



Joint Statement on the Scottish Government Fair Work Agenda- Heriot-Watt University and Recognised Unions

The University is fully committed to the Fair Work agenda. This Statement and its Appendix sets out a number of ways in which this is demonstrated, in line with the Scottish Government Fair Work Guidance. It is agreed that such a Statement can never be written in stone, but rather reflects work in progress, including positive achievements, aspirations intentions and how we work together to resolve disputes and difficult situations such as industrial action, the Covid pandemic etc. It will be kept under review every two years and updated accordingly.

As signatories to the Scottish Business Pledge all individuals who are engaged directly by the University are paid in line with the requirements of the Real Living Wage and we work closely with our UK trade unions to maintain a transparent and robust grading system within which all staff are engaged. Our Strategic Commitment to putting staff at the heart of everything we do is supported by our People Enabler Strategy .

This includes clear commitments regarding fair employment as well as staff wellbeing and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda.

The University also runs a Global Staff Survey on an 18-month cycle which provides a wealth of data to inform progress on our objectives and shape our next steps as an organisation.

Payment of at least the Real Living Wage

HWU is a signatory to the Scottish Business Pledge and all individuals who are engaged directly by the university are paid at least the Real Living Wage, including Apprentices and Graduate Apprentices. Casual workers are paid on the basis of equal-pay-for-work-of-equal-value. The hourly rate must be at least equivalent to the Real Living Wage and match the appropriate hourly rate based on the University's grade structure.

We are working towards full Living Wage accreditation and are committed to actively approaching procurement in line with the accreditation process which focuses on including the Real Living Wage as a selection criterion for activities that are carried out on our campus. We will do this in line with the Scottish Government guidelines [Addressing fair work practices, including the real living wage, in procurement: best practice - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/addressing-fair-work-practices-including-the-real-living-wage-in-procurement/best-practice/pages/12.aspx). Our aim is to achieve full accredited status within 18 months.

We will only enter into contracts with contractors who are committed to fair and ethical working practice as well as equality and diversity within their workforce and supply chain. This includes non-discriminatory behaviour. It further includes compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Real Wage requirements.

Appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, such as trade union recognition

Staff Engagement is a strategic performance indicator as set out in Strategy 2025 and we conduct regular staff engagement surveys on an 18 month cycle which provides clear feedback on areas that are going well and aspects the university community may wish to improve. This is an area where continuous improvement is required in order to demonstrate to staff that their views are indeed

heard and acted upon, and that consistency and fairness is striven for in all the action plans arising from the results.

We recognise the value in proactively engaging with unions to cooperatively anticipate potential issues rather than only reacting to them. We commit to appropriate consultation between Heriot-Watt University management and relevant unions about communications to staff that affect their working terms and conditions. We recognise that facilitating this consultation in a timely fashion is beneficial to both the university, the unions and staff alike.

We fully recognise three unions and recognise a fourth via legacy rights. We meet regularly on both a formal and informal basis to share information, consult and negotiate. This includes both informal and formal consultation on all HR Policies and Procedures, from the early stages of drafting via the HR-TU Joint Policy Working Group; the development of Equality Impact Assessments to the formal consultation and endorsement process. We also run Focus Groups and a range of Networks (e.g. Parents and Carers; Disability Network; LGBTQ+; Armed Forces etc) to elicit feedback about our policies and to help shape their development.

We also consult with unions on organisational change both at local School/Directorate level and organisation wide. We are committed to meet unions to share information and to consult ahead of collective and individual meetings with staff and staff are encouraged to be accompanied by union reps or workplace companions in individual consultation meetings.

There is a section on the HR Staff Intranet called Your Voice which includes a page with information about our recognised Trade Unions; how to join; and summaries of information shared at formal Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committees. An extract is attached as Addendum 1.

We provide paid Facility Time and publish our annual return [here](#).

We run a number of annual recognition events for staff at all levels and in all our campuses, which bring together individuals from across the Global University. These events are popular and a number of them are based on recognition from peers and colleagues.

