



## **REWARDING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK**

*Additional Increments, Contribution Points and Keele Excellence Awards*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The University recognises and values the hard work, commitment, and achievements of all members of staff. The Rewarding Excellence Framework provides additional recognition to colleagues who have consistently demonstrated the University's values and behaviours, where applicable, and who make an exceptional sustained or one-off / time limited contribution within their role, or individual or team contribution against the specified priorities detailed within the Keele Excellence Awards.

#### **1.1 Purpose**

This framework is designed to summarise the annual nomination processes for the following types of reward:

- sustained exceptional performance and contribution within role and grade (additional increment or contribution point),
- one-off/ time limited contributions of exceptional and significant performance (ex gratia), and
- individual or team contributions in line with the specified Keele Excellence Award categories.

#### **1.2 Scope**

The full framework applies to employees on Keele Spine Grades 1 to 9; all employees on the Operational Pay Scales may be put forward for ex gratia awards and all employees on the aforementioned pay scales plus Grade 10 Professorial and Managerial and Specialist are eligible for consideration of Keele Excellence Awards. A separate policy and procedure is available for colleagues at Professorial and Managerial and Specialist Grade 10.

### **2. FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 General Principles**

**2.1.1** All staff members are encouraged to consider Keele Excellence Awards and to nominate colleagues as applicable. The Keele Excellence Awards are not a management led initiative and any employee can make a nomination in line with the

principles outlined. The Keele Excellence Award categories will be released on an annual basis and will be published on the HR intranet pages.

**2.1.2** Nominations for Keele Excellence Awards (KEA), additional increments (AI), contribution points (CP) or ex gratia (EG) awards can be made via the KEA Form or AI,CP&EG Form. The forms will be made available during the nomination window and will be shared on the HR internet pages.

**2.1.3** Nominations for additional increments, contribution points and ex gratia awards must be made by line managers. Line managers have a responsibility to monitor and reflect on the performance and contributions made by all team members so they can identify where applications for awards under this framework may be appropriate. Line managers should be mindful of the importance of valuing diversity of contribution made by staff. Line managers should ensure that they periodically review the contributions of all team members, in order to bring forward for consideration cases that meet the criteria. All line managers must follow the applicable Performance Review and Engagement procedure (SPRE, PPRE or PRE) for each team member. These mechanisms provide opportunity to review performance and contribution for all staff members and should act as a trigger to help identify cases where standards of performance and contribution are exceptional, either in terms of a one-off/ time limited activity or sustained performance, and above the expectations of the role. To avoid disappointment, line managers are asked not to inform a member of staff that an application is being made.

**2.1.4** Accordingly, it is important that the timeline for reward complements the performance review mechanisms outlined. The application / nomination window will ordinarily be April – July of each year.

**2.1.5** When preparing a case, managers must carefully consider the normal expectations of the role. Indicative examples are noted in sections 2.3 and 2.4 and these must be considered in the context of the normal expectations for the role and grade. Performance and contribution that may be assessed as sustained exceptional or as one-off / time limited exceptional and significant performance for a particular grade may be the normal expectation of a role at a higher grade.

**2.1.6** The criteria for assessing contribution must be applied fairly and consistently and judgements for making nominations will be based on objective evidence of the contribution made.

**2.1.7** When making a case, the line manager should be very clear about the staff member's contribution and what is considered exceptional and would not normally be expected of someone in that role and grade. Nominations should only be made where the employee is successfully managing their normal day to day work to a high standard, in addition to the specific exceptional additional contribution.

**2.1.8** In addition, it is an essential prerequisite of all forms of reward, that employees have completed all mandatory training and demonstrate the University's values and behaviours in their work.

**2.1.9** In the case of ex gratia or Keele Excellence Awards it would be usual to wait until the piece of work or project is completed, and its impact assessed, before making an application.

**2.1.10** It is possible, that in addition to a line manager's nomination, an individual is also nominated for a Keele Excellence Award. It would not be anticipated that an individual would be put forward for both additional increment / contribution point and ex gratia. Should a line manager be considering both, it must be for different activities.

**2.1.11** Details of reward for excellence will be made available to promotions committees and other relevant reward panels.

## 2.2 Award Types and Criteria

**2.2.1** This framework provides for reward in one of four ways. Where an application is made via the line manager, they are requested to ensure the nomination is for the most appropriate award, depending on which criteria are fulfilled.

