PROJECT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH CAREERS (PARC)

PHASE 1 REPORT

06 April 2006
PARC WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

The Project for the Advancement of Research Careers (PARC) working group consists of:

- Professor Belinda Probert (Chair)
- Pro Vice-Chancellor: Academic

Professor Doug McEachern
Pro Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation

Mr Bob Farrelly
Director, Human Resources
(also represented by Ms Diane Christensen)

Dr Campbell Thomson
Director, Research Services
(also represented by Ms Susan Lewis)

Ms Vera Morgan (Executive officer)

The working group acknowledges, in particular, the valuable contribution of Ms Stephanie Gee, School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, in sourcing and tabulating the data in Appendix 1.
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2) That the PARC Report Phase 1 be circulated among the University community including the UWA Researchers Association, the Academic Consultative Committee, Organisational Staff Development Services, Human Resources, Financial Services, Research Services as well as Deans of Faculties, Heads of Schools, School Managers, Directors of Centres, chief investigators and research staff for further comment and clarification ................................................................. 11

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12) That the University clarify with NHMRC the skills and experience assumed at each PSP level in its current funding policy.......................................................13

13) That a mapping exercise be undertaken, in discussion with experienced grant holders, to see how well NHMRC PSP salary levels, as awarded, reflect institutional salary levels. Entry level PhDs should be used to set the first mapping point. This will provide documented evidence as to the extent of any mismatch, and support a case to be made for the need for NHMRC to pay salaries at institutional levels.................................................................13

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15) That The University of Western Australia lobby the NHMRC to set firm eligibility rules about the level of experience required in each category of NHMRC fellowship, so as to avoid the situation where experienced researchers apply for more junior fellowships. In the meantime, in cases where senior researchers apply for more junior fellowships, it is important to ensure that this is identified at the application stage and that there is a signed commitment from the relevant School and/or Faculty that the salary gap will be funded locally............................................. 13

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19) That clarification be provided on key elements of the Safety Net Scheme including the evidence required (i) to show that continuation of the staff’s position is of strategic importance to the group and (ii) to substantiate claims that the person is normally supported by external research grant income but an individual or group has failed to obtain continued funding for their position.....................................................15

20) That Deans, Heads of Schools and School Managers be informed of the existence of the Scheme and that they disseminate this information to their research staff ......15
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3.6 Redundancy / Severance Payouts ..................................................................................................... 22

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41) That payment and recovery processes are centralised, with annual reconciliation, so that the cost is spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to redundancy / severance payout entitlements at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the current project grant cost centre ........................................................................................................ 22

4 Classification and tenure ..................................................................................................................... 23

4.1 Identifying research staff at The University of Western Australia .................................................. 23

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43) That, for externally-contracted research staff, annual reports of affiliated Centres and Institutes to the University include a section on research staff listing the number of research staff (other than teaching-and-research staff), their positions and levels, and whether their contracts are likely to continue for a further 12 months ........................................................................................................ 23

4.2 General versus academic classification ............................................................................................ 24

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45) That the classification guidelines be included in project management and human resources training programs ........................................................................................................ 24
4.3 Titles

46) That changes be implemented as soon as possible to ensure a consistent approach to the use of titles across academic research and teaching-and-research streams in the interests of parity of opportunity and status between the streams ........................................ 25

47) That the University move as soon as possible to a 3 or 4-tiered system of academic classification levels and that, at the very least, the new system retain comparability of titles across academic research and teaching-and-research streams but also consider the use of a single stream of titles ................................................................. 25

48) That a separate field be created on the human resources management system to identify fellowship recipients and the fellowship type (e.g. NHMRC, ARC, Welcome, Federation etc)................................................................. 25

49) That NHMRC, ARC and other fellowship recipients use an alternative designation following their title and name to identify their fellowship status ........................................ 25

4.4 Tenure

50) That a working group including Lou Landau and Bill Ford supported by Diane Christensen be set up to look at the feasibility of offering ongoing appointments to career researchers who have been at the University for an extended period........ 26

51) That Heads of School be encouraged to exert greater management capacity in order to make tenure decisions based on a School’s strategic needs, not on whether the staff is research or otherwise ................................................................................. 26

52) That Professional Development Review and “Heads of School” training programs be revised to include this change in direction ................................................................. 26

5 Training, development and participation

5.1 Staff development and training

53) That appropriate training programs for better research project management be developed and provided regularly for chief investigators of research grants, administrative staff supporting research activities (school managers, key persons in human resources, financial services, Research Services finance staff, superannuation office etc), and research staff employed under research grants. Programs should cover: research budgets including on-costs; research staff conditions and entitlements; and guidelines for general versus academic classification ................................................................................................................ 27

54) Given their success, that the University re-introduce leadership and career development programs specific to research staff, and include streams for early career, mid-career and senior level researchers ................................................................. 27

55) That Schools support research staff to attend relevant staff development workshops and programs ............................................................................................................ 27

5.2 Conference leave and funding

56) That minimum levels of travel support be provided by Schools for research staff to attend national/international conferences at which they have had abstracts accepted 28

57) That the University provide more University-wide travel grants for researchers at all levels to attend national/international conferences at which they have had abstracts accepted .......................................................................................... 28

5.3 Academic study leave

58) That the University revisit the issue of academic study leave for research staff in the future ................................. 29
5.4 Eligibility for internal grant funding at The University of Western Australia

59) That researchers be correctly classified as academic so those on an academic career path are not excluded from applying for internal grants

60) That The University of Western Australia establish a policy stating that internal grants are available to all academic staff, not just teaching-and-research staff

5.5 Access to the infrastructure funding from the research quantum

61) That research quantum distribution models within Faculties, Schools and other units apply equally to research and teaching-and-research staff, with some acknowledgement that the equitable distribution of research infrastructure may increase the sustainability of research programs and research staff employed within those programs

5.6 Performance Management

62) That reporting lines at the School level include research staff to ensure that they are covered by the Professional Development Review process, regardless of contract length

