



Voluntary Redundancy Scheme 2026 Key Facts

The University's Voluntary Redundancy Scheme will open on 7 September 2026. This document details eligibility to apply, the redundancy compensation available and the selection process.

1. Eligibility to apply

The voluntary scheme is open to all salaried employees with the following exceptions:

- Any employee holding a post that is fully funded from an external source is not eligible to apply. Where an employee is temporarily in a post other than their substantive post, for example, acting up, they will be eligible to apply provided their substantive post is fully funded by the University.
- Any employee with less than 2 years' service is not eligible to apply.
- Any member of staff with less than 12 months remaining on their contract is not eligible to apply.
- Any member of staff providing cover for a colleague on career break, maternity leave or long-term sick is not eligible unless the substantive postholder also applies.

Important to note:

- Any application will also be assessed relative to the fundamental purpose of the scheme, which is to achieve a reduction in the financial deficit.
- The University is under no obligation to approve an application through the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme.

2. Voluntary redundancy compensation

The compensation will be in two elements:

- An element based on the Labour Relations Agency (LRA) redundancy ready reckoner with a voluntary multiplier applied. The [LRA](#) provides free, impartial and confidential advice to employers, employer bodies, employees and workers in Northern Ireland. Its [Redundancy Ready Reckoner](#) is an official NI tool for

- calculating the statutory number of weeks to be paid as statutory redundancy compensation; and
- An element based on 50% of gross annual earnings.

Element one

This will be calculated based on the LRA ready reckoner with a maximum reckonable service of 20 years. The figure calculated using the LRA ready reckoner will be multiplied by 1.3. The maximum compensation available under this element will be 39 weeks (that is, maximum compensation available based on LRA ready reckoner is 30 weeks, $30 \times 1.3 = 39$).

In line with the provisions of the University's Redundancy Policy, redundancy pay under element one will be based on actual gross weekly earnings, or the amount permitted under the Employment Rights (NI Order) 1996, whichever is the greater. The amount specified in the Order is currently £783 per week.

This is a significant enhancement to the comparable element in the redundancy policy.

Where weekly earnings vary, actual gross weekly earnings for the purposes of the calculation above will be based on the best (highest) weekly earnings during the 12 weeks before the redundancy occurs.

Element two

This will be 50% of gross annual earnings (this equates to 26 weeks' pay based on actual gross weekly earnings).

This is a significant enhancement to the comparable element in the redundancy policy (which is 20% of actual annual earnings).

Affordability will be part of the selection process. If the overall 'payback' period is greater than three years, the application for voluntary redundancy will not be approved. Employees will be given the option of voluntarily reducing their compensation package to bring the payback period below three years.

Where an employee works less than full-time, their redundancy compensation will be pro rata to the hours they work.

Minimum payment

The minimum payment is 50% of actual gross annual earnings plus the amount that the employee is entitled to under the LRA ready reckoner.

This is a significant enhancement to the comparable element in the redundancy policy (which is 20% of actual annual earnings plus the amount that the employee is entitled to under the LRA ready reckoner).

Maximum payment

The maximum compensation will be 65 weeks (39 weeks under element one and 26 weeks under element two).

To note: for staff earning below the amount permitted under the Employment Rights (NI Order) 1996, in real terms the maximum compensation will be greater than 65 weeks at the rate of their actual earnings.

The total compensation will be subject to a maximum payment threshold of £123,750. This means that no employee will receive more than £123,750 regardless of the figure calculated under elements one and two.

In line with current tax legislation, Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003 Section 403, it is expected that the first £30,000 of any voluntary redundancy compensation will not be subject to deductions for income tax or national insurance. Any amount paid more than £30,000 will be subject to income tax and national insurance.

3. The selection process

All applications received will be given due consideration. The primary factor used to determine if an application will be approved will be organisational resilience - when an application is approved and the employee's post is not replaced, will the School or department be able to maintain a viable, appropriate and sustainable service.

There are two stages of decision making:

- Stage one is the Faculty, School or department assessment led by the relevant Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member.
- All requests with provisional approval at stage one will be subject to a further approval stage by a University level committee established for this purpose and comprising some members of the SLT.

Stage one

After the closing date, each SLT member will receive the applications from all parts of their portfolio. The SLT member will use their extant senior leadership structure to consider all applications received, duly engaging members of that leadership structure to ensure appropriate scrutiny is applied to each application. If a member of the leadership team applies, appropriate alternative arrangements will be applied.

The primary factor used to determine if an application will be approved will be organisational resilience, that is, when an application is approved and the employee's post is not replaced, will the School or department be able to maintain a viable, appropriate and sustainable service.

Each School or department will have its current organogram:

- If they can produce a new organogram which will allow the School or department to maintain a viable, but reduced service, the applications will be approved at the initial assessment stage.
- If the School or department cannot produce a viable organogram, some or all of the applications will not be approved at the initial assessment stage.

A key part of the assessment will be the identification of 'key roles' that must be retained. The School or department will be supported in this exercise by People and Culture.

As part of the selection process, Schools and departments will be required to conduct a workload assessment to ensure that the workload for the staff that remain is safe, manageable and staff are not overloaded. Proforma documentation will be developed to support the workload assessment. No applications will be approved until the workload assessment is completed.

Where work is being ceased but it potentially could create other organisational consequences, there must be communication between relevant senior officers to ensure this is managed and incorporated into the workload assessment.

For applications that are supported, the School or department will be required to confirm that this will result in a permanent reduction in salary cost and the deletion of the post in the specific area concerned.

Where one of the Vice-Chancellor's direct reports applies for voluntary redundancy, the stage one assessment of their application will be made by the Vice-Chancellor.

Stage one will also explore opportunities for 'bumping redundancies'. Bumping cannot involve a promotion for any of the parties involved.

Stage two

The stage two process will be conducted by the university level committee specifically established for this purpose.

The university level committee will consider both those applications that were 'rejected' at stage one as well as those approved at stage one. They may overturn any of the decisions made at stage one (both approval and rejection decisions). The university level committee will robustly test the assumptions which underpin the new organograms developed by the school/department at stage one and the related workload assessments.

Where one of the Vice-Chancellor's direct reports applies for voluntary redundancy, the stage two assessment of their application will be made by SLT based on a presentation made by the Vice-Chancellor to SLT (the applicant will not be present).

Another part of the university level committee's role will be to explore opportunities for 'bumping redundancies', either within a Faculty or department or across Faculties or departments.

Important to note:

- Decisions on applications will not be communicated to the applicants until both stage one and stage two are completed.
- The University is under no obligation to approve an application and no employee has an entitlement to voluntary redundancy.

Appeal

Whilst there can be no appeal of the stage one or stage two decision per se, the University will permit appeals where an applicant believes there has been a procedural irregularity. The appellant will be required to specify the alleged procedural irregularity.

If the appeal is upheld, the appeal panel may instruct that the application is reconsidered. This reconsideration may or may not result in the original decision being overturned.

The University will also consider whether the procedural irregularity has consequences for other applications.

How and when the outcome will be shared

Decisions on applications will not be communicated to the applicants until both stage one and stage two are completed.

Following the full assessment process the University will write to all applicants to notify them of the outcome of their application. If the application has been approved, the employee will be required to confirm acceptance of the terms of the

offer. Where the employee confirms acceptance of the offer, the University will determine the date of leaving in consultation with the employee.

Re-employment of staff who accept voluntary redundancy

Staff who accept voluntary redundancy will not be permitted to apply for re-employment for a period of two years following the date of their redundancy.

(3 Sept 2026)

End of document.