Award Type	Award Criteria	Award Payment	Nomination Type
<b>Additional Increment</b> <b>See section 2.3 for further details</b>	<p><b>Sustained exceptional performance and contribution</b> that exceeds the normal role expectations, and performance is expected to continue at that level.</p> <p>Staff members must be within the Keele Spine scale and whose incremental point is less than the contribution point of the grade at the time of the award.</p>	<p>Awards are made on an indefinite basis and are consolidated into annual salary. Line managers must, therefore, be entirely confident that the exceptional performance is sustainable and will continue for the foreseeable future.</p>	<p>Nominations should be made by the line manager.</p>
<b>Contribution Point</b> <b>See section 2.3 for further details</b>	<p><b>Consistently exceeds expectations</b> and demonstrates exceptional performance and contribution with accompanying behaviours. This can be evidenced through successful SPRE reviews.</p>	<p>Awards are made on an indefinite basis and are consolidated into annual salary. Line managers must, therefore, be confident that the exceptional performance is sustainable and will continue for the foreseeable future.</p>	<p>Nominations should be made by the line manager.</p>

	Staff members must be at the maximum point of the Keele Spine Grade or will be at the time of award.		
<b>Award Type</b>	<b>Award Criteria</b>	<b>Award Payment</b>	<b>Nomination Type</b>
<b>Ex Gratia</b>  <b>See section 2.4 for further details</b>	<b>One-off / time limited exceptional and significant performance</b> , that is over and above the normal expectations for the role.	Awards are between £250 - £1,500 and may be made in multiples of £50. Managers should give an indication of the amount of award being applied for; however, the panel reserves the right to adjust the amount to ensure comparability with other awards.	Nominations should be made by the line manager.
<b>Keele Excellence Award</b>  <b>See section 2.5 for further details</b>	Individual and team awards to recognise, celebrate and showcase work of individuals or groups. The full list of categories under which nominations can be made can be found of the Keele Excellence intranet pages.	£250 for individual award winners and £100 per team member in the case of team awards. Winners will be invited to a Celebrating Staff Success Event where achievements and contribution will be further celebrated.	Nominations can be made by any member of staff for colleagues in their team or elsewhere in the University.

## 2.3 Additional Increment or Contribution Point

**2.3.1** The University's Keele Spine grading structure allows for annual incremental progression within grade to recognise continuing capability and competence year on year in terms of the acquisition of skill, knowledge and expertise. An application for an additional increment may be made where there have been exceptional levels of achievement in carrying out the duties of the post and where exceptional performance and contribution is demonstrated on a sustained basis (usually for at least a period of 6 months at the time of application) and where there is a reasonable expectation that they will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Where an individual has reached the top of the incremental range for their grade, or will have reached the top by the date of award, this will become a contribution point. Where the member of staff has yet to reach the point below the top of the relevant incremental scale, an award will take the form of an additional increment.

**2.3.2** Sustained exceptional performance and contribution is where the input and achievement of a staff member is much greater than normal expectations in relation to the role and objectives, along with positive demonstration of the University's values and behaviours. Examples include and are not limited to:

- Consistently exceeding agreed objectives which have made a positive impact on the work of the department or school.
- Routinely completing tasks / projects ahead of schedule with outstanding effectiveness and consistently exceeding objectives.
- Working at consistently high standard, demonstrating behaviours that have regularly gone beyond the normal expectations of the role. Providing an outstanding service to students, staff, or other customers.
- Undertaking significant additional responsibility on an ongoing basis, but where the level of that responsibility falls within the staff member's current grade.
- Exceptional achievements that have resulted in an ongoing enhanced level of contribution within role e.g. by taking forward continuous improvement initiatives that have improved income generation or more efficient ways of working.

**2.3.3** It is not possible to be specific about the length of time necessary to demonstrate that an individual consistently exceeds expectations in the case of a contribution point, as it will vary from job to job. Being on the top spinal point for a grade should not give rise to the expectation of being awarded a contribution point. It would normally be expected that an individual demonstrates they are consistently exceeding expectations and will have demonstrated sustained excellent performance over no less than 18 months.

**2.3.4** Line managers must not make an application for an additional increment/ contribution point in the same academic year as a submission for promotion.

## **2.4 Ex Gratia Awards**

**2.4.1** Ex gratia awards are available to recognise exceptional and significant performance where work is one-off or time limited rather than ongoing. This could include:

- Contributing to a one-off event, activity, task or project showing exceptional commitment beyond that normally required of employees at that grade.
- Effective handling of an unexpectedly complex activity or one-off / time limited project successfully and within agreed timescales
- Short term productivity increases over and above that which is normally expected that has resulted in a positive impact on the work of the team or department.
- Provision of a service that is considered to be an act of excellence or exceptional performance over and above the normal expectations for the role and grade.
- Achieved particularly challenging objectives, overcoming significant obstacles or ensured deadlines are met and aims achieved.

