

Jon Hegerty and Ruth Smith
Joint Union Side Secretaries
Joint Higher Education Sector Trade Unions

By email

26 January 2023

Dear Jon and Ruth,

2023-24 New JNCHES pay round

Further to the last meeting of the 2023-24 New JNCHES pay round, which took place yesterday, I write to set out UCEA's full and final offer on behalf of our participating employers.

We hope that it will be clear by now, from our discussion in the New JNCHES meetings, that higher education institutions (HEIs) have immense sympathy for staff facing cost of living pressures. Employers recognise that the effect of high inflation falls disproportionately on the lower paid. For this reason, on behalf of participating HEIs, UCEA brought forward by six months the 2023-24 pay round. As part of this process, UCEA has proposed an interim uplift from 1 February 2023 and a further uplift from 1 August 2023. This award is structured so as to provide higher increases to those at the lower end of the pay spine. UCEA is committed to working constructively with the HE trade unions to reach an early settlement to the 2023-24 New JNCHES pay round. In order to reach a swift conclusion to these negotiations, UCEA is willing to make the following offer to uprate the new JNCHES pay spine from 1 August 2023 by the following percentages:

Spinal Column Points	Uplift
3 to 5	8%
6 to 14	7%
15 to 25	6%
26 to 51	5%

This structure of pay award would ensure an uplift of 8 percent for all staff earning up to and including £19,333. It would ensure an uplift of at least 7 percent for staff earning up to and including £22,622. All staff earning £30,502 or less would receive an uplift of 6 percent. All staff earning between £31,411 and £65,578 would receive a minimum uplift of 5 percent. In addition to this base pay uplift, around half of the staff covered by the negotiations are also eligible for incremental progression worth up to 3 percent.

To reiterate our position, we are prepared to implement a proportion of this award as an interim uplift from February 2023, primarily in recognition of the cost of living pressures facing HE staff within the 2022-23 financial year. This is a significant financial risk for many HEIs who are unable to forecast with certainty their income for 2023-24. However, to provide support to staff, our members understand the importance of trying to make an early pay award.

Our proposal is that, from 1 February 2023, there would be an interim uplift for staff based upon the following distribution:

Spinal Column Points	Uplift
3 to 5	3.2%
6 to 14	2.8%
15 to 25	2.4%
26 to 51	2%

The remainder of the uplift would then be awarded from 1 August 2023, as follows:

Spinal Column Points	Uplift
3 to 5	4.8%
6 to 14	4.2%
15 to 25	3.6%
26 to 51	3%

We will also recommend that all Post-92 HEIs that have retained separate London weightings increase these by the same percentage as our minimum uplift of 5 percent.

This offer is at the limit of the sector's affordability. Many HEIs themselves face significant increases in costs against a backdrop of already stretched finances. As you know, a significant number of HEIs remain in deficit, while the median surplus across the sector is a modest 2 percent of total income. As a consequence, while employers have a great deal of sympathy with staff coping with cost of living pressures, no HEI could offer a pay award that would get close to current levels of inflation.

The challenging financial climate also means that some employers will find it difficult to protect jobs while implementing the level of uplift which we propose and we are aware some institutions will need to make use of a deferral clause for either one or both elements of the uplift.

We very much hope that the Union Side will recognise the attempts which UCEA has made to provide a meaningful uplift for all staff, despite the financial constraints facing the sector, while prioritising increase to those staff most affected by cost of living pressures.

We believe this full and final offer on pay is fair in the circumstances and we ask that the unions put it to their members.

As we have previously discussed, following the conclusion of the meetings set out in our agreed process relating to the pay award for 2023-24, UCEA will begin discussions over the additional non-pay items which will be submitted by the Unions' as part of their joint claim for 2023-24, in line with the jointly agreed process.

Yours sincerely,



Raj Jethwa
Chief Executive