63) That research staff be included as Professional Development Review reviewers and that Professional Development Review training covers issues specific to research staff

64) That research staff be encouraged to use the annual reviews to develop and pursue an appropriate career development program

5.7 Participation in university decision making

65) That an audit of all University-wide committees (Academic Board, Research Committee etc.) be undertaken to assess the level of research staff representation and to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to ensure elected representation of research staff

66) That Faculty boards include at least one elected member of research staff

67) That Schools include all members of academic staff, including academic research staff, at their School level academic meetings, as well as at least one representative of general research staff

6 One staff

6.1 A “one staff” policy

68) That The University of Western Australia move towards one enterprise bargaining agreement for both academic and general staff

69) That the University provide teaching-and-research and research staff with one uniform and simplified career structure and one set of titles

70) That ongoing employment be a priority for all staff, including research staff

71) That, in keeping with a multidisciplinary approach to research, greater mobility of staff across disciplines be encouraged

APPENDIX 1. Academic and general staff agreements and implications for research staff

APPENDIX 2. Recommendations of the Lake Report 2000 and progress
1 Introduction

Two substantial and interrelated changes to The University of Western Australia's academic profile in recent years include the significant growth in income from research funding as a percentage of the University's budget, and the increasing number of staff at the University undertaking research activities funded from this income.

In an environment where research income has become a critical component of the University's budget, and research activity has mushroomed, research staff are a vital human resource. Historically, however, research staff have been employed on fixed, often short-term, contracts with limited access to the conditions and entitlements available to general and teaching-and-research staff. These current contractual arrangements for research positions no longer meet the professional and personal needs of their incumbents, and potentially lead to costly turn-over of staff as research staff seek more secure employment and better career options. With each staff lost to project infrastructure, project "memory" is lost too, while the employment and training of new staff creates a financial burden, and may result in serious interruptions to programs of work. Moreover, despite projected shortages given an ageing academic staff profile, it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract the best potential researchers to a research career in academia.

The University of Western Australia has led the way among Australian higher education institutions in the extent to which it has recognised the value of its research staff, documented the difficulties they face, and recommended changes to improve their conditions, thereby creating an environment conducive to best research practice. In 2000, the University set up a working party chaired by Fiona Lake to make recommendations regarding the teaching-research nexus with a particular focus on research staff. The working party identified the following issues:

- Inappropriate teaching workloads and practices;
- Poor conditions of employment with short, fixed-term contacts and job security emerging as major issues. Other related issues included limited access to superannuation, variable access to travel funding and staff development, and no entitlement to study leave;
- Poorly articulated career paths;
- Lack of representation in decision making and budgetary processes at departmental level and above; and
- A perception that research staff were held in low regard by others

The Project for the Advancement of Research Careers (PARC) working group was set up in mid-2005 to follow up progress on the recommendations of the Lake Report and, in particular, to determine the specific barriers to career progression for research staff and restrictions to research staff access to conditions and entitlements. The working group did not consider teaching-related issues as these were beyond the scope of the PARC terms of reference but acknowledges that many research staff are involved in teaching activities. Teaching-related issues were considered at some length in the Lake Report (see Recommendations 2-16 of the Lake Report).

The PARC working group was of the view that another survey of research staff was not mandated at this stage. Rather, it used surveys and interviews already undertaken by Lake, as well as by authors of other internal reports and papers, including the Organisation for Staff Development Services, and the University's Working Life Survey, to identify six major areas of concern covering 23 specific issues as the focus of its work.

PHASE 1 of the PARC project investigates and elaborates on these 23 issues for research staff at The University of Western Australia, identifying anomalies in research staff entitlements and the costing and payment of those entitlements, and makes recommendations on these issues.
PHASE 2 will be a period for following up the recommendations made in the Phase 1 report, in consultation with the wider University community. It is proposed that a formal review of progress takes place at the end of PHASE 2.

Recommendations

1) That a person be appointed to follow-up the recommendations in the PARC Report Phase 1 and monitor progress on work arising out of the recommendations with a view to producing a Phase 2 report reviewing outcomes by July 2007.

2) That the PARC Report Phase 1 be circulated among the University community including the UWA Researchers Association, the Academic Consultative Committee, Organisational Staff Development Services, Human Resources, Financial Services, Research Services as well as Deans of Faculties, Heads of Schools, School Managers, Directors of Centres, chief investigators and research staff for further comment and clarification.

3) That a separate project be set up to look at payment and recovery processes for annual leave, sick leave, long service leave and redundancy/severance payouts to ensure that the cost is spread equitably across the project grant cost centres contributing to salary at the relevant times, and with consideration of the fact that payment of entitlements out of project grant cost centres will be a further drain on those project budgets where on-costs are not fully funded.

4) That standardisation of annual leave, sick leave, and long service leave entitlements across academic and general streams be raised and considered in enterprise bargaining discussions, bearing in mind that access to better and cumulative leave entitlements may provide research staff with an additional buffer against funding gaps.

5) That those recommendations in the PARC Report Phase 1 with substantial budget implications be given careful consideration and be included in the 2006 budget discussions by the University Executive.

6) That specific issues be followed-up in the 2006 Working Life survey where appropriate.
2 GRANT FUNDING

2.1 Salary component of project grants

There may be a shortfall between a salary amount paid by a grant funding body and the actual cost to the university. Circumstances in which “salary” / “indexation” gaps arise may include the following:

a) Grant holder miscalculation: The grant holder does not include indexation in their staffing budget.

b) Requested budget not supported by funding body: an NHMRC PSP salary request is funded at a lower PSP level because the NHMRC assessment panel determined that this was the appropriate level of experience of personnel to undertake the work.

c) ARC discovery and linkage project grants and ARC fellowships: ARC pays the University of Western Australia salary rates but only 26% on-costs, not 31% as required by The University of Western Australia which includes a provision for severance pay and long service leave. ARC stipulates that on-costs provisions beyond the ARC contribution of 26 shall not be provided from the Project funding. With ARC grants and fellowships, the University, through the Faculties and the Schools, funds the appropriate salary on-costs.