- Contributing and implementing time-limited significant ideas which have led to improved efficiency and quality and have contributed to the department, School or University plans.

## **2.5 Keele Excellence Award**

**2.5.1** The University recognises and values the commitment and achievements of all members of staff. The Keele Excellence Awards recognise excellence, innovation and outstanding contribution from staff members across the University. The Awards and the Celebrating Staff Success event provides a mechanism to recognise and showcase strong performance in line with the award categories published. Details of each year's Keele Excellence Award categories are published on the Human Resources intranet pages.

**2.5.2** Through the Keele Excellence Awards any member of staff can nominate colleagues from their own department or other areas of the University to recognise contribution against the specified award categories.

## **2.6 Application Process**

**2.6.1** Any staff member can nominate a colleague / colleagues for Keele Excellence Awards through completion of the KEA form.

**2.6.2** Cases for additional increment, contribution point or ex gratia should be made by the line manager through completion of the AI/CP&EG Form and should include an up to date job description and organisational chart. The requirement for a job description and organisational chart may be waived for academic roles where there is a common understanding amongst the committee members of the requirements of a Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow or Reader. The application should clearly describe the following:

- the normal expectations of the job and grade,
- the contribution and how the individual's performance is exceptional against the normal role expectations,
- the outcome and/or the impact of the contribution,
- confirmation that the member of staff is performing satisfactorily in the areas where exceptionality is not claimed,
- why it is expected the level of performance will be sustained and continue for the foreseeable future (for additional increments and contribution points only),
- an indication of the length of time that the exceptionality has been demonstrated,
- why the exceptional and significant performance is of a one-off or time limited nature (for ex gratia awards only).

**2.6.3** Clarification of the normal role expectations is particularly important where cases are being made for staff members on higher grades and where there are greater expectations of performance.

**2.6.4** Cases should be clear and concise and provide evidence of the exceptional performance and contribution and explain the context.

**2.6.5** Candidates who hold fractional appointments should be clearly identified and a statement included as to how the fractional nature of the appointment has been reflected in the responsibilities undertaken and opportunities afforded. Also, nominators are encouraged to reference any personal circumstances that need to be taken into consideration.

**2.6.6** The form should also confirm that all mandatory training has been completed and state how the individual fulfils the requirements of the University's Values and Behaviours Framework (in the case of additional increments and contribution points).

**2.6.7** Line managers preparing cases for academic colleagues may wish to comment within their supporting information why it would not be more appropriate to use the evidence provided as a basis for a promotion submission.

**2.6.8** Supporting evidence needs to be attached to the completed AI/CP&EG form as follows:

Academic Cases:

- Curriculum Vitae in the [standard format](#)
- Grant information list (where applicable) in the [grant list format](#)
- Publication list (where applicable) in the [publication list format](#)

Professional Support Cases:

- Job description
- Organisation chart

## **2.7 Application Moderation and Reward Committee**

**2.7.1** In the case of additional increments, contribution points and ex gratia awards, it is expected that the submitting manager informs and consults others in the management line as appropriate and the case has the support of the Dean or Director.

**2.7.2** All applications will be moderated in the first instance by representative panels. The Chief Operating Officer (or nominated deputy) will chair the professional support staff panel and Executive Deans (or nominated deputy) will chair a panel for academic cases within their respective areas of responsibility.

**2.7.3** The output of local moderation will be put forward to the University panel. A combined University panel will review and determine the outcome of Keele Excellence Awards and separate academic and professional services and support staff panels for ex gratia and additional increments/ contribution points.



**2.7.4** The indicative panel is below. The Chief People Officer has the authority to modify the composition of panels where appropriate and necessary.

<b>Keele Excellence Awards</b>	<b>Academic Panel</b>	<b>Professional Support Staff Panel</b>
Vice-Chancellor (chair) Deputy Vice-Chancellor Chief Operating Officer Chief People Officer Pro Vice-Chancellor – Education Pro Vice-Chancellor – Research Academic Registrar 3 Directors 3 Deans HR Manager – Policy, Projects & EDI Organisational Development Manager	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (chair) 1 Pro Vice-Chancellor Chief Finance Officer Chief People Officer 3 x Executive Deans (or Dean of Education/ Dean of Research in their absence)	Chief Operating Officer (chair) Chief Finance Officer Chief People Officer 2 x Directors 1 x Head of Faculty Operations

**2.7.5** All panel decisions will be based on the merits of the case presented and assessment of contribution. Where applicable, personal circumstances will be taken into consideration and judgements on the merits of nominations will be made.

