



AoC Employment Services

The Association of Colleges (AoC) is pleased to announce a new partnership with Irwin Mitchell to provide an **Employment Advice Service** to members. Irwin Mitchell has considerable education sector expertise and understands the way that colleges work. This partnership replaces the current employment helpline so that, from **1 August 2017**, members will have access to legal advice from qualified employment law solicitors.

Core member services

As part of the membership package with AoC, colleges will receive:

Employment Advice Service

Access to a dedicated advisory service covering day-to-day HR and employment law issues. This will be delivered by Irwin Mitchell and available via:

- Phone: 0333 0100319
- Email: aocemployment@irwinmitchell.com

Up-to-date templates, guides and model policies

Members will have access to a range of tools and templates to guide them through any employment process. This will be available through a dedicated section on our website – www.aoc.co.uk/employment.

Regular newsletters

Best practice and case law developments will be sent directly to members providing the very latest intelligence.

Training and webinars

Annual training events in regions will be delivered by Irwin Mitchell for all AoC members. In addition, the AoC webinar calendar will cover key HR topics throughout the year.

AoC regional networks

Members will continue to have access to the regional networks specifically for HR professionals in colleges. This will provide the opportunity to meet and discuss shared issues with colleagues from other colleges.

Networking

In addition to AoC HR networks, members will also be able to access specialist external training and networking events hosted by Irwin Mitchell which provide an opportunity



to discuss case scenarios in a confidential and open group, as well as developing a wider network of contacts (other employers/HR professionals) in the local area.

National networks

AoC will run two national groups, which will bring together colleges from across the country:

- **Employment Group** (previously Employment Advisory Committee) will contribute to the development of AoC policy on matters relating to the employment, organisational design and the attraction and development of future talent within the sector. The Employment Group will lead on national pay negotiations and make a national pay recommendation for members to consider.
- **Human Resources Group** (previously National HR Network) will provide for two-way communication between AoC and our members to seek and disseminate information, advice and guidance on workforce issues; including industrial relations, employment law and education policy matters.

National negotiations

AoC will continue to act as the employers' representative on the National Joint Forum (NJF), working in partnership with members. This will continue to include national pay negotiations to deliver a recommended pay award each year, as well as joint working with trade unions on nationally recommended joint agreements. We intend to engage a college HR practitioner (on a secondment basis) to work with our negotiating group to lead national negotiations on behalf of members.

AoC point of contact

AoC's employment services will be overseen by Mary Vine-Morris, alongside her role as Area Director for London, together with an employment adviser. They will monitor and manage the relationship with Irwin Mitchell, as well as the national negotiations process with trade unions and AoC's Employment Policy and Human Resources Groups.

Paid-for services

In addition to the core services, members will have access to the following paid-for services:

AoC in partnership with Irwin Mitchell:

- **AoC Annual Employment Law Conference** – AoC's must-attend event for HR professionals will be delivered in partnership with Irwin Mitchell.



- **Discounted rates for complex legal advice** – as part of our partnership, AoC has secured reduced hourly rates for legal advice for members that wish to instruct Irwin Mitchell to undertake legal work or to provide more complex/specialist support.

AoC Create services

Building on the knowledge and expertise within our membership body we provide high-quality, value for money services which include:

- Leadership recruitment and succession planning through our Executive search service
- Coaching for leaders
- Interim management support
- Digital recruitment campaigns through our specialist jobs board – www.aocjobs.com.
- Consultancy support for your organisational requirements particularly through change and transformation
- People development through training courses, workshops and in house training events
- Tailored conferences on critical issues for colleges

These are additional paid-for services working with our members to increase capacity and capability for sustainability, resilience and change. All of the profit from these services is invested back into AoC and the impact and outcomes is shared across the sector.

Why are we changing?

Following the review of AoC, members were clear that they benefited greatly from having access to our employment helpline service. We believe that by outsourcing the advisory service to Irwin Mitchell, AoC is able to ensure it is as cost-effective as possible, while developing the service to members with access to sector experienced lawyers, who will be able to provide pragmatic legal advice that is appropriate to colleges' circumstances. In addition, AoC's employment guides and templates will be overseen by Irwin Mitchell, giving members the benefit of resources that are underpinned by legal expertise.