

ANNUAL REVIEW GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

1. Introduction

1.1 At the University of Essex, staff are appointed to a spinal point on the grade associated with their role. These grades have been determined in relation to nationally agreed role profiles.

1.2 On the salary scale within each grade, there are a varying number of increments and subject to satisfactory performance staff progress through the salary scale by one increment in August (grades 1-6) or October (grades 7-10). Once a member of staff has reached the top of their grade, one or more discretionary increments are available. Discretionary increments are awarded on the basis of sustained exceptional performance.

1.3 Salary scales are also subject to review in August of each year and any percentage uplift to the salary scale is agreed through a national pay bargaining process. To attract and retain high performers, the University uses additional mechanisms to reward high performing staff.

1.4 To support its strategic aims of excellence in education and excellence in research, the University will ensure that there is an opportunity each year for staff to be recognised and rewarded over and above the nationally agreed pay review, where there is exceptional performance in relation to the role, or other duties as specified by the line manager.

1.5 When enhancing financial reward and recognition for exceptional performance, consideration will always be given to the University's Equality and Diversity framework. Equality data will also be reviewed regularly to identify any groups that may be underrepresented.

1.6 Decisions regarding performance-related pay and reward for Professional Services staff will be made by a sub-committee of the Remuneration Committee, chaired by the Registrar. The sub-committee will decide on the award of increments and bonuses and report the decisions to Remuneration Committee. Remuneration Committee will have responsibility for University policy in relation to performance related reward for staff.

2. Eligibility

2.1 All fixed-term and permanent professional services staff grades 1-10 are eligible to apply for an increment or bonus through this process. Academic staff and staff employed within the Grade 11 salary range are considered under separate arrangements.

2.2 Staff with documented performance concerns or currently active disciplinary/capability warnings will not be eligible to apply for a bonus or increment.

3. Criteria

3.1 Members of Professional Services staff must provide evidence to demonstrate exceptional performance and impact over and above normal expectations of their role.

3.2 Staff may either be awarded:

3.2.1 A performance-related accelerated or discretionary increment¹: for sustained and continuing exceptional performance; or,

3.2.2 A bonus: for exceptional performance in relation to a one-off project, activity or outcome.

3.3 Examples of the types of activity that may be rewarded by a bonus or increment for Professional Services staff are detailed on the application forms.

¹ Members of staff at the top of their grade may apply for a performance-related discretionary increment. In exceptional circumstances, those members of staff not at the top of their grade may be considered for an accelerated performance-related increment which will be in addition to the standard increment they would be due to receive based on satisfactory performance.

4. Accelerated/Discretionary Increments

4.1 The University recognises, and wishes to reward, exceptional and excellent continuing and sustained work performance as part of the Annual Review exercise. This may be achieved by awarding accelerated increments, which can be awarded to staff who have not yet reached the maximum of their salary scale or by the award of "off-scale" discretionary increments.

4.2 If you wish to request an award of this nature you are required to provide positive evidence that the member of staff is not only fully justified in their appointment to their current job and grade but has demonstrated exceptional ability such that his or her performance and contribution is judged to be outstanding/exceptional by comparison with others. The award of an accelerated/discretionary increment is to reward continuing and sustained excellent work performance over an extended period of time.

4.3 Recommendations for the award of both accelerated and discretionary salary points should take into account exceptional performance.

4.4 Nominations for professional services staff who work in Faculties and are managed centrally should be made via their Head of Section. If you would like to nominate a Faculty based, centrally managed Professional Services colleague for an award, you should provide evidence of their exceptional performance to their Head of Section for consideration and approval.

5. Points to Note:

a) It is not possible for a person on the maximum point in the discretionary range to receive a further discretionary increment;

b) All staff are informed when Annual Review documentation is available on the website, and advised to contact their line-manager if they wish to be considered in this process. Applications that do not have the support of the Faculty/Section will not be submitted for moderation by the Registrar and Secretary.

c) The Faculty/Head of Section will provide feedback to the individual(s) concerned on any applications that do not have the support of the Faculty/Section.

6. Bonus Payments

6.1 In addition to rewards for exceptional work performance based on achievements over an extended period of time via accelerated/discretionary increments, as outlined above, the University recognises, and wishes to reward, exceptional work performance based on short-term achievement in relation to specific work tasks/projects.

6.2 This recognition will be in the form of bonus payments from the University to reward exceptional and/or meritorious work performance and/or achievement over the last year. This procedure is intended to complement the existing mechanism for the award of accelerated/discretionary increments which seeks to reward continuing and sustained performance over a longer period of time.

6.3 Heads of Sections and Executive Deans may submit recommendations for the award of bonus payments either for individual members of staff or to small groups of staff. Bonuses are available in units of £500 ranging from £500 gross to £2000 gross. Bonuses are taxable and non-pensionable. The value of group bonuses will be divided equally among all of the nominated individuals.

6.4 Individual staff or small groups eligible for consideration must have made a significant and outstanding contribution to the department/section/University, which is exceptional in comparison with the normal requirements of the post.

7. Application process

7.1 Applicants should complete the relevant application form and forward to their line manager/Head of Department who will comment on the individual's application and summarise overall performance and contribution. The form could also be completed by the line manager should they wish to recommend an employee for an increment or bonus. Once the comments have been added the line manager/Head of Department forwards the application to Exec Dean/Head of Section.

7.2 The Exec Dean/Head of Section will coordinate increment and bonus recommendations within their area. They will then pass recommendations via HR (annualreview@essex.ac.uk) to the Registrar.

7.3 Nominations for staff who work in Faculties or Professional Service areas but their line management is located centrally, should be made via their line manager.

7.4 Each department/section may decide their internal process for making recommendations for increments or bonuses ensuring that these are robust, transparent and equitable.

7.5 All applications will be sent to the Registrar and Secretary by the published deadline who will review and report decisions to Remuneration Committee.

7.6 Successful applications will be awarded increments on their normal increment date (1 August for grades 1-6 or 1 October for grades 7-10). Bonuses will normally be paid the month following the decision.