**2.7.8** Where a panel is of the opinion that a case matches the criteria for another form of reward to that which the case was made, e.g. ex gratia rather than additional increment, the panel reserves the right to progress the case accordingly. Additionally, in the case of ex gratia applications, the panel will moderate cases and may decide on a different value of award if appropriate.

**2.7.9** The committee may reject a submission if the case has not been sufficiently made, if mandatory training has not been completed, or if the University values and behaviours are not sufficiently demonstrated.

## **2.8 Outcomes**

**2.8.1** Deans, Directors and line managers will be informed of the panel’s decision.

**2.8.2** In successful cases, Human Resources will notify the member of staff via email (copy to line manager and Dean/ Director) and arrange for payment to be made. Payments will be made in the next available payroll.

**2.8.3** Line managers who have submitted applications for additional increments/ contribution points or ex gratia awards which are unsuccessful will be given summary feedback from the panel by either the Dean or nominee (for Academic Staff) or the Director or nominee (for professional support staff). The panel Chair will



be responsible for nominating who will provide feedback in the absence of the relevant Dean or Director.

**2.8.4** In the case of nominations for Keele Excellence Awards, where the outcome of the application is successful, the nominator will be informed, and the staff member will be informed of the outcome and the source of the nomination.

## **2.9 Payment**

**2.9.1** Payment of additional increments and contribution points will be effective from 1 October of each year for all staff groups. Payment of these awards along with ex gratia awards and Keele Excellence Awards will be paid in the October payroll or first available payroll thereafter.

**2.9.2** Awards become void if the individual leaves the university before the award has been applied in line with the timescales above.

**2.9.3** All awards are subject to tax and national insurance. Additional increments and contribution points are consolidated into salary and are superannuable, other awards are not.

**2.9.4** It should be noted that school and professional services areas will be expected to fund successful additional increment / contribution point and ex gratia payments for staff.

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 Employees**

All members of staff may make nominations for Keele Excellence Awards and are encouraged to consider the categories and make nominations where they believe them to be warranted.

### **3.2 Line Managers**

Managers are responsible for reviewing the performance of team members on a regular basis and in line with SPRE or PPRE/PRE as applicable. Managers must remain aware of the contribution of their team members and identify where awards under this framework may be appropriate and to make sure the criteria for assessing their team members under this framework is fairly and consistently applied.

### **3.3 Human Resources**

Human Resources can provide further guidance on the application of this framework if required.

## **4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- a) Academic Promotions procedures
- b) Acting Up Allowance Policy and Procedure

- c) Job Grade Review Procedure
- d) Professional and Managerial and Specialist Grade 10 Salaries
- e) Progression Procedure
- f) Staff Performance Review and Enhancement (SPRE, PPRE and PRE)

## 5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

**5.1** As a general principle, this framework will be reviewed by Human Resources, in consultation with recognised Trade Unions after three years or where operational and/or legislative requirements change.

**5.2** These awards are non-contractual and the University reserves the right to review, amend or withdraw this framework.

**5.3** This framework will be published on the University policy zone web page and will also be accessible via the Human Resources web pages.

**5.4** Human Resources will be responsible for equal opportunities monitoring of cases and will also monitor the distribution of applications and awards across the various areas. Any anomalies highlighted by this monitoring will be raised with the committee Chairs and relevant Dean, Director or Head of Faculty Operations.

**5.5** Equality issues have been taken into account during the development of this framework and all protected characteristics have been considered as part of the Equality Analysis undertaken.

## 6. ANNEXES

*Not applicable*

## 7. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

<b>Document Name</b>	Rewarding Excellence Framework
<b>Owner</b>	Chief People Officer, Human Resources
<b>Version Number</b>	1
<b>Equality Analysis Form Submission Date</b>	23/06/23
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<b>Date of Commencement</b>	30 June 2023
<b>Date of Last Review</b>	30 June 2023
<b>Date for Next Review</b>	30 June 2026
<b>Related University Policy Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Academic Promotions procedures</li> <li>b) Acting Up Allowance Policy and Procedure</li> <li>c) Job Grade Review Procedure</li> <li>d) Professional and Managerial and Specialist Grade 10 Salaries</li> <li>e) Progression Procedure</li> </ul>

	f) Staff Performance Review and Enhancement (SPRE, PPRE and PRE)
<i>For Office Use – Keywords for search function</i>	