

STARTING SALARIES GUIDANCE

Introduction

The fundamental principle of the University pay structure is that all roles are evaluated to a grade. However, the University recognises that there are advantages in having some reasonable flexibility in setting starting salaries (with the spinal points within the grades) for new appointments. That said, it is important that due consideration is given to the various factors that might influence the starting salary offer, the potential impact on existing staff within a team, and being mindful of the University's gender pay gap.

Gathering the information required

It is advisable that managers scope out the maximum spinal point that can be offered to a new team member that is equitable with their colleagues prior to advertising the vacant position. Candidates expectations can be managed at an early stage. In addition, salaries outside of that approved via the Staff Request Form (SRF) cannot be offered to candidates.

The outline for agreeing starting salaries are as follows:

- a. For appointments on Grades 1-8 starting salaries should be within the normal incremental range for the evaluated grade for the post.
- b. For Professional and Managerial appointments at Grade 9, the starting salary should be within the incremental range for the evaluated zone for the post.
- c. For Professorial appointments the starting salary should be aligned with the appropriate zone for the individual concerned by reference to the zone criteria (specific advice can be sought from an HR Partner or Director of HR.

For appointments at all levels the Recruiting Manager/Panel Chair has reasonable flexibility to negotiate with candidates within the relevant grades/zones.

Information regarding existing salaries within a team are available to Line Managers through Manager Self Service (MSS). Where appropriate, additional information on comparative salaries can be provided via the relevant HR colleagues.

Approval from the Director of HR or a nominated Senior HR colleague is required for any appointment in the contribution range.

Managing candidates' expectations

The expected salary range for a particular role should normally be set out clearly within the relevant advertisement, and candidates' expectations should be managed accordingly.

Salary offers will normally reflect the skills, experience and knowledge of the candidate as relevant to the post in question. The candidate's current salary may be reasonable marker, but offers should not

be based only on external salaries or be disproportionate on this basis. It is worth noting that if appointments are made towards the top of the grade there is limited scope for incremental or accelerated progression unless it is into the contribution range.

There will be occasion where the salary offer will be limited in line with the funding agreed as part of a research project (for example). The maximum salary offer should be indicated clearly on the vacancy advertisement for the role.

Recruiting Managers/Chairs should also be mindful of the full value of the University's employment offer (i.e. base salary, leave entitlements, pension scheme membership and reward opportunities) when making offers, and the other factors that may influence a candidate's decision to accept an offer (e.g. travel time and/or commuting costs).

Recruiting Managers/Chairs should also note the effective dates of incremental pay progression and the University rules in relation to start dates as follows;

- a. For appointments at G1-G5 with start dates prior to 1 March, the incremental date would be 1 August in that year. For appointments on or after 1 March, the incremental date would be 1 August in the following year.
- b. For appointments at G6-G8 with start dates prior to 1 April, the incremental date would be 1 October in that year. For appointments on or after 1 April, the incremental date would be 1 October in the following year.

Where possible Recruiting Manager/Chairs should try to avoid creating anomalies in pay relativities between new starters and existing staff and should always consider salary levels across a team in relation to skills and experience when making a new appointment within that team.

Internal candidates

For internal appointments at the same grade, the expectation is that the same spinal point and increment date is retained.

For internal appointments at a lower grade, the expectation is that a spinal point within the normal range is an appropriate offer. There should not be an expectation from the employee that the spinal point from the higher grade will be matched.

For internal appointments at a higher grade, it is normal practise to appoint at the next available increment that provides a rise in pay . Differences in take-home pay are noted between grade 5 and 6 (due to increased pension contributions) and as a result, the movement of more than one spinal point between these grades will be agreed.

In the instances when an internal candidate has advanced knowledge, skills and experience for the role, an increased starting salary further up the payscale can be approved as long as it fits in with the spinal points of other comparable roles within the team.

Gender pay gap

Ensuring fair and transparent decisions on starting salary between male and female colleagues will enable the University to reduce the gender pay gap.

Useful information regarding the University's gender pay gap is contained within its [annual report](#). For information specific to the role in question please liaise with the relevant HR Partner or Adviser in the first instance.

Labour market pressures

The University has a formal market-related pay policy that allows for the possibility of additional remuneration to apply where significant recruitment challenges exist. Advice is available from the relevant HR Partner who will liaise with the Director of Human Resources for approvals.