

# HR policy briefing

## 8 February 2024

# Agenda

- Standardisation of job descriptions workstream (*Emma Hodgkinson-Last, Reward*)
- Holiday pay
- Prevent duty - training
- New legislation
  - Paternity leave
  - Redundancy protection
  - Flexible working
  - Carer's leave
- General updates

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# Standardisation of job descriptions

Work commenced w/c 15th January on the Standardisation of Job Descriptions workstream resulting from the HR Grading Service Review conducted in 2022.

## **Workstream Objectives:**

- To develop and expand the suite of standard JD's to meet the needs of analytical job evaluations & the differing departmental needs
- To reduce high numbers of job evaluations being carried
- To increase the quality & consistency of JD's
- To put in place mechanisms & processes for ongoing insight & review of standard JD's so that they remain relevant & appropriate

## **Projected departmental benefits:**

- Streamlined approach for developing job descriptions – reducing time spent by departmental HR teams and line managers developing JD's
- Greater clarity, efficiency and consistency for managing the job evaluation process

*Scope: University grades 1-10*

# Standardisation of job descriptions

| Engage & Review           | Develop                   | Pilot | Implement | Training & Resources | Ongoing Metric & Insights |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-----------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>JAN – mid/late FEB</i> | <i>late FEB -----&gt;</i> |       |           | <i>APRIL</i>         | <i>APRIL &amp; beyond</i> |

## ***Early insight into themes from engagement sessions:***

- Multiple factors may be contributing to the underutilisation of generic JD's so it is unlikely that the development of new generic JD's in isolation would meet the overall project objectives
- Improving communication, visibility and transparency across the university in relation to using generic job descriptions and when to submit a request for grading
- The creation of an internal SharePoint for HR may give better visibility to roles that are graded across the university
- Expanding the generic job descriptions available and throughout the grade structure

# Standardisation of job descriptions

## Next steps...

*Initial feedback has been gathered and the focus over the next month will be:*

- Review qualitative insights to identify key themes and agree priorities
- Establish whether further engagement is required
- Establish a working party across the university departments, to enable collaboration, solicit further input collectively from key stakeholders for the development phase and to ensure that we shape an approach which aligns with needs and create the necessary buy-in to champion the use of generics
- Explore how we could adopt the Community of Practice model to support this project, driving collaboration, best practice and consistency across the university
- Develop a communication and engagement plan to increase awareness for implementation phase

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# Holiday Pay

- New Regulations now published which will take effect for holiday years starting AFTER April 2024.
- Some positives but not all the issues are resolved
- Rolled-up pay reintroduced for 'irregular' and 'part year' workers. These are defined as:
  - **Irregular** if the number of paid hours that will be worked in each pay period during the term of the contract in that year is, under the terms of their contract, **wholly or mostly** variable.
  - **Part- year** if, under the terms of the contract, the worker is required to work only part of that year and there are periods within that year (during the term of the contract) of at least a week which they are not required to work and for which they are not paid.

BUT Government guidance states that this specifically excludes TTO paid annually, ie equal amounts each month.

# Holiday pay

## New arrangements coming

- We are looking at revised contracts and payment terms (rolled-up pay) for:
  - Casual teachers
  - Casual examiners
  - Student ambassadors
- Considering implications for TSS and TTO, and variable hours staff on contracts of 12 months or less
- NB rolled-up **pay** does not remove entitlement to actually take **leave**, pay is simply received in advance. Leave still needs to be monitored.

## Holiday pay and regular overtime

- Reward guidance states that where overtime is regular this should be included in holiday pay (ie holiday paid at rate which reflects average pay over previous 52 weeks).
- This is not well-defined in our guidance and further guidance will be provided but consider any current regular OT arrangements and factor in potential additional costs.

# Holiday pay

## Carry over

- Also changes to carry over entitlements wef January 2024.
- More onus on employers to ensure that staff:
  - Are given reasonable opportunity to take leave
  - Are advised that untaken holiday will be lost
- May be more actions for depts to remind staff to take leave
- Clarification re: carry forward where holiday is untaken due to:
  - sickness (statutory leave can be carried forward for up to 18 months but reminder that leave can be taken within period of sickness, by agreement)
  - Family leave (all 38 days can be carried forward into following year)

## Annualised hours contracts

- If you have contracts which set out total annualised hours (PT) rather than just a %FTE (eg "you will work 222 hours per year") please email [kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk)



# Prevent Duty

- Prevent Duty – certain institutions have obligations to ‘prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’
- Government’s [Prevent duty guidance](#) requires universities to demonstrate that they are 'willing to undertake Prevent awareness training'.
- Non-prescriptive about format: briefings fulfil requirement
- The University's Director of SWSS runs an annual Prevent briefing session [Understanding the Prevent Duty in its Context](#)
- 1 hour session for those with welfare responsibilities in departments Recorded and available via CoSy.
- Please sign up for the briefing via CoSy as attendance will be monitored and numbers need to be reported to OfS
- A [2-page Prevent summary](#) is also available for more general information.

Find out more about the [Prevent Duty and the training requirements](#)

# New Legislation: Paternity Leave

The rules on paternity leave are set to become more flexible for babies whose expected week of birth begins after 6 April 2024, and to children whose expected date of placement for adoption, or expected date of entry into Great Britain for adoption, is on or after 6 April 2024.

