

# 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 (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 the past 12 months and in the context of expected continuation at that level.

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 The impact of changing roles and regrading

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 an employee changes role or their role is regraded after an application for CRS has been put forward, but on or before 1 January (the effective date of awards under this scheme), they will no longer be eligible to receive an increment as part of the scheme. The eligibility criteria require them to have one year's service in the grade and post at the point the award is effective.

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

If an employee changes role or their role is regraded 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), they will still receive an increment with effect from 1 January (if their application is successful). In addition, it is normally expected that their 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 an employee has been seconded to a different role, and has been working in that role for at least one year prior to 1 January of the year the increment(s) is awarded, they are eligible to apply for an award in their secondment role. Any application should be considered by their line manager, Head of Institution and Awarding Authority of their secondment role. The following points provide guidance on certain situations:

- If the secondment role is similar to their 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 the secondment role is different to their substantive role, any agreed increments would only be applied to their secondment role (i.e. the role on which their application is based).
- If they are seconded to a different team/Institution, their application should also be considered by the relevant Awarding Authority, with reference to their 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).

- If they apply for an increment in their substantive role, the application will be considered if they are still in their substantive role prior to 1 January. Any increment(s) awarded would apply to their substantive role only.

### 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 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).

## 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 or 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 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>1</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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## 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.

## 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.

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.