The University and its recognised unions work hard to maintain a good relationship at all times, including during challenging times such as during the Covid 19 Pandemic or national or local disputes. We have established dispute resolution procedures which aim to support a settlement of the disputed issues through meetings and negotiations and lead to joint agreements such as those listed below.

The University respects employees' right to take strike action. The University does not consider the Minimum Service Level legislation ("Work Notices") an appropriate way to manage employee relations within the university and will not utilise it as an option to do so, preferring to work in consultation with our trade unions to resolve disputes and minimise impact.

Investment in workforce development

The University invests heavily in staff development supported by our Learning and Teaching Academy, Research Futures and Professional and Organisational Development teams. Our Performance and Development Review process has a strong emphasis on personal and professional development.

The University offers a range of development opportunities for staff and operates a full Professional Development Calendar for all staff. Development opportunities may be identified as a result of

annual performance development reviews, individual desire for advancement, as well as succession planning. The calendar is customised annually to meet requirements. In addition, the University hold regular skills development days and fairs for staff.

The University has a team dedicated to taking forward the University agenda for equality and diversity. We also have teams across Heriot-Watt that make significant contributions; Human Resources, Student Support and Accommodation, the Chaplaincy, the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team all play an integral part.

We are a signatory of the Research Concordat which includes specific commitments to ensure our research community receive time and support for professional development.

We are committed to the Young Person's Guarantee, supporting a range of youth employment and study options as set out in our [HWU Youth Employment Principles and Practices](#) document.

Discussions about personal and career development form an integral part of our Performance and Development Review with minimum annual meetings to set objectives both for work goals and for personal development.

No inappropriate use of zero-hours contracts

The University does not use zero hours employment contracts and works hard to ensure that casual worker arrangements are not used inappropriately. The University is committed to offering as much commitment as possible to those that work within our community and offers open ended employment arrangements wherever possible.

Our [Global Employment Framework Policy Statement](#) sets out our key principles that where there is a sufficiently meaningful and predictable level of regular work the University will typically offer an employment contract which may be fixed term or permanent/open ended, full or part-time and will provide as much security of employment as possible.

Where the volume of work is not at a level to justify a regular employment contract and/or where individuals can choose whether or not to undertake the work offered, the University will typically offer the work on a non-employment basis but a formal engagement as a "worker".

We are implementing¹ a new process whereby PhD students who undertake regular teaching, demonstrating or lab duties at a sufficient level are offered a fixed term employment contract to regularise their work commitments and balance against their ongoing studies.

Action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace

Our Equal Pay Forum (EPF) oversees all activity relating to our published pay gap information. Convened by the Global Director of HR the group includes representation from the Academic Community, Professional Services, Trade Unions, the HR Reward and Wellbeing Function (including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion function) alongside the University's Strategy and Planning Directorate.

The membership of the EPF was refreshed and Terms of Reference updated and approved by the GEDI Committee in June 2022. The EPF meets annually providing a forum to:

- oversee delivery of the previous action plan,
- better understand pay gap issues as they relate to Heriot-Watt, and,
- support onward governance to relevant boards and committees.

¹ Commenced September 2023

The Global Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (GEDI), made up of representatives from across the University Community, oversee the activity across the University. This is underpinned by a full Gender Action Plan demonstrating how issues will be tackled on an ongoing basis. In addition, the University is engaged in the Athena SWAN process; attracting and retaining more young females in STEM subjects and the Leadership Foundation Aurora Programme encouraging female staff to develop as leaders across higher education.

The University has identified a number of actions to address the gender pay gap which exists. This is fully embedded in the University's Equality Outcomes and a joint working group meets regularly to track actions and progress.

The University has been publishing Gender Pay Gap information since 2013. Whilst progress has been slow, the GPG has fallen steadily over the last 6 years.

