



UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX 2022

DISCRETIONARY PAY REVIEW GRADES 1 – 9

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This programme is applicable to all staff holding positions on pay grades 1-9. There is a separate *Discretionary Pay Review* process for Professorial staff.
- 1.2. The programme is designed to encourage and reward exceptional performance results, values and behaviours which help to drive the University's mission, and Strategic goals as stated within the University's Strategic Framework, Sussex 2025, and in any cascading School/Divisional Strategies.
- 1.3. The Strategic Framework document is in its fifth year and therefore the values, behaviours and Strategy, should now be embedded within all aspects of work at the University.
- 1.4. Organisational Financial Health: the University's general financial health will determine its ability and decision to pay out under the programme each year. The achievement of organisational targets and objectives will be required.
- 1.5. The language used in this document is not intended to create a term and condition of employment. This document does not create any contractual rights or entitlements. The University reserves the right to revise the contents of this policy, in whole or in part. No promises or assurances, whether written or oral, which are contrary to or inconsistent with the terms of this paragraph create any part of a contract of employment.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. The Discretionary Pay Review is accessible to all eligible University staff holding positions as defined in 1.1 above, provided that they have been in post on the effective date of the award (October 1st) for over six months and are not subject to a disciplinary or capability process or a performance improvement plan.
- 2.2. Employees who do not have contracted hours (i.e. all Doctoral Tutors, Associate Tutors, School Tutors, Language Tutors & Sports Tutors) will be eligible for a non-consolidated award under this policy, furthermore those staff on short term contracts will also be eligible for an award, the award of a discretionary payment is to recognise an individuals/team contribution to the University's objectives. Please email reward@sussex.ac.uk for further guidance on this point if necessary.

- 2.3. Those staff who are appointed on Research contracts will also be considered for an award under the Discretionary Pay Review Process. Where it is demonstrated that those on Research contracts meet the same threshold for an award as other colleagues, they too will be eligible. The cost of any award for this group will be ascribed to the research grant itself.
- 2.4. Please note that Discretionary Pay Review awards *are not to be used* where a manager considers the requirements of the job to have grown or changed significantly such that the job itself has changed, all such cases should be discussed with the relevant HR Business Partner in the first instance.
- 2.5. Please also note that, where individuals are covering duties attached to a vacant post or an absent colleague or are temporarily acting-up into a higher post, a DPR performance award *is not* the appropriate means of compensation, and all such cases should be discussed with the relevant HR Business Partner in the first instance.
- 2.6. In previous years a maximum of 10% of staff from any School/Division have been eligible to receive an award. This year, in order to ensure that staff in lower graded positions are being recognised for exceptional work and that they have equal access to the Discretionary Pay Review, staff will be split into two grade cohorts: grades 1-6 and grades 7-10. Up to a maximum of 10% of staff from each of these two grade cohorts from any School/Division will be eligible to receive an award under the Discretionary Pay Review process. School/Divisional moderation panels must determine the nominations that they wish to support within the 10% criteria.
- 2.7. In a further change, team bonuses will constitute an additional category for recognition and will be counted in addition to the 10% thresholds outlined above. For the purposes of the Discretionary Pay Review, a team will constitute a maximum of 8 people.

3. **Equality of access**

- 3.1 Managers will consider all directly reporting staff members for performance awards within their areas, regardless of any protected characteristics (these comprise: gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership). Staff on leave (e.g. maternity, paternity, adoption, sick, study), should also be considered.
- 3.2 Each Head of School and Director of Professional Services is required to provide a statement explaining how they have ensured equity, specifying actions that they have taken to address any particular disparities that have come to light.
- 3.3 Unconscious bias training is now mandatory for all those staff in decision making roles with respect to recruitment, promotion or salary review. At the start of the process, all Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services are required to ensure that those intending to sit on the moderation panel have completed the unconscious bias training.
- 3.4 The Reward Team will be responsible for the equalities monitoring of the programme, and will produce a report at the end of the process to ensure the University of Sussex is meeting its equalities responsibilities, this report will be

shared with the University's Remuneration Committee, and may be sent to the University Executive Group for review at the request of this group.