d) NHMRC project grants: NHMRC pays a PSP which may fall short of the amount required to meet the equivalent University of Western Australia salary level. Shortfalls between PSPs and University salary costs are not met at present. There is some debate as to the extent of any shortfall, in part due to the fact that NHMRC PSP descriptors do not reflect the University's internal mapping of PSP levels and The University of Western Australia salary levels. In addition, while ideally researchers at Level C or higher should be paid out of fellowship schemes and not on NHMRC project grants, these schemes are highly competitive and only a very limited number are available to fund senior researchers integral to research programs within the University.

e) NHMRC fellowships: In some cases, the amount paid by the grant body for a fellowship position is not commensurate with The University of Western Australia’s costs associated with that level of appointment. The University has been topping up these up by 7.5%. However, in some cases, applicants for NHMRC Fellowship schemes have been applying for fellowships that are beneath their level of expertise and this has resulted in a shortfall of funds to support their salaries.

f) One-off lag in indexation due to Enterprise Bargaining salary increases: Indexation amounts built into the Research Office spreadsheet do not meet a one-off atypical increase due to the award of salary increases as a result of Enterprise Bargaining. This only affects grants submitted prior to ratification of an Enterprise Bargaining increase.

Recommendations

a. Grant holder miscalculation / b. Requested budget not supported by funding body:

7) That project management training be provided for Chief Investigators to ensure that indexation and on-costs are built into grant applications wherever possible and that staff employed under research grants are employed at appropriate levels in order to minimise shortfalls due to budget miscalculations and grant body funding shortfalls which remain the grant holder’s responsibility

8) That Research Services develop a better grant budget template to help reduce budget miscalculations
c. ARC discovery and linkage project grants and ARC fellowships:

9) That ARC grant applicants, Heads of Schools, and Deans of Faculties be informed that, for ARC grants, on-costs in excess of 26% (covering severance pay and long service leave) must be budgeted for from a source outside of the grant.

10) That the University, through the Faculties and the Schools, continue to meet the known gap between institutional on-costs and ARC-funded on-costs.

d. NHMRC project grants:

11) That the University lobby NHMRC to change its budget policy so that it funds salaries, including on-costs, at the institutional level (as is currently the case with ARC)

12) That the University clarify with NHMRC the skills and experience assumed at each PSP level in its current funding policy

13) That a mapping exercise be undertaken, in discussion with experienced grant holders, to see how well NHMRC PSP salary levels, as awarded, reflect institutional salary levels. Entry level PhDs should be used to set the first mapping point. This will provide documented evidence as to the extent of any mismatch, and support a case to be made for the need for NHMRC to pay salaries at institutional levels.

e. NHMRC fellowships:

14) That the University lobby NHMRC to provide additional fellowships for senior researchers

15) That The University of Western Australia lobby the NHMRC to set firm eligibility rules about the level of experience required in each category of NHMRC fellowship, so as to avoid the situation where experienced researchers apply for more junior fellowships. In the meantime, in cases where senior researchers apply for more junior fellowships, it is important to ensure that this is identified at the application stage and that there is a signed commitment from the relevant School and/or Faculty that the salary gap will be funded locally

16) That The University of Western Australia continue to meet the known gap for some categories of NHMRC Research Fellowships at the 7.5% level in the short term, while assessing what further adjustments are appropriate and possible in the longer term

f. One-off lag in indexation due to Enterprise Bargaining salary increases:

17) That The University of Western Australia consider making a one-off contribution towards projects whose budgets were calculated prior to Enterprise Bargaining agreements in order to ease shortfalls arising out of one-off Enterprise Bargaining-related salary increases

Progress to date

- A revised Research Services budget template is on web at: http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/page/88833
- 1.5% supplementation for ARC grants is under consideration
2.2 Short term contracts

The use of short term contracts where there is funding available for longer term contracts creates unnecessary insecurity for research staff as well as resulting in poorer employment conditions (e.g. restricting access to superannuation and severance payouts). As a result, good researchers may be discouraged from applying for positions at the University, or may be attracted to other work sectors by more stable conditions of employment. Almost four out of five research staff have indicated that short term funded positions are a barrier to their career progression at The University of Western Australia compared to one in five teaching-and-research staff (2003 Working Life Survey). There is some uncertainty as to the extent of the problem and the reasons for it.

Recommendations

18) That Recommendation to Offer New Employment Contract forms for fixed-term contracts under 24 months include additional questions to ascertain, in cases where the position is externally-funded, whether funding is available for longer than the period indicated and, if so, why a longer contract is not sought.

Progress to date

• The Manager, Equity and Diversity is investigating the use of contracts in the employment of fixed term staff at The University of Western Australia including the number of contracts per person, the length of contracts, breaks in service and classification levels
• The same project is also assessing the impact of contract length on access to severance pay on completion of service.
2.3 Safety Net Scheme

The University of Western Australia's Safety Net Scheme is an employment support scheme for externally-funded research staff whose funding has been exhausted and who have not been successful in attracting new funding to support their positions. It is a direct result of the recommendations of the Lake Report. The scheme has some unique features in that it covers technical and general as well as academic staff, and applies to staff at all levels. At present, it uses matching funding from a Faculty/School and, as such, can respond to supported requests within a very short timeframe. In addition, the requirement of matching funding from the Faculty/School is deemed a good indicator that the person named in the request is key to the Faculty/School.

However, the Safety Net Scheme appears to be underused. The amount awarded has dropped from $128,000 in 2003 (5 positions) to $74,000 in 2005 (2 positions). Three issues have been identified. First, some applications do not meet the criteria. Clarification is required on key elements of the scheme, including the evidence required (i) to show that continuation of the staff’s position is of strategic importance to the group, and (ii) to substantiate claims that the person is normally supported by external research grant income but an individual or group has failed to obtain continued funding for their position. Second, many researchers and Schools are unaware of the existence of the scheme. However, if the profile of the scheme is raised, major changes will be required in its administration including (i) a change in the central funding source, (ii) greater formalisation of the process including review panels, and (iii) longer response times. In addition, some researchers have expressed concern that an option within the scheme for the University to redeploy them to another area will make them even less competitive in a future funding round as their experience in their prime area of research diminishes. Third, Schools may not put funds aside regularly to cover matched funding for safety net applications and may not be in a position to provide support when requested.