Gender Pay Gap Mean and Median 2017-22

Year	Mean%	Median%
2017	24	23
2018	22	21
2019	20	19
2020*	19	21
2021	21	21
2022	17	19

Over the last two years the University has established a new oversight committee, the Global Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Committee. The GEDI Committee is chaired by the Vice-Principal & Provost and reports to the University Executive. These new structures support visibility and regular updates on development and progress. The Equal Pay Working Group, which oversees pay gap activities, reports into the GEDI Committee creating a clear link to the University's governance and oversight structures.

Our Action Plan can be found in our [UK Pay Gap Information](#) midpoint report published April 2023.

Offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment

We believe that nobody should have an excessive workload that is unmanageable or where staff are unable to maintain a positive work life balance and we continue to encourage active management to achieve this. We believe all staff should have the right to disconnect when away from work and to take their full holiday allowance.

We have agreed [Academic Workload Principles](#) and are fully committed to ensuring these are implemented across all academic areas. Each School will review their practices against these Principles from the next academic year, on an annual basis. Reports on progress will be made to Senate and the Global Operations Executive to ensure progress as set out in the Principles document. These will also be shared and discussed with the Joint Heriot-Watt Academic Principles Working Group.

Our [Supporting Family Life](#) Suite of Policies, including Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Shared Parental Leave etc. is a Day One right for all UK staff, as is paid Carers' Leave.

We offer Flexible Working as a Day One right to all our employees making a non-statutory request and have refreshed our Policy in light of the implementation of the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023.

Following the pandemic we introduced our approach to Connected Hybrid Working which increases the flexibility available to staff whilst recognising that we are a campus-based organisation. That flexibility includes the ability for some staff to work partially from home but also to vary their hours, thus supporting caring responsibilities. This approach is now consolidated into our normal policies and procedures with guidance developed in consultation with the Trade Unions around norms and expectations to support existing principles.

Oppose the use of fire and rehire practice

The University would not consider firing and rehiring to be an appropriate way to implement change and would always work in consultation with our trade unions so that such options would not need to be considered.

The University has a range of Change Management Policies and Procedures available on our [HR Policy Web Page](#) under the Employee Relations and Managing Change Section. Consultation on changes from minor departmental restructure to proposed changes in terms and conditions and major University restructure and realignment are carried out in line with these policies and in line with the [CJNCC Terms of Reference](#).

Our commitment to the Scottish Government's Fair Work Requirements is referenced in the following joint documents as well as this Joint Statement:

1. [CJNCC Terms of Reference](#)
2. [HWU-HWUCU Joint Statement in relation to Pay and Working Conditions Dispute June 2023](#)
3. [HWU-UCU Joint Statement Pay and Working Conditions June 2022](#)
4. Joint Outline Agreement HWU-Unison December 2020 ²
5. Joint Agreement HWU-UCU November 2020

On behalf of Heriot-Watt University

Richard Claughton - Global Director of HR

Signed 

DATE 01 June 2024

On behalf of Heriot-Watt UCU Branch

Sarah Joss – HWU UCU Branch President

Signed 

DATE 04 June 2024

On behalf of Heriot-Watt Unite Branch

Lorna Robertson – Unite Regional Officer

Signed 

DATE 01 June 2024

On behalf of Heriot-Watt Unison Branch

John Mooney - Unison Regional Organiser

Signed 

DATE 01 June 2024

² Points 4 and 5 are internal joint agreements relating to the ending of local disputes about VR in 2020 and confirm commitment to early consultation in change management matters.

Heriot-Watt University Fair Work Statement Addendum 1

General Information from the HR Intranet Site

Working in Partnership with UK Trade Unions

As part of the University Strategy Building Flourishing Communities, we recognise the important role that our recognised trade unions have to play in the UK.

In this section, you will find general information about the agreements and relationships with our UK TU Colleagues.

Who we recognise

We recognise UCU, Unite and Unison (and EIS for a small number of staff). In general, and as a broad summary, the membership base is

- UCU - academic, research and professional services staff
- Unite - technical, trades and campus services staff
- Unison - admin and campus services staff

But you should check with each union which is most appropriate for you to join. You have the right to become a member of any union or no union.