4. **Effective Date of Discretionary Pay Review Awards**

- 4.1. Discretionary Pay Review performance awards will normally be paid out on the February pay date each year with an effective date of October 1st in the previous year.

5. **Performance Criteria**

- 5.1. Performance considered for reward under the programme represents that which is truly exceptional and goes *significantly beyond* that which would normally be expected and which is also captured and **evidenced** in **appraisals**.
- 5.2. The performance criteria required for individual awards are applied within each School/Division and are established to align the individual's efforts with the School/Division's Strategy, which in turn, supports and helps deliver the University's mission and Strategic goals as described in the [Sussex 2025 Strategic Framework document](#).
- 5.3. Consideration of an award under this policy will also refer to the University's values (contained in the Sussex 2025 Strategic Framework), and the Dignity and Respect Policy, (an outcome from the 2018 staff survey), for context the University believes that the **behaviour** of staff in delivering outcomes are as important as the outcomes themselves, as such an assessment of an individual's performance should include their behaviours as defined within the applicable policies.
- 5.4. Performance and the reasons for nomination must be evidenced on the Discretionary Pay Review form.
- 5.5. For those academic staff who are nominated for a DPR award, but where they have also been successful in seeking promotion, then they will only be entitled to receive a non-consolidated bonus payment. This is because their promotion will be effective from the 01 October 2022, i.e. the same date that the DPR payment would be payable from, as such they cannot be given an additional increment on their new pay scale as the reason for recognition through the DPR relates to their previous post, as such an accelerated increment will not be accommodated.
- 5.6. Managers, must note that performance linked to work during the Covid-19 pandemic should not be the basis for nominations, as all staff at or below the top of the non-discretionary zone of Grade 8 received recognition for exceptional performance in January 2021 linked to work during the pandemic.

6. **Types of Pay Awards**

- 6.1. Whilst submissions for pay awards will only be made in cases of exceptional performance, a distinction will be drawn between a high-performance year or a one-off achievement or project and evidence of sustained performance excellence over time.

- 6.2. **Discretionary Pay Review Bonuses:** where an award is based on an exceptional high-performance year or a one-off achievement (or project), the award will be paid by way of a lump sum bonus payment.
- 6.3. Discretionary Pay Review Bonuses may be:
- 6.3.1. An individual bonus payment: where an individual performance bonus is awarded, it may be awarded as a proportion of an increment up to a full increment on the University pay scale. The minimum bonus payment will be £750 (pro-rated for part-time staff). Therefore if the difference between a staff member's current point and the next increment on the scale is less than £750, the bonus amount should be the difference between the staff member's current salary and a two increment rise. Line managers will assess performance and determine the amount applicable in each case. Supporting evidence for the recommendation will be included within the Discretionary Pay Review form. Bonuses will be pro-rated for part-time staff.
 - 6.3.2. A team bonus payment: where a team bonus is awarded, all team members will receive the team bonus amount of £750. Bonuses will be pro-rated for part-time staff. For the purposes of the Discretionary Pay Review, a team constitutes a maximum of 8 people. Teams can consist of staff from across different Schools and/or Divisions, and managers are encouraged to liaise with colleagues in other areas where this may be appropriate.
- Team bonus payments are an additional category for recognition and are counted in addition to the 10% thresholds outlined in 2.6, although it is generally expected that no more than one team from each School/Division will be nominated.
- 6.4. The minimum bonus payment will be £750 (pro-rated for part-time staff).
- 6.5. Awards of performance bonuses may be made to staff whose posts have been red-circled or who have reached the top of their grades.
- 6.6. **Discretionary Pay Review Salary increase:** where a recommendation is put forward for exceptional, sustained performance over a number of years. The award will be consolidated into base pay by way of one additional pay point increment on the pay and grading structure (unless the individual's salary is already at the top of the incremental scale or point 6.7 applies).
- 6.7. To ensure that lower paid staff receive appropriate recognition for exceptional performance the minimum salary increase will be £750. Therefore if the difference between a staff member's current pay point and the next increment on the scale is less than £750, two pay points should be awarded instead of one.
- 6.8. Discretionary Pay Review Salary increases may be:
- 6.8.1. Increments awarded within the non-discretionary zone of a grade:
 - a) These increments may be awarded to individuals demonstrating exceptional and sustained performance over time but who have not reached the discretionary range of the current grade. As increments

awarded within the non-discretionary zone of the grade will *be in addition* to the annual automatic increment, these awards will necessarily be quite rare and significant awards to achieve. Managers putting forward such cases must ensure that there are extraordinary and documented performance results and **evidence showing sustained performance over the previous two years must be submitted with the DPR form.**

- b) Accelerated increments should not be regarded as a means of adjusting the salaries of existing staff in the light of new appointments.