In addition to the University's Safety Net Scheme, some Faculties have their own schemes. For example, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences has a competitive scheme based on track record. Only recently it has been extended to included persons whose funding support has come from other than nationally competitive schemes (e.g. Healthways).

Recommendations

19) That clarification be provided on key elements of the Safety Net Scheme including the evidence required (i) to show that continuation of the staff’s position is of strategic importance to the group and (ii) to substantiate claims that the person is normally supported by external research grant income but an individual or group has failed to obtain continued funding for their position

20) That Deans, Heads of Schools and School Managers be informed of the existence of the Scheme and that they disseminate this information to their research staff

21) That a separate source of funding be identified for the continuation of the Safety Net Scheme in anticipation of the increased access to the Scheme

22) That the use of the Scheme be monitored over the next 12 months and a recommendation be made at the end of that period regarding further changes, if any, to the Scheme

23) That Faculties be encouraged to supplement the University-wide Scheme with Faculty-specific Schemes

Progress to date
2.4 Register of researchers to meet short-term needs

It has been identified that, in Schools and Faculties, there are often short term employment opportunities for early career researchers to work on research projects. These researchers include PhD students who are close to completion or have just completed their dissertation and whose postgraduate award funding is exhausted, and research staff who are in between grants. It is proposed to set up a web-based register of researchers who are available to meet short-term research needs. The register will be available to chief investigators who have short-term research staff gaps to fill.

Recommendations

24) That funding be provided to set up and maintain a web-based register of early career researchers who are available to meet short-term research needs

25) If the register is established, that a decision be made as to the most appropriate area to maintain the register, and funding be provided to ensure its maintenance

26) That the use of the register be monitored to ensure it is not used to create a casualised research workforce to replace longer, fixed-term research positions

Progress to date

- The Dean, Graduate Research School is currently looking into the Scheme.
3 LEAVE AND ENTITLEMENTS

3.1 Superannuation

All staff (including research staff) who are employed contracts of two years or more are eligible for the full 17% superannuation benefits. As a general rule, once a person has been offered a two year contract, they retain their eligibility for the full 17% superannuation benefits even if their contract is renewed for a shorter period. The problem for research staff is that they may be employed on contracts for shorter periods than the two year minimum for eligibility for full benefits. All staff who experience a break in service and return on a contract of less than two years go back to the 9% superannuation guarantee.

Recommendations

27) That the University support a change in policy to make staff eligible for superannuation after a period of 24 months of continuous service, notwithstanding whether the period was covered by one or more contracts, and that it enters into discussions with Unisuper to bring this policy into effect

Progress to date

- The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
3.2 Annual Leave

Annual leave conditions for research staff differ depending on their general/academic classification. General staff may accumulate leave over the years, with leave not taken paid out at the end of their contract. Academic staff do not accumulate leave beyond 12 months, except with the agreement of the Head of School, where a maximum of two year’s entitlements can be held at any one time. They must take any leave owing within the period of their contract or forfeit their entitlement as leave owing is not paid out after the expiry of their contract. In addition to equity issues, improved leave entitlements for academic research staff to at least match those available to general research staff would ensure a greater capacity for them to cover funding gaps.

Recommendations

28) That contracts for academic research staff include a tick box to indicate that they are aware that accumulated annual leave must be taken within the period of the grant

29) That Human Resources remind fixed term academic research staff to take any outstanding annual leave when they send out the expiry of contract notice three months prior the expiry of the contract, with a copy of the notice to the chief investigator

30) That school managers and chief investigators be trained in policies and procedures related to annual and other leave practices for research staff

31) That payment and recovery processes for annual leave be centralised, with annual reconciliation, so that the cost is spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to salary at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the current project grant cost centre, or that an alternative method of calculating liability be developed to ensure that a current project grant cost centre does not contribute more than its actual liability

32) That the differences between all general and academic staff in their annual leave entitlements be raised and considered in enterprise bargaining discussions

Progress to date

- The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
3.3 Sick Leave

Sick leave entitlements accumulate over years of service. Such accumulation is an important financial buffer for staff in the event of a major illness. While research staff accumulate sick leave entitlements in the same way as other staff, there are no centralised policies and procedures to ensure that costs related to such leave are spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to salary at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the project grant cost centre current at the time of application. The default is for the full cost to be paid from the project grant cost centre current at the time of application.

Recommendations

33) That payment and recovery processes for sick leave be reconsidered and either centralised, with annual reconciliation, so that the cost is spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to salary at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the current project grant cost centre, or an alternative method of calculating liability be developed to ensure that a current project grant cost centre does not contribute more than its actual liability.

34) That an actuarial study be undertaken to determine what levy could be applied to research grants should the University decide to centralise payment of any sick leave in excess on one week.

35) That differences between general and academic staff in their sick leave entitlements be raised and considered in enterprise bargaining discussions.

Progress to date

- The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
3.4 Long service leave

There are substantial differences between general and academic research staff in their long service leave entitlements; these reflect differences in award agreements for general and academic staff. Areas of difference include: access to pro rata payments, and length of service requirements before pro rata payment is made on termination. A 1% long service leave levy is paid from the project grant cost centre from which the current salary is paid, charged as a salary on-cost, and held centrally. However, long service leave is normally paid from the current project grant cost centre as the criteria for access to the central fund is very limited and does not include payment for long service leave taken during employment or any payments on termination except in very specific circumstances. Recovery guidelines are silent on the use of these funds to cover research staff long service leave benefits. Long service leave is not accessed by all research staff as it requires a long period (10 years for academic staff; seven years pro-rata for general staff) of continuous service. It is considered anomalous that research staff are eligible for long service leave as a result of multiple contracts leading to continuous employment of 7-10 years, yet do not have continuous appointments. See also Section 4.4 (tenure).

