

Durham University and Campus Trade Unions – Update on Agreed Areas of Priority Action (last update: July 2022)

USS Pension

Durham University and DUCU will continue to work collaboratively to advocate for a fair and affordable USS pension scheme. A copy of our joint statement was sent to Universities UK (UUK) in [May 2022](#) and published on the University website.

Local Issues

Durham University and the campus Trade Unions (GMB, UCU, UNISON and Unite) are jointly committed to ensuring that all colleagues working at Durham University do so with the best possible pay and working arrangements. We are pleased to have worked collaboratively and constructively together to create this joint list of priority actions on local issues. We have built upon shared and common ground and carefully negotiated and agreed a package of proposals, which has required movement from both sides. We look forward to working together to take the actions forward.

Local UCU request

How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action

Pay

National Pay Negotiations

Durham University recognises that the JNCHES pay spine needs to be updated. UCEA have indicated that they intend to stand up a working group, including trade unions, to look at the pay spines. This work is expected to take until September 2024 to complete. Durham University will engage with UCEA on this work.

Local Pay

Upon completion of any national review of the JNCHES pay spines (or if there is no national review nearing completion by September 2023), Durham University will consider a local review of Durham University's pay spines, working jointly with our campus Trade Unions.

Local UCU request	How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action
	<p>Pay</p>
	<p>From 1 May 2022, Durham University employees will receive a minimum of £10 per hour in a permanent change to some of our lower spine points. This has increased the pay of c.900 colleagues, who will have their pay further increased when the 2022 cost of living increase is implemented. Taken together, this is a c.10% pay increase for our lowest paid staff, an increase that was initiated by Durham University in recognition of the challenge that the current cost of living crisis poses.</p> <p>Durham University has consistently increased the pay of our employees to a level that is at least equal to the Real Living Wage. Durham University commits to annually increasing pay to at least match the Real Living Wage rate (save for if there were exceptional unforeseen circumstances which would prevent such action), noting that in 2022 the University has exceeded the pay rate of the National Living Wage. Durham University is committed to keeping Real Living Wage accreditation under annual review. The University will also review provision for outsourced roles from third parties, such as Mitie at an appropriate time such as contract renewals or break periods.</p>
<p>Pay progression</p>	<p>Durham University recognises the contribution from its professional staff who are vital to the continued success of the University. The University also recognises the difficulty faced by staff at the top of their pay spine, who are unable to automatically progress to additional increments in their current role.</p> <p>In addition to the current processes under which staff may progress into the contribution points on the pay spine, Durham University is working with the Trade Unions to develop a new criteria and process for staff who have been at the top of their normal pay grade or sitting on the same point within the contribution points for three years or more (and are not eligible for the academic promotion and progression process). Any criteria to allow progress into the ECPs must be based on a fundamental change to responsibilities or exceptional contribution from the employee. Any such review under the new criteria shall take place on a tri-annual basis.</p> <p>Any agreed criteria and process will be temporary and will remain in place until a national review of JNCHES has been concluded and, if considered appropriate, the University concludes a local review of the University pay spines.</p>

Local UCU request	How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action
	<p>Pay</p>
	<p>In addition when a colleague has been at the top of their pay grade for 2 years, their manager will ensure there is a discussion with them about development opportunities to support them to seek roles at a higher grade, if the colleague wishes to do so.</p>
<p>All staff to be paid a loyalty bonus of £2500 in recognition of increased workload during the pandemic and taking into account “lack of national national progress on pay</p>	<p>The University has confirmed a one-off payment to all employees, which includes PGRs carrying out teaching and related activities, to recognise their contributions over the last two years.</p> <p>All employees who had started employment at the University on or before 1 January 2022, and are still employees at the time of the payment, will receive a payment in the July 2022 payroll. The payments will be made on the basis of a simplified but more favourable pro-rata approach. The payment is £1000 to all employees with a contract of employment between 0.5 and 1FTE, £500 to employees with a contract of employment which is less than 0.5FTE and £250 to all PGRs undertaking teaching/related activity.</p> <p>The University has explained to the Trade Unions that this payment is at the limit of affordability and hopes that this, alongside other measures taken during the pandemic, provide meaningful recognition for the efforts made by all our employees.</p> <p>Durham University has also committed to increasing the 2022 annual reward budget, which is used to recognise and reward staff across the University, including Exceptional Contribution Points, Discretionary Awards, team awards and recognition events/awards.</p>

Local UCU request**How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action****Pay and promotion inequalities****Gender pay gap**

Durham University has a Diversity Pay Steering Group which produces an [annual report](#) and has created a comprehensive action plan to reduce the gender pay gap at Durham. Our trade unions are represented on the Steering Group. Our gender pay gap is declining year-on-year, whereas that of the sector is increasing. During the most recent period, our work on casualisation, in collaboration with our trade unions, has resulted in an 8% reduction in the median gender pay gap. The action we have taken to increase pay for colleagues on our lower grades has the potential to help further reduce our gender pay gap. We are recruiting more women into higher grade roles (Grade 7 and above) than ever before and are promoting more women than men year-on-year following revisions to our academic promotion processes. The gender pay gap is mainly due to the structure of our workforce.

