

# Contribution Reward Scheme for Academic Related and Assistant staff in Grades 1 to 11

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## 1. Introduction

The University of Cambridge operates an annual Contribution Reward Scheme for Academic-Related and Assistant staff in grades 1 to 11. The scheme is made up of two components, explained below. **Eligible employees may apply for one award (i.e. either a contribution increment or a single contribution payment) in each annual exercise** (or, for awards outside the normal timetable, no more than one award per year).

- a) **Contribution Increments (for sustained/ongoing contribution) – see Section 2**
- b) **Single Contribution Payments (for one-off/time limited contribution) – see Section 3**

There are other reward mechanisms in addition to the Contribution Reward Scheme. The most appropriate should be considered in each case (for example, if there has been a change to the employee's responsibilities or role that may justify pay at a higher grade). Please speak to the appropriate HR School team to discuss further.

## 2. The impact of COVID-19

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the HEI sector, and many staff will have faced difficulties in carrying out their usual duties. We therefore welcome a voluntary statement detailing the impact on your current or future work. Further information about this can be found on the application forms (PD30a for Contribution Increments and PD30b for Single Contribution Payments).

## 3. Contribution Increments

This is the award of up to three additional increments (in the normal pay range or in the contribution point range, i.e. the starred points) to recognise an individual's personal contribution over and above the normal expectation for the role, over a period of at least a year and in the context of expected continuation at that level.

The award of Contribution Increments will not affect the underlying grade of the recipient. Contribution Increments awarded must not exceed the range of the current grade. Where the resulting salary is within the range of contribution points (i.e. starred points) for that grade, there will be no automatic progression to the next salary point. If, however, the resulting salary is still within the range of service-related grade points, the individual will continue to progress to the top of the service-related points as normal.

### 3.1. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Contribution Increments employees must:

- be an Academic-Related or Assistant staff member in Grades 1 to 11; and
- have not yet reached the maximum contribution point for their grade; and
- have been in their current role and grade for at least one year prior to 1 January of the year the increment(s) is awarded; and
- be employed at the point the award is paid (i.e. employees who have left the University, or are due to leave the University prior to 15 March, are no longer eligible to receive an award); and
- not be applying for a Single Contribution Payment under the scheme

Please note, if any applicants do not meet any of these criteria, they will not receive an award under this scheme.

### 3.2. What warrants a Contribution Increment as part of CRS?

An employee put forward for an award must be able to demonstrate their sustained and ongoing contribution over a period of not less than one year, which shows their personal contribution is over and above what is expected of a person performing competently in that grade. Their contribution should be consistent with the Institution's and University's agreed objectives. Judgement on contribution and consideration for number of increments to award should be relative to the expectations of the individual's grade and role, and relative to the contribution of other members of staff in the same Institution.

Examples of what might justify additional increments may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Having consistently performed their role to an excellent standard, above what would normally be expected of them in their role
- Having proactively sought opportunities to gain additional knowledge and/or skills, which have then positively impacted the support an individual provides to their Institution or the University
- Taking on additional responsibilities (within the existing grade) on an ongoing basis
- Providing a consistently high standard of contribution and support to their Institution or the University
- Using initiative and problem-solving skills above what would normally be expected of that grade to offer suitable and effective solutions
- Successfully completing agreed long-term objectives to a high standard
- Providing a consistently high standard of customer service and therefore positively impacting the reputation of their Institution or University
- Demonstrating innovation and resourcefulness regularly, resulting in improved, more cost effective processes
- Showing leadership qualities which positively encourage team members and colleagues, and improve overall team performance (particularly when the individual does not have line management responsibility)

If successful, the demonstrated level of contribution becomes the normal expectation for that member of staff.

### 3.3. Additional considerations

Demonstration of contribution is the main focus of the award decisions. However, when reviewing the eligible population there are other points to take into consideration:

#### a) Time without an incremental point change

The time since the employee last received an incremental point change (through either service points or previous contribution increments) should also be considered when assessing proposals or encouraging applications. Priority may be given to cases where the individual has not received an incremental point change over a longer period compared to other employees (where budget restrictions cannot accommodate all awards), in order to reward their contribution and service. Using the information provided in the eligibility reports, Awarding Authorities are encouraged to review all staff who are on their top service point and consider the number of years they have been there.