Recommendations

36) That payment and recovery processes for long service leave be centralised, with annual reconciliation, so that the cost is spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to salary at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the project grant cost centre current at the time of application

37) That any-one who has served at The University of Western Australia long enough to be eligible for long service leave be considered eligible for an ongoing appointment

38) That the substantial differences between all general and academic staff in their long service leave entitlements are raised and considered in enterprise bargaining discussions

Progress to date

• The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
• A plan for the centralisation of the provision for and payment of LSL across all employees of the University has been prepared but not yet implemented.
3.5 Parental Leave

The University of Western Australia has introduced generous parental leave conditions for staff with 12 months continuous service. These include 14 weeks paid leave, an additional 90 weeks unpaid parental leave, and a return-to-work bonus of either 12 or 22 weeks salary (contingent on 1-5 or over 5 years continuous service respectively). Unfortunately, research staff may have very limited capacity to access these entitlements as a result of the short and/or fixed term nature of their employment contracts with the University and research grant accounts may have little capacity to bear the cost of parental leave. Where a research staff member is entitled to parental leave, this must be funded by the University even though, in many cases, the funding of this parental leave cannot be taken from the project grant income. For example, the ARC will fund 12 weeks maternity leave but will not fund the additional 2 weeks maternity at UWA nor will it fund the 22 weeks return to work bonus. It is noted, however, that parental leave affects only a small subset of staff at The University of Western Australia. There are also some guidelines suggesting that parental leave costs should be met at a Faculty level when it is essential that staff be replaced during the period of leave.

Recommendations

39) That the University develop a protocol for the payment of parental leave that does not levy project grant cost centres and may include Central and School contributions

Progress to date

- The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
3.6 Redundancy / Severance Payouts

In general, redundancy payments are made when ongoing staff are made redundant (for example, when a previously ongoing position is declared surplus to requirements). Severance payments are made when fixed term staff finish their contracts and are not re-employed within the University. All staff, including research staff, on fixed term contracts of 12 months or less are not eligible for severance payments (the contract must be for more than 12 months). The severance is paid from the current project grant cost centre, unless there are no funds available, in which case the payment comes from School funds.

Recommendations

40) That, in the course of enterprise bargaining discussions, consideration be given to changing the minimum eligibility criteria for severance pay to continuous service of 12 months or more rather than continuous service of over 12 months in order to maximise access of research staff to severance payments and in view of the fact that employment contracts are generally for standard periods such as 12 months

41) That payment and recovery processes are centralised, with annual reconciliation, so that the cost is spread across the project grant cost centres contributing to redundancy / severance payout entitlements at the relevant times, rather than be drawn from the current project grant cost centre

Progress to date

• The Manager, Equity and Diversity is assessing the impact of contract length on access to severance pay in the course of a project investigating the use of short term contracts at the University.
• The coverage of fixed-term research staff by industrial agreements, their current entitlements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement have been documented. See Appendix 1.
4 CLASSIFICATION AND TENURE

4.1 Identifying research staff at The University of Western Australia

At present, it is difficult to identify academic and general research staff at The University of Western Australia in a systematic way. There are two problem areas. The first is to identify research staff within core Schools at The University of Western Australia. The second is to identify research staff who are based at affiliated Centres and Institutes and whose contracts are not directly with the University but who contribute in one way or another to the University’s research and other outputs.

Recommendations

42) That, for internally-contracted research staff, there be a tick box on the Recommendation to Offer New Employment Contract form asking whether or not the person will be undertaking research duties, in addition to whether or not it is a research- or externally-funded position.

43) That, for externally-contracted research staff, annual reports of affiliated Centres and Institutes to the University include a section on research staff listing the number of research staff (other than teaching-and-research staff), their positions and levels, and whether their contracts are likely to continue for a further 12 months

Progress to date
4.2 General versus academic classification

Classification within general or academic award streams should be based on the nature of the position description, and the skills and experience associated with that position. The application of policies regarding classification within general or academic streams has been inconsistent, and researchers may be inappropriately classified as general or academic. Misclassification has important repercussions for career progression and access to entitlements including eligibility for internal grants at The University of Western Australia.

Recommendations

44) That the University consult with The University of Western Australia Researchers Association and develop appropriate guidelines on the criteria for classifying research staff as either general or academic

45) That the classification guidelines be included in project management and human resources training programs

Progress to date
4.3 Titles

There is no consistency in the use of generic titles across academic research and teaching-and-research streams. Moreover, the University is inappropriately using titles related to NHMRC/ARC fellowship schemes as their generic titles in the academic research stream, even though the majority of researchers are not fellowship holders. Identification of fellowship status is important, but should be done outside of the use of generic titles. Furthermore, some high-status titles such as associate professor are not available for use by research staff, even though a researcher may be performing at a high level. While there are plans to restructure academic classification levels within the University in the long-term to a maximum of three or four, a number of simple changes can be made in the short-term to ensure titles are consistent across the two academic streams e.g. Associate Professor (teaching-and-research) / Associate Professor (research). Due to past controversies and staff resistance, it is suggested that the term "research fellow" be retained in the short-term.