Our college system means that we have more lower graded roles than other universities of a similar size and, unlike many other universities, we only outsource a very small number of our lower graded roles. Our gender pay gap is still too high and there is more we can do. We will continue to work constructively and collaboratively in this area and we welcome all suggestions of how we can reduce our gender pay gap.

Race and disability pay gap

We have chosen to publish our ethnicity pay gap and our disability pay gap for the first time in 2022. We will provide relevant data, including disaggregated data for academic and professional staff, save where such data could lead to the identification of individuals. We are reviewing the action plans for these groups through the Diversity Pay Steering Group and invite suggestions for actions that might help us reduce the gender pay gap further from all members of the University, whilst noting the legal requirement to respect the need to ensure equal pay.

Local UCU request	How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Pay and promotion inequalities</h2>	
<p>Grading and job descriptions – PS/Colleges</p>	<p>We are currently engaging with our campus trade unions to review Durham University’s Job Family job description templates. This will ensure that they provide suitable information to attract candidates to Durham and to ensure our staff (and their managers) fully understand the requirements of their role. We hope to roll out the new Professional Services job description templates in August 2022.</p>
<p>Use of market supplements or other attraction payments</p>	<p>Durham University will start work in September 2022 on reviewing its current guidance on the use of market supplements, or other payments to potentially attract candidates to roles. This will ensure that where additional payments are considered, this is undertaken consistently with appropriate benchmarking, so that we remain competitive in the recruitment market.</p>
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Inequalities more generally</h2>	
<p>Buy out staff from University level roles</p>	<p>Durham University will formally recognise the workload for staff associated with appropriate University level roles, for example chairing a Staff EDI Network. This will include the buy-outs for employees and pre-agreed additional working hours for hourly-paid colleagues. We fully appreciate that this is an important element of citizenship. Our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (EDI) is currently considering how best to recognise such work, potentially beyond that which is currently provided in the University’s promotion/progression process and merit/discretionary award process.</p>
<p>Improved partner leave/shared parental pay</p>	<p>In June 2022 we updated our 'family-friendly' policies (such as maternity and paternity leave), making us one of the most family-friendly employers in the sector. We’ve changed our maternity, adoption and paternity policies to remove the time that colleagues need to work before being eligible to receive the occupational payments.</p> <p>Instead of having to work at Durham for 52 weeks before becoming eligible for Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Leave, all employees can access them from the day they start work with us. The length of time you can receive occupational full pay while on Maternity or Adoption Leave is also increased from a maximum 16 weeks to 26 weeks full pay.</p>

Local UCU request

How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action

Casualisation

Implementation of the Casual Working Principles

Durham University and DUCU issued a [joint statement](#) on our sector leading Casual Working Principles in February 2020. The principles include default employment contracts with Durham terms and conditions of employment, including annual incremental progression and cost of living increases. All roles are aligned to our pay scales and have role descriptors to ensure consistency. All roles must undergo a light touch recruitment process to ensure transparency. All work or training which is required to be undertaken as part of a role must be paid for.

We acknowledge that these principles are not yet fully implemented across the University and are committed to making this a reality as soon as possible. These Principles are not optional.

Following consultation with key stakeholders, including our Trade Unions, we are undertaking an end-to-end process review of the administrative processes involved in casual appointments. The HR team is working in partnership with stakeholders on the implementation and launch of the updated processes, which will be introduced in October 2022. This will be supplemented by relevant updates to Guidance. Additional staff have been recruited to HR to support the casual process across the University. This is a measure of the University's commitment to ensuring the Principles and processes are implemented as consistently as possible across the University.

When the University implements the updated processes, it will also take the opportunity to work with Departments to reinforce the University's Casual Working Principles and ensure they are appropriately implemented and embedded across the University. Following the implementation of the updated process, Departments will be required to adhere to the core Casual Working Principles. HR will continue to work closely with Departments and Trade Unions to ensure such adherence. Departments will also be reminded about the pay tariffs for teaching/related activity which were agreed with DUCU and must be used as guidance when calculating pay for individuals before they start work. It is acknowledged that the variety of teaching/related work across the University varies significantly between departments and modules and there can be no set tariffs.