#### b) Gender equity and fairness

Gender-based management information is provided to Awarding Authorities to help ensure that awards made through CRS are fair, equitable and monitored over time.

#### c) Retention

If, in addition to the above, the award of a contribution increment is needed to help retain the services of a particular member of staff, the case put forward must include relevant factual information to support the

view that there is a significant risk that their services might otherwise be lost to the University. In these cases, Institutions are asked to consider additional options which may help to mitigate the risk.

### 3.4. Procedure

All cases must be made using form [PD30a \(for the proposal of Contribution Increments\)](#).

- Part 1 should be completed by the staff member who should put forward their own case for consideration.
- Part 2 should be completed by the immediate manager (in some cases this will be the Head of Institution) who must confirm whether or not they support the case.

Please note that there is no need for Part 1 to be completed if the line manager is putting the member of staff forward for consideration. If this is the case, the line manager must inform the individual that a proposal has been put forward on their behalf.

The form should be submitted in accordance with the timetable set by the institution, which will be communicated at the start of the exercise.

### 3.5. The impact of Cambridge Living Wage (CLW)

In August 2019, the University implemented a new minimum rate of basic pay of £10 per hour, for directly employed staff, known as a Cambridge Living Wage (CLW).

Employees on spine points 18 to 20 are eligible to receive a Cambridge Living Wage supplement, which increases their hourly rate to £10, and is paid to them each month with their normal pay.

Those in receipt of a CLW supplement can still apply for Contribution Increments through the Contribution Reward Scheme. If they are successful in their application, they will move to the appropriate spine point. As a result, their base pay will increase, and the amount paid as the supplement will decrease. If they move to spine point 21 or above, they will no longer be eligible to receive the supplement. The examples below demonstrate this:

#### **Example 1:**

*Alex is currently on spine point 19, base salary of £18,529 per annum, £9.72 per hour. Alex receives a CLW supplement of £0.28 per hour, bringing their total to £10 per hour.*

*Alex applies for one Contribution Increment, and is successful. Alex therefore moves to spine point 20, base salary of £18,852 per annum, £9.89 per hour. The amount Alex receives as CLW supplement will therefore reduce to £0.11 per hour, but their total will remain as £10 per hour.*

#### **Example 2:**

*Sam is currently on spine point 20, base salary of £18,852 per annum, £9.89 per hour. Sam receives a CLW supplement of £0.11 per hour, bringing their total to £10 per hour.*

*Sam applies for two Contribution Increments, and is successful. Sam therefore moves to spine point 22, base salary of £19,623 per annum, £10.29 per hour. Sam is therefore no longer eligible to receive a CLW supplement.*

## 4. Single Contribution Payments

This is the award of a one-off, non-pensionable payment to recognise exceptional contribution, over and above the normal expectation for the role, in the context of a one-off task or project that is time limited. Awards can be made on an individual basis, paid at 3% of base salary, or on a team basis (where the one-off task/project is a result of the joint efforts and combined achievements of two or more individuals),

paid at 2% of base salary. Awards are calculated using base salary (pro-rated for part time staff) as at 1 January, and are payable in the March payroll<sup>1</sup>.

The award of Single Contribution Payments will not affect the individual's underlying grade or spine point.

Note: It is not normally appropriate for applications for single contribution payments to be received for the same or similar reasons for more than two consecutive years for the same employee. This would normally indicate that the case no longer meets the criteria for a reward designed to recognise single exceptional contributions, but matches the criteria for a contribution increment. In the exceptional event of a single contribution payment being requested in the third consecutive year, consideration will be given by the Awarding Authority to the award of a consolidated contribution increment in place of the third single contribution payment.

#### 4.1. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Single Contribution Payments employees must:

- be an Academic-Related or Assistant staff member in Grades 1 to 11 (at any point in their grade, including the top contribution point); and
- have been in their current role and grade for at least 3 months prior to 1 January of the year the Single Contribution Payment is awarded<sup>2</sup>; and
- be employed at the point the Single Contribution Payment is paid (i.e. employees who have left the University, or are due to leave the University prior to 15 March, are no longer eligible to receive an award); and
- not be applying for a Contribution Increment under the scheme

Please note, if any applicants do not meet any of these criteria, they will not receive an award under this scheme.

