



BARGAINING ALERT 3 • 26 June 2026

Minor Progress on Minor Issues

Even Less Progress on Major Issues

**By Jordan Morelli
Chief Negotiator, QUFA**

QUFA and Queen's have been at the bargaining table since May. After this week, we will take a two-week hiatus and will reconvene on 13 July 2026 in earnest with thirteen bargaining days scheduled between then and the end of July. QUFA and Queen's have both tabled their initial round of proposals (excluding comprehensive monetary issues), and for several proposals the parties have had several back-and-forth rounds of counterproposals. The discussions at the bargaining table remain collegial and collaborative; however, the most challenging issues have yet to be resolved.

Merit Framework

Last week, the QUFA Bargaining Team hosted a Town Hall-style meeting where we presented QUFA's proposals to implement the merit framework recommended to the Joint Committee to Administer the Agreement (JCAA) by the Joint Working Group that was created via Letter of Agreement (LOA) 6 in the current Collective Agreement (CA) (which is set to expire on 30 June 2026).¹ We also presented Queen's partial response to this proposal, which we received only the day before the Town Hall. Queen's has yet to respond fully to our proposals to implement the merit framework, and there is much work to be done if we are to successfully negotiate the implementation of this new framework. The QUFA Bargaining Team is committed to finding a resolution that benefits QUFA Members.

Job Security and Employment Stability

As we reported in *QUFA Alert! 2*,² QUFA tabled proposals based on five key themes. With their response on 25 June 2026 to the Job Security and Employment Stability theme proposals (which were tabled on 20 May 2026), Queen's has now responded, at least partially, to all of QUFA's initial proposals. QUFA likewise has responded to all of Queen's initial proposals. The QUFA Job Security and Employment Stability-themed proposal package is quite comprehensive and includes many proposals that QUFA Members have indicated are very important to them. This package of proposals includes proposals to standardize teaching-focused positions, and to provide a pathway for long-serving Adjuncts

What Happens When the CA Expires?

As noted, the current CA expires on 30 June 2026 at midnight. There is a provision in labour law that says that as long as the Parties continue to negotiate and have not triggered the events that lead them to be in a legal job action position (lockout or strike), the provisions of the now-expired CA continue to prevail. This is referred to as the "freeze provision." Practically speaking, for Members considering phased retirement or promotion in the coming years, the dates, deadlines, and terms laid out in the 2025-2026 CA continue to be in effect. If this changes, we will advise you immediately.

to convert to teaching-focused positions. This package also includes a proposal to create a spousal appointment type. We proposed to modify the criteria for promotion to various ranks so that they are consistent and fair, and to provide equitable access to promotion to all ranks to Adjunct Members. QUFA also proposed the complete elimination of the use of the QSSET tool, as such instruments are widely known to be highly flawed, including being biased against members of equity-deserving groups. Unfortunately, Queen's has rejected the substance of nearly all of the aforementioned QUFA proposals.

Conciliation

Before entering into this round of collective bargaining, QUFA announced our intention to file for conciliation near the end of July. This is a normal part of the collective-bargaining process and does not signal that anything is amiss. Indeed, some unions, such as USW 2010, routinely file for conciliation on the very first day of bargaining. In conciliation, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development appoints a Conciliator. The cost of the Conciliator is paid by the Ministry. If bargaining reaches an impasse with the Conciliator, they report to the Minister, who issues a No-Board Report. Conciliation is a mandatory step before either party can initiate job action, but it does not mean that job action is inevitable, or that it is even likely.

Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER)

One final matter that the Bargaining Team wants to raise is the topping up of QUFA Members' Professional Expense Reimbursement (PER) accounts. QUFA believes that the past practice has been for Queen's to top up these funds with the annual amounts at the beginning of each fiscal year on 1 May.

This year, that has not happened. Members have reported that they are being told by the University Finance office that the 2026-2027 funds will not be added until the renewed CA has been ratified by the Parties. QUFA views this departure from past practice as constituting an unfair labour practice and has advised Queen's that it expects this to be rectified by 1 July 2026. QUFA's expectation is that Members' PER accounts will be topped up immediately based on the 2025-2026 amounts until we have a ratified and renewed CA, and can then be adjusted as necessary, as is done with our salary during bargaining years. Queen's has assured QUFA that this top up will happen this year on 1 July 2026. If after 1 July 2026 your PER account has not been topped up, please reach out to QUFA (qufa@queensu.ca) to let us know.

QUFA Bargaining Team

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Notes

¹The materials we shared can be found on the QUFA Web site: <https://qufa.ca/merit-discussion/>

²*QUFA Alert!* and other bargaining materials can be found on the QUFA Bargaining Web site: <https://qufa.ca/bargaining/>

QUFA can be reached at qufa@queensu.ca.