**Subject to Formal Acceptance**

**Phase 1 package of measures jointly agreed by Durham University and the Campus Trade Unions**

1. **Introduction**

1. We value the relationships with our local TUs. We look to work closely with them on areas where we have agency to make positive change. The following package of measures has been endorsed by the University Executive Committee and agreed with our campus Trade Unions following several constructive and positive meetings.

1. We look forward to building upon the progress made to date. We also acknowledge that some issues are more complex and will take longer to work through. There is much we can achieve together, and this is an important first step. We also recognise that any recommendations must be within the constraints of national pay bargaining and reflect the financial situation of the University. We remain committed to continuing discussions with our trade unions on matters of local importance.

1. Possible additional priorities for the coming academic year may include (but are not limited to) benchmarking our annual leave entitlements for staff in grades 1 to 6.

**Immediate Priorities**

1. **Real Living Wage Accreditation**
   1. While the University tracks the Real Living Wage and has chosen to match (or better) each annual uplift, it is not currently accredited and therefore not obliged to do so. We consider that the time is right for the University to seek accreditation from the Real Living Wage Foundation.
   2. Real Living Wage Accreditation will support those engaged in the lowest paid roles, many of whom are students.
   3. Accreditation will require that anyone engaged to work at the University must be paid at least the real living wage (currently £10.90 p/h). We have a small number of casual staff who are not currently on our pay scales and their pay falls below the Real Living Wage rate. This is mainly student ambassadors in central and college roles and students working in their colleges.
   4. The requirement to be compliant would also extend to contractors, albeit we would work with our contractors to phase this in, likely when contracts are renewed.
   5. We would seek accreditation as soon as possible, with implementation of the Real Living wage from the next annual update in May 2024.
2. **Enhanced Support for UKVI Costs**
   1. The University and the campus trade unions are concerned about forthcoming increases in visa fees, which will impact on our international staff.
   2. The University currently covers:
      1. the cost of visas for all new staff who have a contract for 2 years or more; and
      2. the cost of Indefinite Leave to Remain for current staff, normally when a colleague has been in the UK for 5 years.
   3. The University does not currently cover the cost of the annual Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS).
   4. New and current staff can access a £10,000 interest free loan to cover other visa costs such as the IHS and dependents. The loan can be accessed multiple times, as long as the amount owed does not exceed £10,000.
   5. The Government has recently announced a significant increase in visa costs. While most costs will increase by 15-20%, the Immigration Health Surcharge will increase from £624 to £1035 per adult per year. We do not have an implementation date, but it could be as soon as October. It has not been confirmed whether this increase will apply to all migrants or only new migrants. We have asked UCEA to confirm this position and to lobby the Home Office that it should not apply to current migrants.
   6. We must remain competitive to attract and retain a diverse global workforce and we have benchmarked widely across the sector. We therefore propose to pay visa costs for all new staff regardless of contract length and pay the full IHS for new members of staff for the first year.
   7. We will also contribute £500 per year for all existing staff as a contribution toward the cost of the IHS (which is what we believe the approximate increase in cost will amount to). This will continue until the member of staff is eligible to apply for indefinite leave to remain.
   8. Interest free loans of up to £10,000 will continue to be available to cover the cost of dependents.
   9. We will keep our position under review as more information becomes available.
3. **Starting Salaries for Assistant Professor Roles on the Research and Education and Education Track**
   1. We want to ensure that the starting salaries of our Assistant Professor roles  on the Research and Education Track and Education Track remain competitive.
   2. It is proposed that from 1 October new Assistant Professor roles on the Research and Education Track and Education Track will be advertised at a minimum of grade 8.
   3. We will commit to move all staff current Assistant Professor roles on the two Tracks from grade 7 to grade 8 by 1 January 2024.  This will take some time as we will need to map out a process for assimilation and review current job descriptions to ensure they reflect grade 8 requirements.
4. **Introduce New Career Development Fellowships**
   1. We are committed to reviewing the use of fixed term  teaching contracts, which are often undertaken by staff at the outset of their academic career. Such roles can offer limited support and do not always have time allocated to engage in opportunities which would appropriately equip staff to progress in an academic career.
   2. Career Development Fellowships would be the normal expectation, and would usually consist of a 2-year fixed term appointment with enhanced support and built in time for development activities, such as research which aligns to research development expectations and/or other appropriate development activities such as pedagogy/ training (to be agreed on appointment).
   3. There will be some exceptions, which may be for a range of reasons such as cover for maternity, sickness and to cover other shorter-term requirements. There may also be a justification for longer term appointments in some cases. Details will need to be worked through with Executive Deans and Departments, with new arrangements introduced from 1 October 2024.
5. **Commitment to the ‘Durham Professional’ initiative**
   1. The University is committed to providing a wide range of career development opportunities for colleagues.
   2. We are committed to build on our firm foundations of skills and career development for professional services (PS) colleagues by developing the concept of the “Durham Professional”.   This will include a talent development approach for PS which will deliver an increased awareness and take up of professional development opportunities, for example we will promote the concept of “career development” roles which span 2 grades and include a tailored development plan to ensure the postholder can progress to the higher grade.  We will work to ensure that our professional services colleagues can develop, and ensure their expertise and contribution are acknowledged and recognised.
   3. We will look to build upon these strong foundations during 2023-24 with a renewed focus on career development, skills development. This will include bringing the PS community together, on recognition and through exploration of institutional partnership with the Association of Higher Education Professionals (formerly AUA). We are working to develop an inclusive range of options and activities that will ensure Durham will be well aligned with colleagues from other universities and in doing so are reflecting on good and engaging practice from across the sector.
   4. We would anticipate that as DU Professional develops and embeds, we will see increased career mobility across our PS colleagues, coupled with increased staff retention and take up of our wide range of professional and personal and development opportunities.
   5. This work is already in development with an anticipated launch date of January 2024.
6. **On-Call Arrangements**
   1. A number of our staff currently perform important on-call activity, often responding to incidents in the University. This may involve them coming onto site or dealing with the issue remotely.  It is unpredictable if/when people will be called or how long an incident will take to resolve.
   2. We propose to benchmark on-call arrangements both within the University and externally.  This will include looking at on-call arrangements with a view to improving consistency, considering the level of on-call payments and the potential for time off in lieu. UEC Leads will also be asked to review how many people need to be on call based on business and operational requirements.
7. **Trade Union Facility Time**
   1. DUCU and Unison have requested additional facility time. The University recognises that it has and will continue to do positive work with our trade unions which is to the benefit of all of our staff.  We also recognise the time and effort that our trade union colleagues put into their roles.

We have agreed to provide additional support to our trade unions and will allocate UCU an additional 1 FTE of facility time. We will increase Unison’s Facility time from 0.2FTE to 0.3FTE.

1. **Ending of the Marking and Assessment Boycott (MAB)**
   1. The MAB has been very challenging for many members of staff (whether taking action or not), and even more so for many of our students. As we all appreciate, the current mandate for MAB comes to an end on 30 September. Recent developments indicate that the MAB may end sooner than this date. This would be welcome news for our whole community and would give us all an opportunity to move beyond the MAB and focus on what we now need to do to support our students.
   2. DUCU has confirmed that, subject to acceptance by its members of this package, it will encourage members to prioritise and complete all outstanding marking.
   3. Separate communications and guidance will be issued when more information is available.