Recommendations

46) That changes be implemented as soon as possible to ensure a consistent approach to the use of titles across academic research and teaching-and-research streams in the interests of parity of opportunity and status between the streams

47) That the University move as soon as possible to a 3 or 4-tiered system of academic classification levels and that, at the very least, the new system retain comparability of titles across academic research and teaching-and-research streams but also consider the use of a single stream of titles

48) That a separate field be created on the human resources management system to identify fellowship recipients and the fellowship type (e.g. NHMRC, ARC, Welcome, Federation etc)

49) That NHMRC, ARC and other fellowship recipients use an alternative designation following their title and name to identify their fellowship status

Progress to date

- Jan Stuart is reviewing the use of titles at The University of Western Australia
- Diane Christensen is developing simplified academic classification levels within the University
4.4 Tenure

Research staff are an invaluable component of the University’s research infrastructure and the underpinning of its research excellence. For some staff, their contribution to research at the University of Western Australia will be a short-term one. Others will look for opportunities to make a long-term contribution but, faced with financial uncertainty and a poor career structure, will move to more stable employment either within or outside of the University. Still others will make a long-term commitment to continue to undertake research at the University, despite the vagaries of research employment; their dedication plays a crucial role in developing and building up the research capacity of the University. In the 2003 Working Life Survey, 71% of research staff (compared to 24% of teaching-and-research staff) indicated that an insufficient number of tenured or ongoing positions was a barrier to career progression. In order to attract, retain and reward excellent research staff, particularly in face of a predicted shortage of researchers as older academic staff retire and young graduates are drawn towards other professions, the University is investigating the possibility of offering ongoing positions to career researchers and assessing the financial and industrial implications of such a move. While Heads of School already have some discretion to direct funds to create ongoing positions for research staff, with the positions becoming redundant when funding runs out, few use this discretion.

Recommendations

50) That a working group including Lou Landau and Bill Ford supported by Diane Christensen be set up to look at the feasibility of offering ongoing appointments to career researchers who have been at the University for an extended period

51) That Heads of School be encouraged to exert greater management capacity in order to make tenure decisions based on a School’s strategic needs, not on whether the staff is research or otherwise

52) That Professional Development Review and “Heads of School” training programs be revised to include this change in direction

Progress to date

- Professor Lou Landau and Professor Bill Ford have formed a small Tenure Working Group with Diane Christensen examining the feasibility of extending tenure to career researchers at the completion of an agreed number of years of continuous employment
- Part of the remit for the Tenure Working Group is to undertake several case studies, mapping the potential implications of such a change for several different units within the University
5 TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

5.1 Staff development and training

In general, research staff access to staff development activities is dependent on funding and time release decisions made at the Faculty, School or Research Unit level. Activities may be research specific (e.g. training in the use of specialised techniques) or more generic (e.g. developing grant writing skills; mentoring programs). Organisational and Staff Development Services supports the needs of research and other staff through generic workshops and longer term programs; Research Services also offers a variety of workshops relevant to career researchers; and Graduate Studies offers programs for early career researchers finishing PhDs. The 2003 Working Life Survey found three-quarters of research staff were satisfied with staff development opportunities compared to two-thirds at the time of the 2000 Lake survey. This change is likely to have been strongly influenced by Organisational and Staff Development Services Raising Researchers program that ran successfully for two years in 2002 and 2003. Feedback on the program, particularly its mentoring component, was excellent. However, the program has not run since 2003 due to funding constraints; nor were recommendations to enhance the program by including additional streams targeted at middle and senior level researchers taken up. See also Sections 5.2 (conference leave and funding), 5.3 (academic study leave) and 5.6 (performance management reviews).

In addition to staff development activities specific to the career development of research staff, training programs are essential to ensure staff at all levels (chief investigators, administrative staff and researchers) have excellent research project and resources management skills. Training for better management of research projects is likely to improve research staff conditions at The University of Western Australia.

Recommendations

53) That appropriate training programs for better research project management be developed and provided regularly for chief investigators of research grants, administrative staff supporting research activities (school managers, key persons in human resources, financial services, Research Services finance staff, superannuation office etc), and research staff employed under research grants. Programs should cover: research budgets including on-costs; research staff conditions and entitlements; and guidelines for general versus academic classification

54) Given their success, that the University re-introduce leadership and career development programs specific to research staff, and include streams for early career, mid-career and senior level researchers

55) That Schools support research staff to attend relevant staff development workshops and programs

Progress to date

- Research orientation programs are run periodically
- Current entitlements for fixed-term research staff to staff development in industrial agreements, and the source of funding to meet the cost of that entitlement, have been documented. See Appendix 1.
- The University of Western Australia Professional and Leadership Development Framework
- GO8 funding proposal
5.2 Conference leave and funding

Conference exposure is critical in the career development of researchers by providing a national/international stage to showcase their work and creating strategic opportunities for research networking. In the 2003 Working Life Survey, researchers responded that they were happy with their access to conference leave, however relatively few also received University funding to attend conferences compared to teaching-and-research staff. The issue of funding remains a contentious one for research staff whereas teaching-and-research staff are more likely to have access to research infrastructure or other monies for specific conference attendance, as well as access to paid study leave for general career development. Practices vary across the campus. For example, in 2003, the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences extended access to travel grants of up to $2500 (for a period of two calendar years) to self-funded research staff.

Recommendations

56) That minimum levels of travel support be provided by Schools for research staff to attend national/international conferences at which they have had abstracts accepted

57) That the University provide more University-wide travel grants for researchers at all levels to attend national/international conferences at which they have had abstracts accepted

Progress to date
5.3 Academic study leave

Study leave provides an important career development opportunity for academic staff. It serves at least two purposes. For staff involved in other than pure research activities (e.g. teaching activities), it offers time to undertake research activities. For all researchers, it offers a unique opportunity, funded by the University, to engage in collaborative activities with researchers in other States and overseas. Research staff do not have an entitlement to study leave and this is unlikely to change in the near future. This is problematic for research staff developing career paths. Even though they may have fewer teaching commitments than teaching-and-research staff, much of the so-called research time available to them may be spent in research administration and management activities. In addition, their career development may be severely impeded by a lack of opportunity and funding to build up collaborations with key researchers in other institutions.

Recommendations

58) That the University revisit the issue of academic study leave for research staff in the future

Progress to date
5.4 Eligibility for internal grant funding at The University of Western Australia

Research staff have very limited access to internal grants at The University of Western Australia. There are two issues. First, research grants (e.g. The University of Western Australia Research Grants Scheme) are generally restricted to academic staff only, so staff who have been misclassified as general are ineligible. Second, many grants are further restricted to teaching-and-research staff (e.g. Fay Gayle Fellowships, Faculty of Medicine Small Bequest of Research Funds), thereby excluding research staff altogether. The latter is a serious impediment to academic career development, as competitiveness for external grants is dependent on a researcher's track record, including their capacity to attract other grants. This is a particular problem for early career researchers who are excluded from the opportunity to apply for and get grants in a "nurtured" environment.

