

**From:** [Tracey Slaven](#)  
**To:** [White, Tracey](#)  
**Subject:** Update on the Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group including harmonisation of terms and conditions (including the 35-hour week)  
**Date:** 04 July 2023 15:30:40

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Dear colleague,

This is to update you on the work of the Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group and key areas of consideration – Harmonisation, including the 35-hour week, Casualisation and Professional Services Regrading/Career Progression.

As a reminder, you can click [here](#) to read about the background and more detail about the work of the Group.

Thank you to staff who have provided feedback so far via the [Reward - Feedback Form](#). If you wish to submit feedback please continue to do so through this form.

### **Harmonisation, including the 35-hour week**

The University remains committed to harmonisation of terms and conditions for staff, including the introduction of a 35-hour working week across all grades.

Our intention had been to phase implementation of a 35-hour week, based on May 2023 for posts graded 1-4, followed by posts graded 5-9 from October 2023. Phasing was originally proposed as a means of addressing the impact of the increase in the Accredited Living Wage. This has since been addressed as a result of the national pay award applied in February 2023.

In addition, our aim was to harmonise key terms and conditions relating to areas including annual leave, sickness leave, overtime and public holiday payments from October 2023.

SMT have considered information presented to them which has, so far, focused on the 35-hour week for staff in posts graded 1-4. This includes the impact that moving to a 35-hour week has, both financially and otherwise, based on feedback from Schools, Directorates and staff. At the same time, consultation with Schools and Directorates on posts graded 5-9 has commenced.

Due to the projected financial challenges facing the University, as highlighted during the Principal's Open Session on 7 June, the SMT agreed that further consideration needs to be given to the timing for implementation. Picking up on feedback received, the SMT also agreed to review whether a phased approach is preferable.

The Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group will now consider in a focused workshop, how we implement harmonisation, including the 35-hour week. This will include reflecting on whether, in the context of the financial challenges, a phased approach is appropriate to ultimately achieve our aims.

A further update will be provided as soon as possible and I would encourage you to provide feedback, if you have not already done so, through the [Reward - Feedback Form](#). You can also provide feedback through your line manager or your trade union representative as follows:

Unison – Owen Cox ([o.m.cox@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:o.m.cox@abdn.ac.uk))

Unite – Brian Paterson ([b.paterson@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:b.paterson@abdn.ac.uk))

UCU – [ucu@aberdeen.ac.uk](mailto:ucu@aberdeen.ac.uk)

### **Guaranteed Minimum Hours and Temporary Services contracts**

The Group is continuing to review the University's use of GMH and Temporary Services contracts, including the impact of the [new guidance](#) launched in September 2022, and which is being piloted this academic year.

In addition, the proposal recently submitted by Aberdeen UCU is being taken forward by seeking to accelerate actions to further improve practice in this area and to create a sub-group to focus on this key area of mutual interest.

More information about the additional work and the sub-group will be published soon.

Meanwhile, if any member of staff on a Temporary Services or GMH contract has any concern about the nature of the contract they have been given, they can raise this directly with their [HR Partner/Adviser](#).

### **Review of Regrading Policy and Procedure and Career Progression for Professional Services staff**

The sub-group are making good progress in reviewing the Regrading Policy and Procedure. It has been agreed that it would be helpful to get feedback on proposed changes as well as career progression opportunities for Professional Services staff through a series of focus groups.

Information about these will be announced soon and if you are keen to be involved please email Tracey White, Senior HR Partner (Reward and Policy) at [twhite@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:twhite@abdn.ac.uk).

Best wishes,

Tracey

Tracey Slaven

**University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer**



