



University of
St Andrews

Starting salary policy

Document type	Policy
Scope (applies to)	All staff
Applicability date	24/02/2025
Review / Expiry date	05/12/2025
Approved date	24/02/2025
Approver	Deputy Director of Human Resources
Document owner	Human Resources Officer
School / unit	Human Resources
Document status	Published
Information classification	Public
Equality impact assessment	None
Key terms	Staff/Pay and benefits/Pay rates arrangements
Purpose	Provides guidance on the new joiner salary process.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.6	Change of HR approval contact.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	24/02/2025

Table of contents

1.	Policy statement	3
2.	Non-standard starting salary	3
3.	Contribution-Related Points	4
4.	Market Pay Issues	4
5.	Externally Funded Posts	4
6.	Version control	4

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 In support of the University's commitment to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, all salary offers must be made within the standard incremental points of the grade at which the role has been evaluated using the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) job evaluation system and within the advertised salary range. To ensure equity and consistency in approach to starting salaries across the University, employees should normally be appointed on the first incremental point of the designated grade as this reflects the fact that individuals will have the basic skills and competencies required for the job, but will take time to gain experience in performing their role in full.

2. Non-standard starting salary

- 2.1 Appointment to a salary beyond the first point must be supported by objective and transparent justification. Reasons may include, but not limited to:

- The prospective employee is in receipt of a salary and benefits package in excess of the value of the package on offer. However, a higher current salary should not be the sole factor which justifies a salary offer above the minimum of the scale. There must be sufficient evidence obtained during the application process to demonstrate the applicant's skills and knowledge, relevant to the role, to merit the higher pay point.

Or

- The prospective employee has a significant amount of relevant experience, knowledge and skills that are beyond the essential criteria of the post which may result in them being able to fulfil the requirements of the role more quickly than expected or to be able to take on additional duties (within the agreed grade) than advertised. However, length of service should not be the sole factor which justifies a salary offer above the minimum of the scale. There must be sufficient evidence obtained during the application process to demonstrate the applicant's skills and knowledge, relevant to the role, to merit the higher pay point.

- 2.2 Before any decision is made to offer an alternative point, consideration should be given to any potential anomalies/inequalities that may arise as a result, for example:

- Inconsistencies with the remuneration of current staff fulfilling the same (or very similar) roles;
- Risk of appointing two or more people to the same (or very similar) roles but at different points on the salary scale;
- There is some evidence to suggest that women are more reluctant to negotiate on salary than men;
- The successful candidate may come from employers beyond the UK with vastly different pay scales and currencies which do not match their experience/knowledge in terms of UK pay.

- 2.2.1 Care must be taken in considering an appointment above the minimum and any proposals of this nature should be discussed with Human Resources before an offer is made.

- 2.3 When prospective employees have been paid above the first point of the advertised grade in a previous post but have not been working in that post for 6 months or more, they will not normally be eligible for appointment higher up the grade on the basis of previous earnings.

- 2.4 Please note that these principles also apply to internal staff when moving to a post at a higher grade. However, when an existing member of staff is appointed to a new position at the same grade as their current post, they will be appointed on the same incremental point as the role they are leaving; in some circumstances this may, therefore, be higher than the first point of that grade.
- 2.5 Authorisation to appoint above the bottom point of the grade must be sought from the [Recruitment team](#), before confirming a salary offer with a prospective employee. 'Non-standard' salary offers must not be made without this authorisation.
- 2.6 The agreed salary should be added to the Details of Appointment form and forwarded to the [Recruitment team](#). Where justification for this increase relates to the appointee's current/previous salary, any agreement made will be subject to verification by Human Resources. The Recruitment Assistant handling the post will normally contact the candidate for a recent payslip or other relevant evidence.

3. Contribution-Related Points

- 3.1 The contribution-related points at the top of each grade should not be used for a starting salary unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases authorisation must be sought from [VP People and Diversity](#), who may in turn seek confirmation from the Quaestor (for professional service posts) or the Master (for Academic posts) before confirming a salary offer with a prospective employee.

4. Market Pay Issues

- 4.1 External factors affecting salaries (e.g. market rate) will be dealt with via the [Market supplement policy](#). If you have any queries regarding the use of this policy, please direct these to Human Resources via [HERA](#).

5. Externally Funded Posts

- 5.1 The principles outlined in this policy relate to both internally and externally funded posts. Please note that the level of funding available in a grant will not be viewed as the sole justification for placing an employee at a higher incremental point on the designated grade.

6. Version control

- 6.1 This policy is not contractual and may be amended by the University from time to time.
- 6.2 This document will be reviewed periodically in conjunction with the University's recognised Trade Unions. Any feedback on the policy content should be directed in the first instance to the [Recruitment team](#) or via the [HR Feedback Form](#).

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Migration of the policy to the Governance Zone.	Published	Lisa Stewart, Human Resources	24/06/2019
1.1	Change to the classification from internal to public	Published	Lisa Stewart Human Resources	23/10/2019

1.2	Minor changes to wording/additions. Mainly section 2.	Published.	Susan Gibson	26/07/2021
1.3	Change to review date only.	Published	Susan Gibson	29/08/2023
1.4	Change to review date to allow the Recruitment Manager to review upon appointment.	Published	Susan Gibson	27/03/2024
1.5	Amending the expiry date only to coincide with policy review consultation dates.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	25/07/2024
1.6	Change of HR approval contact.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	24/02/2025