

Contribution Reward Scheme: Guidance for Eligible Employees

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](#).

Eligible employees can apply for either a Contribution Increment(s) using form PD30a, or a Single Contribution Payment using form PD30b. This document aims to provide guidance to those wishing to apply for an award, including examples of the kinds of contribution that may warrant an award, and how to complete the application form.

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 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 you must:

- be an Academic-Related or Assistant staff member in Grades 1 to 11; and
- have not yet reached the maximum contribution point for your grade; and
- have been in your 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. if you have left, or are due to leave the University, prior to 15 March, you are no longer eligible to receive an award); and
- not be applying for a Single Contribution Payment under the scheme

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

1.2 The impact of changing roles

There may be occasions when an individual has applied for, or been nominated for, a contribution increment as part of the scheme, but changes their role before the outcome of the application has been confirmed. This section aims to clarify what would normally be expected to happen in such situations.

Changing roles on or prior to 1 January of the year the award is made

If you change role after an application for CRS has been put forward, but on or before 1 January (the effective date of awards under this scheme), you will no longer be eligible to receive an increment as part of the scheme, as the eligibility criteria require you to have one year's service in the grade and post.

Changing roles after 1 January of the year the award is made

If you change role after an application for CRS has been put forward (whether substantively or as a secondment), and after 1 January (the effective date of awards under this scheme), you will still receive an increment with effect from 1 January (if your application is successful). In addition, it is normally expected that your new spine point and associated salary will be uplifted in line with the award received via CRS. The examples below explain this:

Example 1:

Alex is in a Grade 6 role, on SP39. Alex applies for a contribution increment under the Contribution Reward Scheme. Before the outcomes are confirmed, Alex successfully applies for another role, and is promoted to Grade 7 with effect from 1 February. In line with the University's standard procedures, as part of this promotion, Alex receives two increments, moving them to SP41. In March, the outcome of Alex's CRS application is confirmed as successful. Their 1 January spine point is uplifted to SP40. Their spine point on promotion with effect from 1 February is also uplifted to SP42, so they retain the two-increment increase as part of the promotion.

Example 2:

Sam is in a Grade 5 role, on SP36. Sam applies for one contribution increment under the Contribution Reward Scheme. Before the outcomes are confirmed, Sam successfully applies for another role at the same grade, and transfers to the new role with effect from 1 February. In line with the University's standard procedures, Sam retains their current spine point and salary. In March, the outcome of Sam's CRS application is confirmed as successful. Their 1 January spine point is uplifted to SP37. Their spine point on transfer with effect from 1 February is also uplifted to SP37.

Applying for a contribution increment whilst on secondment

If you have been seconded to a different role, and have been working in that role for at least one year prior to 1 January of the year the increment(s) is awarded, you are eligible to apply for an award in your secondment role. Any application should be considered by your line manager, Head of Institution and Awarding Authority of your secondment role. The following points provide guidance on certain situations:

- If your secondment role is similar to your substantive role, it would normally be expected that any increment(s) awarded would be applied in both roles. The Awarding Authority should confirm if this is the case. If your secondment role is different to your substantive role, any agreed increments would only be applied to your secondment role (i.e. the role on which your application is based).
- If you are seconded to a different team/Institution, your application should also be considered by the relevant Awarding Authority, with reference to your substantive line manager and Head of Institution as required (if it is expected that the award will be applied in both the secondment role and the substantive role).

1.3 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 your role to an excellent standard, above what would normally be expected of you in your role
- Having proactively sought opportunities to gain additional knowledge and/or skills, which have then positively impacted the support you provide to your School/Faculty/Department/Division or the University
- Taking on additional responsibilities (within your existing grade) on an ongoing basis
- Providing a consistently high standard of contribution and support to your School/Faculty/Department/Division or the University
- Using initiative and problem-solving skills above what would normally be expected of your 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 you do not have line management responsibility)

1.4 How to complete an application form

In order to apply for a Contribution Increment under the scheme, you need to complete Part 1 of the [PD30a application form](#). It is recommended that you take your time when completing form, and take care to reflect on your 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've had with your line manager.