#### 4.2. What warrants a Single Contribution Payment under CRS?

An employee's contribution will either be with respect to a one-off task or project. Awards can be made on an individual basis, or as a team where the one-off task or project is a result of the joint efforts and combined achievements of two or more individuals. Some examples of what might justify a single contribution payment may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Completing a significant task or project to an excellent standard, perhaps coupled with resultant savings in resources.
- Successfully organising or helping to organise a one-off event, demonstrating commitment, flexibility and adaptability to ensure smooth running before and on the day.
- Successfully tackling an unplanned or unexpected task, crisis/emergency, or incident involving complexity.
- Suggestion or design of an innovative approach, solution or idea for the improvement to a working practice or process within the School/Faculty/Department/Division. This may have led to greater efficiencies, improved quality, cost savings etc., which contributed to the achievement of School/Faculty/Department/Division objectives.
- Achieving a particularly challenging goal or objective, e.g. overcoming a significant obstacle to ensure a deadline is met.
- Demonstrating fantastic team working, by working together effectively to deliver a large, complex project

<sup>1</sup> If an individual has changed their working hours between October and December, the line manager should contact their HR Business Manager to determine the appropriate payment calculation.

<sup>2</sup> If an individual is successful in their application for an award based on contribution in their role and grade, but they have subsequently changed role or grade, the award will be calculated using the salary of the role and grade on which the application was based

It should be noted that Single Contribution Payments are not to be used to reward temporary acting-up to a higher grade, which should be recompensed through an [Additional Responsibility Payment](#).

### 4.3. Procedure

All cases must be made using form [PD30b \(for the proposal of Single Contribution Payments\)](#).

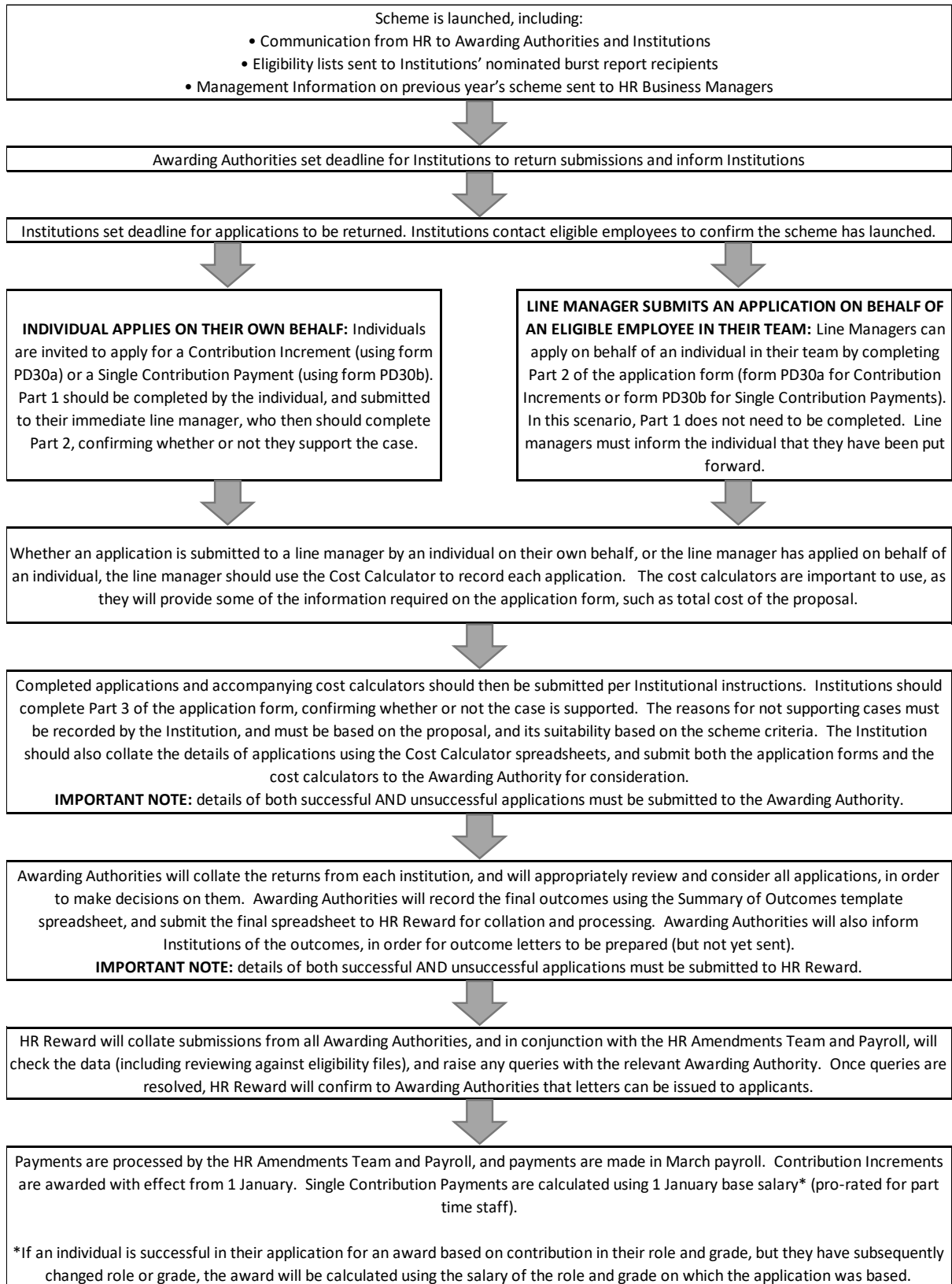
- Part 1 should be completed by the staff member who should put forward their own case for consideration.
- Part 2 should be completed by the immediate manager (in some cases this will be the Head of Institution) who must confirm whether or not they support the case.