- Leave may be taken in two separate non-consecutive one-week blocks.
- Leave may be taken at any time during the first year after the birth or adoption (rather than within the first 56 days).
- Notice periods have changed: Rather than the current 15-week notice period before the expected week of childbirth or adoption, employees only need to give 28 days' notice (4 weeks). Any dates specified for leave to be taken can be changed as long as an employer is given at least 28 days' notice.

NB If employment has started with the University within the first 52 weeks after the child is born they may take any portion of the two weeks' paternity leave which is unused from their previous employer

# New Legislation: Redundancy Protection

## 1

- Currently, before making employees on maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave redundant, employers are obliged to offer them suitable alternative employment where it exists in priority to anyone else who is provisionally selected for redundancy.
- From 6 April 2024 this right will also apply during pregnancy and for an 18 month period after the EWC/date of placement.

# New Legislation: Redundancy Protection 2

Who is protected and when?

|  | Length of protection   |
|--|--|
| <b>Pregnant employee who takes maternity leave</b> | <p><b>Start:</b> When the employer has been notified of pregnancy</p> <p><b>End:</b> 18 months from the child's date of birth if notified to employer before the end of maternity leave (or 18 months from the Expected Week of Childbirth if not notified)</p> <p>(Includes any time spent in this period on maternity leave or other statutory leave)</p>                    |
| <b>Employee who has suffered a miscarriage</b>     | <p><b>Start:</b> When the employer has been notified of pregnancy</p> <p><b>End:</b> Two weeks after the end of the pregnancy, for pregnancies ending before 24 weeks.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Pregnancies ending after 24 weeks are classed as stillbirths and the employee would be entitled to statutory maternity leave (see above).</p>                                       |
| <b>Employees taking adoption leave</b>             | <p><b>Start:</b> Beginning of adoption leave</p> <p><b>End:</b> 18 months from date of placement or date of entry into Great Britain (if overseas adoption).</p> <p>(Includes any time spent in this period on adoption leave or other statutory leave)</p>  |
| <b>Employee taking shared parental leave</b>       | <p><b>Note:</b> If the employee has also taken maternity or adoption leave, the above periods apply instead.</p> <p><b>Start:</b> Beginning of SPL</p> <p><b>End:</b> If less than six weeks of SPL is taken, at the end of SPL. If more than six continuous weeks of SPL is taken, 18 months from child's date of birth (inclusive of any time spent on statutory leave).</p> |

# New Legislation: Flexible Working

From 6 April 2024 the following flexible working changes will take place:

- Employees will have a Day One right to request flexible working arrangements (meaning no length of service will be required);
- Employers will need to consult with the employee before rejecting a request;
- Employers will have 2 months to complete the statutory process rather than 3 months;
- Employees will be able to make 2 statutory flexible working requests every 12 months – currently, employees can only make one statutory request a year, and;
- An employee will no longer have to explain what (if any) effect their request will have on the employer or how the impact might be dealt with.

NB most of our flexible working applications are informally agreed, and nothing here changes.

# New Legislation: Carer's Leave

Beginning on 6 April 2024 there will be a new statutory right to one week's unpaid leave to provide care for a dependant with a long-term care need.

- The leave will be a Day One right, which means that employees do not need to have a particular length of service to qualify.
- Dependants are not only a spouse, civil partner, child or parent with long-term care needs but also anyone who reasonably relies on the employee for care.
- Long term needs are defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, an illness or injury (whether physical or mental) that requires, or is likely to require, care for more than three months, or old age.
- Employees may take one week's unpaid leave to provide or arrange care in each rolling 12-month period. Requests can be in consecutive, or non-consecutive, half-days or full days up to and including taking a block of a whole week of leave at once.
- As with other types of statutory leave, employees are protected from detriment and dismissal because they take, or seek to take, carer's leave

# General updates

## Updated EJRA 2A Form

- Departments are now required to provide information regarding succession plans to the EJRA Committee as part of the EJRA 2A form.
- A revised EJRA 2A form has been uploaded to the HR website along with the timetable for the June 2024 application round
- [The EJRA | HR Support \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)



## Updated retention periods for personnel records

- The retention period has increased from 6 to 7 years after University employment ceases;
- The requirement to keep sickness and family leave records has been removed;
- Added additional clarity for records for job applicants who are not subsequently engaged or employed with the University (to be held for 6 months following the end of the recruitment process)
- NB there may be exceptions where these documents are required for longer than 6 months in relation to skilled workers etc.
- [Retention periods for University personnel records | HR Support \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

# General updates



## Updated Offer letter

- Now includes pre-arrival information for new researchers
- [Contract templates | HR Support \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

## Updated Academic further particulars

- Revised versions of the template FPs for academic posts (AP and statutory professor) are now on the HR website
- At the request of the divisional offices, text from the standard sections has been replaced with links where possible, to make the documents shorter and more attractive.
- [Academic staffing: further particulars templates | HR Support \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

## IT Equipment Loan Form

- From 12 February all new starters and existing employees who are moving into a new appointment will be able to find the link to the Equipment Loan Form via the 'Onboarding' feature in HR Self-Service. This form should be discussed and completed with their line manager.
- Departments should consider reviewing their new starter and new appointment communications to mention the form
- The form can be downloaded from the HR Website [New Starter Arrangements Day 1 checklist](#)