Links to the TU local web pages are on this page, along with a list of current Office Bearers. Please contact them direct for further information or if you wish to join. We do not hold union membership information on any university system with the exception of our Payroll System ONLY if you choose to pay membership fees direct from your pay. Only Payroll members of staff can access such information and it is held in line with our [Staff Privacy Notice](#)

We meet local and national union reps in several different formats, both formal and informal, to discuss, consult and negotiate as appropriate on matters relating to University operations, matters of national importance such as pay negotiations, Policy Review and Development and individual case work.

Terms of Reference and other Agreements

Our Agreed Terms of Reference are published here alongside two Partnership Agreements with UCU and Unison, agreed in 2020.

The current Facility Time Arrangements are also published here. As we are committed to further development of partnership working, updates will also be published.

Facility Time and Time off for TU duties and activities

Union representatives have a statutory right to reasonable time off for trade union duties and for trade union activities set out in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 and supported by the [ACAS Code of Practice](#)

Whilst these rights allow for a reasonable level of paid time off for trade union duties, this does not extend to paid time off for trade union activities. The University has Terms of Reference which set out the formal framework of the Combined Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (CJNCC) and its approach to dispute resolution. Facility Time is the provision of paid time off from an employee's normal role to undertake Trade Union duties and activities as a Trade Union representative.

Set out below are examples of Trade Union Duties and Activities from the Government Website.

Facility Time is approved each year by UE to UCU, Unite and Unison for them to allocate to individual Branch Reps.

The allocation for the 2023-24 financial year is as follows:

UCU	1.7 FTE
Unite	0.7 FTE
Unison	0.2 FTE

Individual reps who receive Facility Time are listed on this page.

Using Facility Time

Individuals who have been allocated Facility Time should work with their line manager to agree the best use of the facility time, noting that the workload of the union rep must reduce or be re-allocated to temporary backfill in line with the agreed FTE facility time.

For full time teaching staff, this may be easiest to arrange by reducing the teaching and engaging temporary support to pick that up, but line managers are encouraged to discuss appropriate options with individual reps in their team. For part-time employees, it may also be possible (if agreed between manager and individual rep) to receive the facility time allocated in addition to contractual hours or by increasing the union rep's contract by that fraction.

Please try to avoid using casual workers for back fill (and particularly casual workers based outside the UK) as this may create different difficulties.

Under Section 13 of the Trade Union Act 2016 and The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017, relevant employers (including HEIs) have to collate and publish, on an annual basis, a range of data on the amount and cost of facility time within their organisation. Heriot-Watt publishes its annual return on the HR Policy Web Page under Employee Relations and Change Management and the latest return is [Trade Union Facility Time Return](#)

Combined Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee (CJNCC)

The "overarching" Committee is the Combined Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee which meets approximately four times per year. Known as CJNCC Quarterly, it is the formal committee for formally noting matters discussed with recognised TU reps in other sub-committees, for example the CJNCC Covid-19 Committee which met regularly between March 2020-June 2022; the HR-TU Joint Policy Review Committee; and other short-term union groups such as the Redundancy Avoidance Group and special CJNCCs to discuss national or local disputes and outcomes of Staff Surveys.

CJNCC Quarterly has the following remit:

- negotiate contractual terms and conditions of employment other than those which are dealt with at national negotiations.
- discuss or consult as appropriate, matters of mutual interest, including certain policy changes, organisational restructure, local restructure, matters affecting individuals or groups of employees which are not covered by negotiation arrangements, and redundancy avoidance
- provide data or reports on decisions from either party to the other on matters that have either already been the subject of negotiation or consultation in internal or other form, or facts which it is deemed important or useful to share with the other party

- forms part of the formal consultation process for Policies and Procedures in conjunction with UE, GOE and, where appropriate, Senate and Staff Committee.

The Committee has agreed that it would be helpful to publish a joint summary of the topics discussed at such Quarterly Meetings. You can find a summary of the discussions from [the most recent meeting here] and from the [previous meeting here]. The next Quarterly meeting will take place on [date] and a summary of discussions from that meeting will be published thereafter.

APPROVED