or late in the evening; if this is the case the crew should be compensated appropriately. We would like to discuss the following:
 1. **Dailies get a rest day for night work** - Workers on 'daily' contracts receive a paid rest-day' at the end of a block of night work as they will be unable to find paid work the following day.
 - **Any work beyond midnight should be classified as nightwork.**
 - **Weekend work should be paid at a premium**
 - **Work between 2100 and 2300 will be paid at X work between 2300 and 2400 at X.**
 5. **Bank holidays – T2 if worked T1 if not** – Crew deserve a day off or should be compensated when most of the country are having a break. This principle is agreed and recognised in other industry agreements.
 6. **Definition of Semi-Continuous Working Day (SCWD)** – We have received confusing interpretations of the SCWD and we would like to define this in the agreement.

Bectu would like to initiate the process as soon as possible and are keen to avoid prolonged talks that can frustrate negotiations. Therefore, in the interest of good industrial relations we request that the above points are negotiated with meaningful resolution within 3 months of the date of this letter. The union believes this is both an achievable and reasonable timeframe.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



Spencer MacDonald
National Secretary
London Production & Regional Production Division

cc Bectu Reps