Recommendations

59) That researchers be correctly classified as academic so those on an academic career path are not excluded from applying for internal grants

60) That The University of Western Australia establish a policy stating that internal grants are available to all academic staff, not just teaching-and-research staff

Progress to date
5.5 Access to the infrastructure funding from the research quantum

The research quantum that comes to the University from the Commonwealth supports the University's research infrastructure. The University distributes a proportion of the research quantum it receives to Faculties using a transparent model that may change over time. However, the further redistribution of that infrastructure funding varies greatly between Faculties and between Schools within Faculties. It is outside the terms of reference of this working group to look at distribution models and make recommendations regarding best practice. However, regardless of the model adopted, it is important that criteria for distribution are applied equally to research and teaching-and-research staff. For example, if a distribution model rewards a supervisor for each continuing and/or completed PhD student, it is important that the model applies equally to supervisors who are research staff and supervisors who are teaching-and-research staff. There is potential for research staff who are chief investigators to use these funds to bridge salary gaps where there are project grant shortfalls (see Section 2.1), to subside conference and study development travel, as a short-term safety net in the event of loss of grant funding, in addition to providing funding for research infrastructure.

Recommendations

61) That research quantum distribution models within Faculties, Schools and other units apply equally to research and teaching-and-research staff, with some acknowledgement that the equitable distribution of research infrastructure may increase the sustainability of research programs and research staff employed within those programs.

Progress to date
5.6 Performance Management

Staff on research contracts should have the opportunity to participate in Professional Development Reviews, and Professional Development Reviews need to be structured in a way that is appropriate to research staff.

Recommendations

62) That reporting lines at the School level include research staff to ensure that they are covered by the Professional Development Review process, regardless of contract length

63) That research staff be included as Professional Development Review reviewers and that Professional Development Review training covers issues specific to research staff

64) That research staff be encouraged to use the annual reviews to develop and pursue an appropriate career development program

Progress to date
5.7 Participation in university decision making

University committees are decision-making bodies whose impact affects the environment in which staff work and the conditions of their employment. Representation of research staff on these committees is critical to ensure that issues affecting research staff are raised and addressed, and that decisions made by those committees affecting broader matters do not have adverse consequences for research staff.

The representation of research staff on university-wide committees is increasing, but policies to ensure their representation vary and, in the case of Academic Board, regulations covering the specific representation of research staff were changed in the restructure of Academic Board in 2002 so that research staff are no longer represented as a specific interest group. The situation appears to be worse at the Faculty and School level where the inclusion of research staff at the committee level appears to be ad hoc. There are no university-wide guidelines covering the representation of research staff on committees at any level of university decision-making.

Recommendations

65) That an audit of all University-wide committees (Academic Board, Research Committee etc.) be undertaken to assess the level of research staff representation and to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to ensure elected representation of research staff

66) That Faculty boards include at least one elected member of research staff

67) That Schools include all members of academic staff, including academic research staff, at their School level academic meetings, as well as at least one representative of general research staff

Progress to date
6 ONE STAFF

6.1 A “one staff” policy

One of the strategic priorities in the University’s Operational Priority Plan 2006-2008 is:
“To recruit, develop and retain the highest quality staff, supporting the development of their full
potential within a “one-staff, one-University” policy”

Recommendations

68) That The University of Western Australia move towards one enterprise bargaining
agreement for both academic and general staff
69) That the University provide teaching-and-research and research staff with one uniform and
simplified career structure and one set of titles
70) That ongoing employment be a priority for all staff, including research staff
71) That, in keeping with a multidisciplinary approach to research, greater mobility of staff
across disciplines be encouraged

Progress to date

• Working groups are investigating uniformity across streams of titles (Section 4.3) and tenure
(Section 4.4) for research staff
### APPENDIX 1. Academic and general staff agreements and implications for research staff

#### 3.1 Superannuation

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff | • Ongoing (FT or PT) and fixed term contract of 2 or more years - 17% employer contribution to super  
| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff | • Fixed term contracts of less than 2 years - 9% employer contribution to super  
| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts | • As per academic staff  
| UWA internal policy | • Once a 2 year contract has been held the 17% continues to be paid for each subsequent contract.  
| | • There is no accumulation of service to be able to be eligible for the 17%.  
| Who pays / Process of recovery | • Once a staff member has been on a 2 year contract any subsequent contract (regardless of length) will be at the 17%.  
| | • If a staff member has a break in service then they go back to the 9% super if on a contract of less than 2 years.  
| | Super entitlements are recouped from project grant cost centre that salary is paid from as part of on-costs, and are paid to the superfund.  

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**Notes:**

- **Superannuation**
  - **Academic Staff**
    - Ongoing (FT or PT) and fixed term contract of 2 or more years - 17% employer contribution to super.
    - Fixed term contracts of less than 2 years - 9% employer contribution to super.
  - **General Staff**
    - As per academic staff.

- **Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts**
  - Once a 2 year contract has been held the 17% continues to be paid for each subsequent contract.
  - There is no accumulation of service to be able to be eligible for the 17%.

- **UWA internal policy**
  - Once a staff member has been on a 2 year contract any subsequent contract (regardless of length) will be at the 17%.
  - If a staff member has a break in service then they go back to the 9% super if on a contract of less than 2 years.

