

Contribution Reward Scheme: Guidance for Line Managers

The University of Cambridge operates an annual Contribution Reward Scheme for Academic-Related and Assistant staff in grades 1 to 11. An overview of the scheme, including the awards made, can be found [here](#).

This document aims to provide guidance to line managers, who have received applications for CRS from eligible employees in their team, as well as line managers who wish to submit an application on behalf of a member of their team. The guidance provides examples of the kinds of contribution that may warrant an award, and explains how to complete the line manager section of the application form.

It should be noted that the criteria are intended to provide Awarding Authorities with flexibility when assessing applications, so discretion can be applied, based on the objectives of and differences between the institutions within the University, as well as the differing expectations of those on different grades. This guidance is designed to help line managers consider and reflect on the performance and contribution of those in their teams, in order to most effectively assess their applications, and add appropriate comments.

1. Contribution Increments

As referred to in the [overview](#), this is the award of up to three additional increments, either in the normal pay range or in the contribution point range (i.e. the starred points), which are awarded in recognition of personal contribution and performance over and above what would normally be expected of the role, over a period of at least one year.

It should be noted that normally one increment is awarded as part of this scheme. Applications for more than one increment would need to demonstrate truly exceptional contribution with a demonstrable impact on the individual's School/Faculty/Department/Division.

1.1 Eligibility criteria

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 Contribution Increment 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.

1.2 What warrants a Contribution Increment as part of CRS?

Some examples of what might justify additional increments may include, but are not limited to:

- 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 School/Faculty/Department/Division 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 the School/Faculty/Department/Division 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 the School/Faculty/Department/Division or University
- Demonstrating innovativeness and resourcefulness regularly, resulting in improved, more cost effective processes
- Showing leadership qualities which positively encourage team members and colleagues, and improving overall team performance (particularly when the individual does not have line management responsibility)

1.3 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.

The Cambridge Living Wage should not affect the assessment of an individual's performance and contribution. They should continue to be assessed based on the expectations of their grade, in line with the guidance above.

2. Single Contribution Payments

As referred to in the [overview](#), this is the award of a one-off, non-pensionable payment, awarded in recognition of an employee's 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.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

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

- be an Academic-Related or Assistant staff member in Grades 1–11 (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 awarded¹; 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.

2.2 What warrants a Single Contribution Payment under CRS?

Some examples of what might justify a Single Contribution Payment may include, but are not limited to:

- 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 a smooth running 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.

¹ If an individual 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.

3. Considering an application form received from a member of your team

Line managers are required to review CRS applications from those in their area, in order to indicate whether or not they support the application. You should carefully consider all CRS applications you receive from individuals in your team, reflecting on the individual's overall performance and contribution over the past 12 months. It may be useful to consider any notes or forms from Staff Review and Development meetings or informal meetings.

You should use the [cost calculators](#) to record each application you receive. There are separate cost calculators for Contribution Increments and Single Contribution Payments. The cost calculators are important to use, as they will provide some of the information required on the application form, such as the total cost of the proposal. Once you have reviewed all the applications, please ensure you submit the cost calculators along with the application forms to your Head of Institution, for their review.

When reviewing an application form, you should consider the following, alongside the criteria and examples referred to above:

- How has the individual's contribution affected the School/Faculty/Department/Division over the past 12 months? Have they been involved in any large or complex projects or changes, where their contribution has impacted on the success of said project/change?
- Have there been any staff changes which have affected the individual's role? Have they taken on any additional responsibilities (within their grade)?
- Have you received any positive feedback about the individual from others in the team, or elsewhere?
- Has the individual consistently demonstrated their commitment to excellent customer service?

It is likely you will receive multiple applications from individuals in your team, meaning there are other things to consider, such as:

- How does the contribution of one individual compare to others? Are there any individuals who stand out above the rest in terms of their impact on the School/Faculty/Department/Division?
- How long have each of the applicants been on their current spine point (this information can be found in the eligibility files sent to Institutions)? It may be appropriate to prioritise applications from those who have been on the same spine point for longer, in order to reward their contribution and service.

Once you have considered the above, complete Part 2 of the application form, confirming whether or not you support the application, and the reasons for this. The reasons must be based on the proposal, and its suitability based on the scheme criteria.

It is important to ensure that the criteria for assessing contribution are applied fairly and consistently.

4. Completing an application form on behalf of a member of your team

It is recognised that some individuals may not submit an application on their own behalf. You are therefore encouraged to actively review and consider the contribution and performance of your team members each year, as well as giving consideration to how long they have been on their current spine point. The examples and considerations detailed above can be used to identify individuals who may be deserving of an award.

If an individual has not submitted their own application, you can complete the application on their behalf. In these instances, Part 1 of the form does not need to be completed. You can instead complete Part 2, detailing the reasons you are putting the individual forward for an award.

5. Submitting the application(s) to the Head of Institution

Once you have completed Part 2 of the application form, you need to submit all application forms, including those you are supporting and those you are not, along with the completed [cost calculator sheets](#), to your Head of Institution. The launch communication will have included the details of where to send the applications, and the deadline by which to do so.