

New JNCHES Pay Spine review: Terms of reference

Background and purpose

The New JNCHES 2023-24 negotiating round includes commitment to a joint review of the UK HE pay spine, with time limited negotiations to seek agreement of a new pay spine and principles for its implementation, paying particular attention to compression within the pay spine.

The negotiations will seek agreement on a no detriment basis and ensure that the proposal is a properly costed, jointly agreed position which both UCEA and the trade unions are able to recommend to their respective memberships, in preparation for implementation from the beginning of the 2024-25 pay year taking necessary action after carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment to rectify any discrimination exposed by that.

Remit of negotiations

The outcome of the negotiations will be an agreed, jointly costed proposal for the reform of the pay spine which will strive to standardise the differentials between pay points and be accompanied by a revised Appendix A to the New JNCHES Framework Agreement laying out the principles to be applied by HEIs during implementation and a revised Appendix B listing the new annual salary pay points. To achieve this, the following will be included:

- consideration of data relating to the use of the pay spine in the sector including, but not limited to:
 - o qualitative research relating to the challenges and limitations of the current spine from employers.
 - o quantitative data on grading structures and number of staff on each pay point, including equality data.
 - o secondary research on approaches taken to address similar pay and grading developments in other sectors.
- consider current and future developments through the pay spine, identify and seek to address/remove drivers of pay spine compression, including a potential mechanism to avoid future compression of the pay spine.
- model potential changes to the pay spine and examine the associated costs.
- agree a proposed new pay spine.

The remit of the negotiations will be to agree proposals for a new UK pay spine. It is recognised that the constituent members of New JNCHES will need to consult their members on such proposals; the intention of these negotiations will be to agree proposals that can be recommended for acceptance.

Both parties understand the importance of, and sign-up to the principle of, reaching agreement on a new UK pay spine. If agreement is reached both parties agree that the new spine will be recommended for implementation. In the unlikely event that no agreement is reached the existing position regarding the pay spine will remain as per the New JNCHES agreement.

Negotiating group membership

- 10 representatives from unions, one FTO and one lay rep from each union.
- up to 10 Employer representatives (including UCEA officers and representatives from HEIs).

For this work, support will be provided from ACAS with ACAS conciliators joining meetings as appropriate/needed to ensure that progress is being made.

Additional specialists may be invited with the agreement of both sides to provide input and research findings where relevant.

Pay spine review negotiations: Chair and secretariat

The negotiations will be chaired on an alternating basis.

The joint secretaries will act as co-ordinator between meetings.

UCEA will provide secretariat support to the negotiations.

Meetings

Will be held regularly and as required to progress work effectively within the agreed timescale.

The meetings can take place in person or virtually, so that the joint work can be completed within the agreed timescales and provide reasonable opportunity for both sides to participate.

Responsibility for hosting meetings will be shared between the employers the trade unions and ACAS as appropriate.

Timescales

The first negotiating meeting will be held as soon as possible with the aim to complete negotiations by the end of October 2023.