Please note that there is no need for Part 1 to be completed if the line manager is putting the member of staff forward for consideration. If this is the case, the line manager must inform the individual that a proposal has been put forward on their behalf.

The form should be submitted in accordance with the timetable set by the institution, which will be communicated at the start of the exercise.

## 5. Procedural Flowchart

The below flowchart provides an overview of the CRS process. More detailed guidance for employees and line managers can be found on the [CRS webpages](#).



## 5.1. Awarding Authorities

Awarding Authorities are convened by the Secretaries of Councils of the Schools, or the Registry, in the case of Council institutions, including the Unified Administrative Service or the Academic Secretary in the case of Other Non-School General Board Institutions. The Awarding Authorities are:

- Institute of Continuing Education
- University of Cambridge Development and Alumni Relations
- Non-School Council Institutions
- Non-School General Board Institutions
  - Fitzwilliam Museum
  - Hamilton Kerr
  - Kettles Yard
  - HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies
- School of Arts and Humanities
- School of Biological Sciences
- School of Clinical Medicine
- School of Technology
- School of the Humanities and Social Sciences
- School of the Physical Sciences
- UAS
- University Information Service
- University Library and associated Libraries:
  - Squire Law Library
  - Medical Library Addenbrookes
  - Betty and Gordon Moore Library
  - Central Science Library
  - Centre for Applied Research in Educational Technologies
  - Faculty of Architecture and History of Art Library
  - Marshall Library of Economics
  - Radzinowicz Library
  - Seeley Historical Library
  - Social and Political Science Library