Considering the criteria and the examples above, you could ask yourself the following questions:

- Have there been any newly introduced systems or processes in the School/Faculty/Department or Division over the past 12 months? How have they impacted your role, and how did you deal with the changes?
- Have there been any significant staff changes in your School/Faculty/Department or Division over the past 12 months? Has this resulted in any additional responsibilities being passed to you, or required you to be involved in the training/upskilling of incoming staff?
- Have there been any significant challenges that have arisen over the past 12 months, which have required your involvement in problem-solving and innovative solutions?
- Have you regularly received praise for the support you provide to your customers (that may be fellow colleagues, staff from other areas of the University, students or external people)?
- How has your contribution impacted the wider team, department (or beyond)?

When completing the form, structuring the reasons for your application as follows may be helpful:

- What process/change/challenge was happening that required your involvement
- What did you personally contribute to the situation
- What was the impact of your contribution

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 you must:

- be an Academic-Related or Assistant staff member in Grades 1 to 11 (at any point in your grade, including the top contribution point); and
- have been in your 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. if you have left, or are due to leave the University, prior to 15 March, you are no longer eligible to receive an award); and
- not be applying for a Contribution Increment under the scheme

Please note, if you do not meet any of these criteria, you 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.

2.3 How to complete an application form

In order to apply for a Single Contribution Payment under the scheme, you need to complete Part 1 of the [PD30b application form](#). It is recommended that you take your time when completing the form, and take care to reflect on your performance and contribution during any considerable or complex one-off tasks or projects. It may be useful to consider any notes or forms from Staff Review and Development meetings or informal meetings you've had with your line manager.

¹ If you are successful in your application for an award based on contribution in your role and grade, but you 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.

Considering the criteria and the examples above, you could ask yourself the following questions:

- Have there been any large or considerable one-off tasks or projects over the past 12 months, such as a large event, the implementation of a new system or process, a review of any existing processes? How were you involved in these tasks? How did your involvement affect the overall result of the task?
- Were there any particular challenges or problems encountered as part of the task(s) or project(s)? How were you involved in the resolution of these problems?
- What impact has the successful completion of the task(s) or project(s) had on your School/Faculty/Department/Division?
- Did you receive praise for the support you provided to your customers as part of the one-off task(s) or project(s) (that may be fellow colleagues, staff from other areas of the University, students or external people)?

When completing the form, structuring the reasons for your application as follows may be helpful:

- What one-off task/project was happening that required your involvement
- What did you personally contribute to the one-off task/project
- What was the impact of your contribution

3. After you've completed the application form

After you've completed the application form, whether that is the PD30a for Contribution Increments or the PD30b for a Single Contribution Payment, you should submit the form to your immediate line manager by the deadline set by your Institution.

Your line manager will then complete their part of the application form, adding their own comments, and then passing it on to your Head of Institution for their review and comments. The form will then be submitted to the Awarding Authority, for them to make a decision on the application.

The outcome of the application will be confirmed to you prior to March payday. If you have any queries regarding the outcome, you are encouraged to discuss this with your line manager and/or Head of Institution.

Successful awards are processed as follows:

- Contribution Increments will be implemented in the March payroll, backdated to 1 January of the year the increment is awarded. Any backpay owed will also be paid in your March pay.
- Single Contribution Payments will be processed and paid in the March payroll. Payments are calculated using your salary as at 1 January of the year the payment is awarded*.

*If you are successful in your application for an award based on contribution in your role and grade, but you 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.

4. How your application will be assessed

As referred to in section 3 above, your application will be reviewed in turn by your line manager, Head of Institution and the relevant Awarding Authority. Applications will be assessed based on the criteria outlined in sections 1.3 and 2.2 above. However, it should be noted that Awarding Authorities are expected to exercise discretion when reviewing applications, based on the objectives of, and differences between, the institutions within the University, as well as the differing expectations of those on different grades. It is therefore important to remember that not all applications made under this scheme will be approved.