

Re: Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) and Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act, 2013 (FEMPI 13)

Introduction

As you will be aware, there have been significant developments over the last number of weeks with regard to the terms and conditions applying to public sector staff as a result of national negotiations through the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA – “Haddington Road Agreement”) and the implementation of a Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act, 2013 (FEMPI 13), signed into law on the 5th June 2013. The measures outlined in both documents will come into operation today, **1st July 2013** and will be applied across the Sector, having a direct impact your current terms and conditions.

The University appreciates that these developments have led to considerable anxiety and uncertainty and fully understands that the measures will be very difficult for staff in a number of ways. It is the University’s objective to bring as much clarity as possible to you and keep you updated on a continuing basis as further clarifications and interpretations become available to us.

The proposals contained in the Agreement and the legislation are quite complex, and the Department of Education and Skills have advised that direction and clarifications will be provided over time.

Staff bound by the Measures under the PSSA or the FEMPI 13

The PSSA will cover those grades whose representative unions have agreed to be bound by its terms, and have registered that agreement with the Labour Relations Commission, including staff in those grades who are not members of the relevant trade union.

The FEMPI 13 will cover those grades whose representative unions have rejected the terms of the PSSA, including staff in those grades who are not members of the relevant trade union.

The current position in relation to the four unions with representation in our University is as follows:

SIPTU has accepted the terms of the PSSA.

TEEU has accepted the terms of the PSSA.

UNITE has rejected the terms of the PSSA.

IFUT is currently balloting its members.

The effect of the above situation on the different categories of staff is as follows:

Administrative and Library Staff (including research administrators) are covered by the terms of the PSSA.

Electrical, Mechanical and General Operative staff are covered by the terms of the PSSA.

Technical and Computer Staff (technicians) are covered by the terms of FEMPI 13.

Academic Staff are covered by the terms of the FEMPI 13 (subject to ballot outcome).

It has yet to be determined how Researchers (working in academic disciplines) are to be treated.

Impact on Pay - All Staff

It is important to note that the provisions of the PSSA and the FEMPI 13, with regard to pay reductions are the same and, will be applied irrespective of the stance of individual unions with regard to the PSSA. As a result, all University staff earning above €65,000 per annum will be subject to a pay cut from 1st July, in accordance with the scale shown in the Table following:

Annualised amount of Remuneration	Reduction
Any amount up to €80,000	5.5%*
Any amount over €80,000 but not over €150,000	8%
Any amount over €150,000 but not over €185,000	9%
Any amount over €185,000	10%

*The 5.5% reduction applies to **all** salary below €80,000, not solely the portion of salary which is between €65,000 and €80,000. Annual salaries above €65,000 include allowances in the nature of pay, i.e. fixed periodic pensionable allowances.

The required reductions will take effect in the **July 2013 payroll** and revised pay scales for the impacted grades will be posted to the HR web page tomorrow.

This measure will cause a significant workload for the Payroll department over the next couple of weeks and we would ask impacted staff, who may have additional queries, to await receipt of their July payment before contacting the department.

Increments – All Staff

- For all staff who have a collective agreement in place, the next increment will be paid as normal, subject to satisfactory performance.
- For staff in grades who do not have a collective agreement in place, a three year increment freeze effective 1st July 2013 will apply.
- For staff in grades where the pay scale starts above €100,000 per annum a three year increment freeze effective from 1st July 2013 will apply.

Further detailed information regarding the implementation of the ‘increment pauses’ outlined in the PSSA will be provided by the Department of Education and Skills in due course.

Pension adjustments – All Staff

Reduction in pensions in payment will also take effect and in addition, these measures will also have implications for pending retirements. Our Pensions Liaison Officer and Willis are dealing directly with the affected groups regarding the processing of the statutory adjustments to their pension from 1st July 2013, and will also deal with the pending retirees who may be affected by the legislation. Retired staff will be contacted and we expect to communicate more details for pending retirees on receipt of further clarification from the Department of Education and Skills.

Impact of other measures on Staff comprehended by the PSSA

Working hours

At the time of writing this communication the following measures will apply to staff on administrative, library and general operative grades only.

Staff with a working week of 35 hours per week, or less, will increase to 37 hours per week with effect from 1st July 2013.

Staff with a working week of 39 hours or greater will remain the same but an hour of overtime (where applicable) worked each week by these staff will be unpaid until 31st March 2014. More information regarding hourly rates of overtime pay is available on the HR web page.

Implementation for Existing Staff

The agreement proposes that the maximum increase for grades up to and including **Administrative Officer 1 and Assistant Librarian 1** will be capped at 2hrs and 15mins until the 30th June 2015.

Therefore, staff in these grades currently working 32.5 hours a week will move to 34.75 hrs until 30th June 2015 and will increase to 35 hours per week on the 1st July 2015.

Staff in these grades currently working 35 hours a week will move to 37 hrs per week until the 30th June 2015 and will remain at 37 hours per week on the 1st July 2015.

Staff in grades **Senior Administrative Officer IV, Deputy Librarian** or higher will move to a 37 hour a week.

The effective date for the changes in working hours is today (1st July 2013) and pending detailed discussions and consultation with trade unions to determine the exact detail on how the increased hours will work we would ask staff to keep a note of their attendance either through the flexitime system or their own records.

New Staff

All staff offered employment with the University from today will work the new hours for their respective grade between the revised office opening hours of 9am - 5.30 pm (Monday - Friday), subject to details being communicated on how the University will operate the revised working week.

A more detailed communication will be issue confirming how we will implement the revised hours across the University when we have spoken to the trade unions and received further guidance from the central government departments.

*Staff working on part-time or reduced hours arrangements will have these measures applied on a pro-rated basis.

Conclusion

It is appreciated that a significant number of ambiguities are likely to remain over the coming weeks (particularly with regard to staff covered by FEMPI 13 rather than the PSSA) and the Department of Education and Skills have advised the University that further direction on how to address these matters will issue in due course.

We appreciate that many of you will have individual questions to be addressed and we will communicate to you each time we receive further guidance from the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Skills. However, if you have specific queries that are not being addressed through these communications please send them to haddingtonroad@nuim.ie and we will try to respond promptly depending on the information and clarifications available to us.

We will keep you informed as we receive further guidance and information.

Kind regards.

Rosaleen McCarthy
Acting Director of Human Resources

Further Information

Access the [HR web page](#) for documents or links to the following additional information: FEMPI Act 2013, Haddington Road Agreement, Department of Education and Skills Circular, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform FAQs.