## 6. Financial matters

- a) A budget for University Education Fund (UEF)/Chest funded **Contribution Increments** is set each year by the Council and General Board. Each Awarding Authority is allocated a share of the set budget, for the period 1 January to 31 July of the year increments are awarded. The budget, confirmed in the launch message, is allocated in direct proportion to the salary costs of eligible Chest-funded staff currently in grades 1 to 11 in the Institutions within their remit. Appropriate use of the budget should be made in each exercise, and provision needs to be made by Institutions for bearing the costs in subsequent years.
- b) For the 2022 scheme year, budgetary arrangements for **Single Contribution Payments** are different to previous years, as follows:
- For awards made to UEF/Chest-funded staff: a budget has been set by the Council and General Board. Each Awarding Authority has been allocated a share of the set budget to fund Single Contribution Payments made to individuals in Chest-funded roles. As for the budget for Contribution Increments, the budget has been allocated in direct proportion to the salary costs of eligible Chest-funded staff in grades 1 to 11 in the Institutions within their remit. Any Single Contribution Payments awarded to Chest-funded staff in excess of the budget must be funded by Institutions from sources available to them.
  - For awards made to non-Chest-funded staff: as in previous years, these awards are fully funded by Institutions, from sources available to them. Heads of Institutions need to identify the funding source before making any proposal for a Single Contribution Payment.
- c) The Council and the General Board expect Institutions to meet the full costs, including on-costs, of successful proposals from sources available to them (whether UEF/Chest or other), including the in-year budget provided, as referred to in a) and b) above. Heads of Institutions need to identify the funding source before making any proposal for a contribution reward. The default assumption will be that funding will follow that of the current post.
- d) The costing of all proposals must include on-costs. For Contribution Increments, the relevant calculation will be the difference between total basic salary plus on-costs at the proposed new grade point, compared to those of the current grade point as at 1 January of the year the increment is awarded, adjusted for part-time workers (but with no adjustment for atypical pension/NI arrangements). The total is multiplied by 7/12ths to calculate the in-year cost to be funded from the central budget. For Single Contribution Payments, this will be 2% or 3% of the current base salary as at 1 January of the year the single payment is awarded, plus an assumed 10% for National insurance costs.
- e) [Grades and salary points, including on-costs](#), can be viewed online. For consistency, [Cost Calculator](#) spreadsheets must be used to calculate the costs of proposals.
- f) Proposals outside the normal timetable should be costed according to the rate of pay effective at the proposed date of implementation.
- g) The UEF/Chest budget available to fund Contribution Increments is subject to cash limitation. The expectation is that awards made from non-UEF/Chest budgets should not exceed the relative percentage of the UEF/Chest budget allocation, i.e. the spend on awards made to those in Chest-funded roles and those in non-Chest funded roles should be proportionately similar.

For example, an Awarding Authority's expenditure on eligible UEF/Chest funded staff is £500,000. The budget for Contribution Increments to be funded by the Chest is £25,000, which is 5% of their UEF staff expenditure. The Awarding Authority's expenditure on eligible non-UEF/Chest funded staff is £650,000. The budget for Contribution Increments for this population should not exceed 5% of this, meaning they should fund no more than £32,500 on non-UEF/Chest Contribution Increments.

- h) Awarding Authorities will be responsible for ensuring that the award of Contribution Increments is within their allocated share of the budget. This may mean that some staff who have demonstrated

excellent performance will not be successful and it is the responsibility of Heads of Institution and Awarding Authorities to demonstrate objectively any ranking awarded and the subsequent decisions taken. Please note that the award of Contribution Increments forms a recurrent cost to Departments and therefore increases baseline spend in future years.

## 7. Procedure for Institutions and Awarding Authorities

As soon as the scheme is launched, Heads of Institutions shall arrange for all members of staff to be informed that:

1. The scheme has been launched and how the guidance can be accessed (see [reference documents](#)).
2. A general review is underway in the Institution of those eligible to be considered.
3. Individuals may request to be considered for a Contribution Increment or a Single Contribution Payment.

Reports listing staff eligible for consideration for both contribution rewards will be electronically sent to the nominated report recipient for Institutions via the secure 'burst reports' mechanism, which is generated via the HR system. The process is described in the letter launching the exercise.

