

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT JOB EVALUATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the National Framework Agreement?

The Framework Agreement (the Agreement) was negotiated at national level between the trade unions representing employees in the Higher Education sector and the Universities & Colleges Employers Association. The Agreement is intended to modernise the existing pay and grading structures. The new structures will be fair and flexible with all employees placed on a single salary spine. Grading structures will also be modernised as part of this process.

To help ensure equality of treatment and the transition to the new single pay spine the University intends to implement a job evaluation exercise across all job groups.

Further details on the Agreement are set out in Appendix One.

What is Job Evaluation?

Job evaluation is a process whereby the demands and scope of a post can be assessed relative to other posts. Job Evaluation does not assess the individuals who occupy posts or their performance in these posts. Job Evaluation does not determine pay, it merely determines a grade relative to other posts and grades are then allocated to pay scales.

Why do we need to conduct University wide Job Evaluation?

The University currently has a significant number of different staff groups, grading structures and pay scales. A University wide Job Evaluation exercise is the most effective and robust means of determining future grading structures and the transition to the single pay spine.

The Job Evaluation exercise will also help ensure equality of treatment.

Which Job Evaluation Scheme will be Used?

In common with most other Higher Education Institutions (over 75%) the University will use the Scheme known as HERA (Higher Education Role Analysis) which was developed by a consortium of Higher Education employers. The University will use a computerised version of the HERA Scheme which will speed up the process.

Will every job be subject to a full job evaluation exercise?

Most Job Evaluation Schemes involve the detailed analysis of a representative sample of posts. The posts in the sample are known as 'benchmark roles'. These 'benchmarks' will be used to develop future grading structures and the transition to the single pay spine. The remaining jobs will be matched on to grades relative to the 'benchmark' jobs.

The University and the Trade Unions will identify a representative sample of posts to be used as 'benchmarks'. Care will be taken to ensure the sample is representative of the full range of job types and grades. Approximately 350 jobs will be included in the sample (representing approximately 10% of the workforce).

When will all this happen?

The University and the Trade Unions are currently jointly determining the way forward to get the process underway. In line with the Agreement the University aim to complete the transition to the new single pay spine by 1 August 2006.

The first part of the process is to identify and evaluate the benchmark roles. We aim to complete this by October 2005.

What will be the outcomes?

Evidence from other employers, who have implemented similar schemes, would suggest that at the end of the process the grading of the vast majority of posts will be unchanged. A small number of posts will be graded higher and small number will be graded lower.

What if I don't agree with the evaluation outcome?

Most Job Evaluation Schemes make provision for appeals. The University in conjunction with the Trade Unions will develop an appeals mechanism. Employees who are dissatisfied with the evaluation outcome can make a formal appeal.

What if my appeal is unsuccessful?

In the event that the appeal is unsuccessful the post will remain as determined through Job Evaluation.

What if the Job Evaluation exercise results in the post which I occupy being down graded?

The agreement allows for individuals to be protected on their current salary for a period of up to four years.

What happens during the period of protection?

The University will endeavour under the jointly agreed Redeployment Principles to seek opportunities for individuals to move to or apply for posts at their original grade. There may also in some cases be opportunities, arising from restructuring, to enhance the duties of the post to bring it up to the original grade.

In the event that there is no change to the post at the end of the protection period the person occupying the post will revert to the salary appropriate to the grade allocated through the Job Evaluation Exercise.