6.6.2 Increments awarded within the discretionary zone of a grade:

- a) These increases may be awarded to individuals demonstrating exceptional performance but who have reached the non-discretionary top of their current grade.
- b) Discretionary salary points are fixed pay points, in that there is no progression from one point to the next, unless a further recommendation for a performance salary increase is approved.

- 6.7 Awards of Discretionary Pay Review Salary increases may be made to staff whose posts have been red-circled or who have reached the top of their grades. In these cases, the award will be given as a lump sum payment and will represent the amount of difference between the current pay point and the next within the same grade, or in the cases of those at the top of their grades, the amount of difference between the top rate pay point and the one immediately below.

7 Process Guidelines. Moderation and Sign Off

- 7.1 The University Executive Group (UEG) and the Remuneration Committee will provide governance regarding programme design, affordability, and equity.
- 7.2 The programme will be communicated and coordinated annually within each School/Division during the Autumn Term.
- 7.3 It is now mandatory that schools and Professional Services convene a panel which should consist of the Head of School or PS Director and other senior colleagues in order to review the nominations put forward from within the school/service. Membership of that panel should be carefully considered, it is recommended that the diversity of the School/service is reflected in the composition of the panel. Unconscious bias training is now mandatory for all those staff in decision making roles with respect to recruitment, promotion or salary review.
- 7.4 Moderation for Professional Staff in PS Divisions and Schools: A panel chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, and including the Director of Human Resources, a Director of Professional Services and the Director of University Operations and Strategic Planning, will meet to moderate the recommendations. Directors of Professional Services may be asked to attend the meeting if there are any issues that arise that require further discussion or enquiry around pay equity.

- 7.5 Moderation for Academic Staff: Heads of School will meet the Provost and Director of Human Resources to discuss the cases of all academic staff. Particular emphasis will be placed on issues of equity and diversity.
- 7.6 HR will provide Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services with spreadsheets at the launch of the process, setting out the current grades, grade points and salaries for each of their eligible staff members.
- 7.7 Line managers will consider all direct reports for awards and submit recommendations via the relevant Head of School or Director of Professional Services using the Discretionary Pay Review form.
- 7.8 Staff members may nominate themselves for an award, and are entitled to submit a request to be considered directly to the School/Divisional moderation panel for consideration for an award, but line managers may be asked for their view on such cases by the moderation panel.
- 7.9 Discretionary Pay Review forms will include evidence in support of each case being recommended and will form the basis of review and discussion, seeking advice from the relevant HR Business Partner as needed.
- 7.10 Heads of School and/or Directors of Professional Services will consult with all line managers in their Schools/Divisions regarding their award recommendations. They will be accountable for completing and returning the spreadsheet and supporting documentation to the HR Reward Team by email to reward@sussex.ac.uk. All recommendations will be sent to the Reward Team, so that they are all sent to one destination and processed by one team.
- 7.11 HR Business Partners will join the Head of School or Director of Professional Services to review the submissions, and will be able to advise on reward submissions and matters of process.
- 7.12 All completed Discretionary Pay Review forms and award spreadsheets must be provided to the central Reward Team for processing by 25th November 2022.
- 7.13 Only submissions using the current documentation format will be accepted.
- 7.14 The full recommendations and costs of the process will be considered at a meeting comprising the Vice-Chancellor, Provost, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Human Resources and Director of Finance.
- 7.15 Payroll will process the awards for payment and these will normally be paid the February pay date each year with an effective date of October 1st in the previous year. HR will prepare letters for those staff who have been successful, confirming the awards, for distribution to Heads of School and Directors of Professional Services, so that they can be given to staff in person by their line manager.
- 7.16 There is no right of appeal against a decision not to grant a pay award but an individual may request feedback from their manager on the decision.