- a) All cases must be made using form [PD30a \(for the proposal of Contribution Increments\)](#) or [PD30b \(for the proposal of Single Contribution Payments\)](#). Part 1 should be completed by the staff member who should put forward their own case for consideration. Part 2 should be completed by the immediate manager (in some cases this will be the Head of Institution) who must confirm whether or not they support the case. Please note that there is no need for Part 1 to be completed if the line manager is putting the member of staff forward for consideration. If this is the case the individual must be informed that a proposal has been put forward on their behalf.
- b) Only one award should be specified on each application form. Staff cannot be awarded both a Contribution Increment and a Single Contribution Payment in a single year. The choice of award should reflect whether an individual's contribution is sustained over a period of at least one year, or if it relates to a one-off task or project. This Scheme is designed to recognise excellent contribution, i.e. contribution and achievement that is much greater than would be expected considering an individual's grade, role and objectives. Meeting the eligibility criteria means that an Institution is able to apply for a Contribution Reward in respect of a staff member. The recommendation/application should then outline the case for a Contribution Reward. It is not sufficient to state that the eligibility criteria have been met. The Awarding Authorities will expect to see a rationale which explains why an achievement or contribution is considered exceptional in accordance with the guiding criteria.
- c) The Head of Institution is responsible for indicating whether they support the application and must forward all cases (both supported and unsupported) to the Awarding Authority. The reasons for not supporting cases must be recorded by the Institution concerned. They must be based on the proposal, and its suitability based on the scheme criteria.
- d) Awarding Authorities are responsible for assessing proposals for the award of contribution rewards based on the documentation provided. Where the number of successful applications exceeds the budget allocation, Awarding Authorities will place the proposals in rank order in relation to the criteria and in comparison with other proposals submitted in the same exercise in order to determine which applicants will be successful. The cost of UEF/Chest funded decisions of the Awarding Authorities on the awards of Contribution Increments must not exceed the UEF/Chest budget allocation. Regardless of the source of funding, all rewards must be given on an equitable basis and should be relative to the performance of other members of staff in the same Institution.
- e) Secretaries of Awarding Authorities will write to Heads of Institutions advising them of the decisions of the Awarding Authority. If the Awarding Authority considers that the proposal should be successful, but it was unsupported by the institution this should be discussed before the final

outcome is confirmed. The correspondence should also include reasons where a reward has not been given.

- f) Secretaries of Awarding Authorities should submit the details of rewards made to [ContributionRewardScheme@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ContributionRewardScheme@admin.cam.ac.uk), using the summary of outcomes proforma (see [reference documents](#)). This should include all of the applications considered, awarded and not awarded by the Awarding Authority. The Reward Team will review the submissions, and raise any queries with the Secretaries of Awarding Authorities.
- g) Once all queries have been resolved, Heads of Institutions should arrange for staff to be informed in writing of the outcome using model letters (see [reference documents](#)). Copies of letters to staff awarded contribution rewards should be sent to the relevant [HR Business Manager](#).
- h) Heads of Institution are encouraged to provide feedback to individual staff members on their application. The feedback from the Head of Institution should help staff gain a clear sense of what factors were relevant to the outcome.
- i) Human Resources will:
1. Implement the awards in March.
  2. Compile data on gender, ethnicity and employment category and provide an annual report to the Resource Management Committee.

## 8. Reference documents

Template letters:

- [Notification of launch of the scheme](#)
- [Notification of award of Contribution Increment\(s\)](#)
- [Notification of award of a Single Contribution Payment](#)
- [Notification of unsuccessful proposal for Contribution Increment\(s\) or Single Contribution Payment](#)

Templates and guidance notes:

- [Summary of outcomes](#)
- [Form PD/30 Proposal for Contribution Reward\(s\)](#)
- [Cost Calculator](#)
- [Cost Calculator Guidance: Contribution Increments](#)
- [Cost Calculator Guidance: Single Contribution Payments](#)
- [Using the Cost Calculator to complete the Summary of Outcomes proforma: Guidance for Awarding Authorities](#)

## 9. Guiding Principles

Assessment of contribution made should be clearly related to University, School or Faculty/Department objectives and should recognise achievements and reward behaviours and activities likely to contribute to the future success of the University.

Judgements should be based on objective evidence, and if appropriate, recognise teamwork.

Managers should ensure that they periodically review the contributions of all of their staff, in order to bring forward for consideration all cases that meet the criteria. The Staff Review and Development Scheme, whilst remaining a separate and independent mechanism for appraisal, could be used for this purpose.

Criteria for assessing contribution must be applied fairly and consistently.

Details of the general principles, including Natural Justice, Fairness and Declaration of Interest, Equal Opportunity, Disability and Allowance for Special Circumstances, and Confidentiality and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) can be found in the [Appendix](#).

### **9.1. Procedural Adjustments and Interpretation of Guidance**

The Chair of the Human Resource Committee shall have authority, on behalf of the General Board and Council and in consultation with the trade unions, to make any reasonable change or adjustment to the procedure, interpret aspects of the guidance mentioned in the document where doubt arises as to its meaning, or take other action that may be necessary to ensure the fair and efficient management of this and any subsequent promotions exercise.