To support the implementation of the new casual processes for AY 2022/23 and the relaunch of the Casual Working Principles, Durham University will agree to dedicated DUCU facilities time of 0.1FTE for an initial period of 6 months, which may, following review, be extended to 12 months. The DUCU representative and the University will work constructively together to identify and resolve concerns.

Local UCU request**How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action****Contracts****Teaching contracts**

The University agreed to end the use of nine-month teaching contracts and the default for several years has been to offer teaching contracts of at least 12 months. This allows colleagues to engage in research, development or related activity from the previous teaching year.

Any outstanding teaching contracts of 9 months are being reviewed by HR and Departments when brought to the attention of the Head of Department or Executive Dean. As a default they will be extended to a 12-month contract (or, where appropriate and if there is business need, a longer fixed term).

If nine-month contracts are being offered to individuals, this should be raised with the relevant Head of Department and Executive Dean.

23 month teaching contracts

The University has no policy which suggests or requires 23-month contracts. The University's HR Business Partners have reminded departments that 23-month contracts should not be put into place. Our Recruitment team will also review requests.

Any 23 month contracts will be reviewed when they are brought to the attention of the Head of Department or Executive Dean and, as a default, they will be extended to a 24 month contract (or, where appropriate and if there is business need, a longer fixed term). We will reiterate to Faculties that contract length should be aligned to business need/availability of funding.

Fixed Term Contracts

Durham University has committed to working with our trade unions to review the use of fixed term contracts across the University. The review will include: updating guidance on when fixed term contracts may be used, considering relevant data on the use of short fixed term contracts with a view to considering if more appropriate arrangements could be put in place, reviewing redeployment arrangements and reviewing the use of bridging funds for situations when contracts are not concurrent. While the University and the Trade Unions recognise the importance of this work, it has been agreed that a review will not commence until 2023.

Local UCU request	How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action
	<h2>Workload</h2>
<p>Review of workload</p>	<p>Durham University has recognised for some time that workloads within the University require attention and this was further highlighted in the recent staff survey. In partnership with our trade unions and in consultation with a cross-section of our staff, we aim to produce high level workload principles by November 2022. These will be designed to tackle workload concerns for all colleagues across the University.</p> <p>We have convened two working groups, which will include colleagues from the campus Trade Unions; one to make recommendations for academic workload and one to make recommendations for professional services/colleges workload. Terms of reference are now in place and the Workload Steering Group will meet for the first time on Monday 25 July.</p> <p>Once the working groups are established and in line with the high-level workload principles, they will determine their programme of work, with actions being implemented in the following 6-12 months. The working groups terms of reference will include oversight of the implementation of their output. Where actions can be taken sooner, we will seek to implement suggestions and practices as soon as possible in recognition of the pressures some staff are facing now.</p> <p>As part of the discussion about workloads, a meeting will be convened with the Trade Unions, the Provost and other senior staff to discuss TAS data.</p>
<p>Review of DPPC</p>	<p>The Provost Office is currently undertaking a review of the DPPC process to examine whether there is scope to reduce the workload involved. This will include consideration of the value-added that is achieved through the time-consuming reading of outputs, mindful that we have a considerable amount of existing information from other sources.</p> <p>Some changes to process were agreed at the recent University Academic Promotion Committee (UAPC). Recommendations will be considered by Senate in October 2022. Campus trade unions will be consulted in advance of Senate as part of this process.</p>

Local UCU request	How we are progressing with agreed areas of priority action
	<h2>Wellbeing</h2>
<p>Wellbeing</p>	<p>In 2021 Durham University implemented a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for both students and staff. We are currently in year 2 of implementing a comprehensive Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and we have launched a hub of resources and support/training materials for colleagues and managers.</p> <p>Actions to date have included the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme, which includes 24/7 access to counselling and advice for staff. We have launched a Menopause Policy and supporting information and 50 staff Mental Health First Aiders have been trained and will soon be available for colleagues across campus to contact. We acknowledge that improving working terms and conditions, as outlined in this document on pay, casualisation, workload and equalities and in the joint statement on pensions, are integral to improving wellbeing at work.</p>
<p>Working Principles</p>	<p>In July 2022 we launched the University's Working Principles. These aim to help colleagues 'work well together' to look after themselves and each other. The Principles focus on culture, meetings, emails and expectations and they have been endorsed by our trade unions and EDI Networks.</p> <p>The Principles are not designed to help with workload (which we will look at separately) but should help colleagues reset their work-life balance.</p>