- **Who pays / Process of recovery**
  - Super entitlements are recouped from project grant cost centre that salary is paid from as part of on-costs, and are paid to the superfund.
## 3.2 Annual Leave

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff | • As per General Staff Agreement except  
• leave is not cumulative (though up to 4 weeks can be rolled into following year with approval of Head of School)  
• Leave must be taken before resignation or expiry of employment  
• No payout of leave on termination for any reason |
| --- | --- |
| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff | • 4 weeks per year  
• Cumulative to a maximum of 3 years entitlement  
• Leave can be taken in advance (if resign/retire/terminate before end of year any leave taken above entitlement to that date is repaid) |
| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts | • Leave must be taken within the term of the contract (ie can’t add it on to the end)  
• Annual leave can roll from one contract to the next if no break between.  
• If a staff member resigns (general staff) any pro-rata leave owing is paid no matter how long is left on the contract (unless the school notifies HR differently)  
• No annual leave is paid out for Academic staff who resign. |
| UWA internal policy | • General Staff records are held centrally at HR  
• Academic records are held at the school level |
| Who pays / Process of recovery | • Paid out of the project grant cost centre that employs the staff member  
• Annual Leave Loading is debited from the project grant cost centre that the salary is drawn from and held at the BU level  
• If an employee changes cost centres the new centre can request a balance from HR to allow for the calculation of the monetary value of the entitlement to be transferred (by journal) to the new cost centre. |
### 3.3 Sick Leave

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff |  
|-----------------------------------------------|---|
| 93.75 hours per year (or pro-rata amount for less that FTE) |  
| As per General Staff Agreement except |  
| Medical certificate after 5 continuous days off |  
| Leave is cumulative |  

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff |  
|-----------------------------------------------|---|
| 93.75 hours per year (or pro-rata amount for less that FTE) |  
| Medical Certificate for more than three continuous days off |  
| Leave is cumulative |  

| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts |  
|---------------------------------|---|
| Sick leave would roll from one contract to the next as long as break is less than 2 weeks (for longer would have to be negotiated on a case by case basis) |  

| UWA internal policy |  
|--------------------|---|
| General staff records are held centrally at HR |  
| Academic records are held at school level |  

| Who pays / Process of recovery |  
|--------------------------------|---|
| Paid out of the project grant cost centre that employs the staff member (as this is not an ‘additional cost’) |  
| If an employee accumulates a substantial sick leave balance and moves to a new cost centre the new centre can apply to have the monetary value of the sick leave balance transferred from the previous cost centre to the new one – this is rather rare and is done on a case by case basis. |
### 3.4 Long service leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff</th>
<th>Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Long service leave is available after 10 years continuous service</td>
<td>• Long service leave is available after 10 years continuous service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The amount of leave available is 13 weeks (91 calendar days). It can be taken in the following forms: at half pay for 26 weeks or 6.5 weeks at double pay (or some combination of this)</td>
<td>• The amount of leave available is 13 weeks (487.5hrs). It can be taken in the following forms: at half pay for 26 weeks or 6.5 weeks at double pay (or some combination of this)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The Agreement is silent on research staff, but addresses the matter of fixed term staff. In the case of fixed term staff, they are the same as ongoing staff as long as they meet continuity of service requirements.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pro-rata payout only in cases of:</td>
<td>• Pro-rata payout only in cases of:</td>
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<td>• genuine retirement (after 55)</td>
<td>• genuine retirement (after 55)</td>
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<td>• on death</td>
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<tr>
<td>• termination by Uni and have at least 5 years service</td>
<td>• termination by Uni and have at least 5 years service</td>
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<td>• (pro-rata is only on service at the Uni, prior service is not counted unless 3 years have been served)</td>
<td>• (pro-rata is only on service at the Uni, prior service is not counted unless 3 years have been served)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long service leave is available pro rata after 7 years continuous service (with no need to repay if leave before 10 years). (There is no pro-rata pay-out available)</td>
<td>• Long service leave is available pro rata after 7 years continuous service (with no need to repay if leave before 10 years). (There is no pro-rata pay-out available)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It is at School/Unit discretion to allow pro-rata to be accessed.</td>
<td>• It is at School/Unit discretion to allow pro-rata to be accessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On second period of accrual (after initial ten years) pro-rata can be accessed after 3 ½ years.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pro-rata payout on</td>
<td>• Pro-rata payout on</td>
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<td>• at least one year service if retiring at age 55 or older</td>
<td>• at least one year service if retiring at age 55 or older</td>
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<td>• on death with at least one year’s service</td>
<td>• on death with at least one year’s service</td>
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<tr>
<td>• After three years service if retired by Uni</td>
<td>• After three years service if retired by Uni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• (pro-rata is only on service at the Uni, prior service is not counted unless 3 years have been served)</td>
<td>• (pro-rata is only on service at the Uni, prior service is not counted unless 3 years have been served)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts**

- Once eligible for long service leave, research staff can take their long service leave within the period of their contract or be paid in lieu at the termination of their contract.
- The amount of continuous service for accumulation of long service leave is 10 years. Two breaks a year of up to 6 weeks each are permissible. These weeks do not count as service, but do not count as a break in service.

**UWA internal policy**

- All staff are required to take their long service leave within 5 years of accumulating it. If the leave is not taken no further entitlement accrues until the leave is cleared (unless approved by the VC).

**Who pays / Process of recovery**

- LSL levy is a 1% charge on salaries (as an on-cost) paid from the project grant cost centre from which the normal salary is paid; this is held centrally by the university.
- LSL is paid from the project grant cost centre that normal salary comes from at the time that LSL is taken by the employee. An application can be made to the Director of Financial Services to recover LSL costs from the central fund in the following circumstances (these are being reviewed):
  - on retirement at or after 60
  - on grounds of ill health
  - resignation of female officer on marriage after completion of three years of service
  - discontinuation by Uni after three years service
- The current BU would have to recoup the cost of the LSL from the previous BUs that employed the staff member
### 3.5 Parental Leave

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff | • Once staff have 12 months continuous service they are eligible for up to 104 weeks parental leave in total (can be made up of a combination of paid and unpaid leave).  
• Research Grant Funded staff on a second or subsequent contract can have a break of up to 6 weeks between contracts and not interrupt continuous service for the calculating of eligibility for parental leave (except if they have received a severance payment as outlined in Schedule C – Fixed Term Employment)  
• 14 weeks paid leave (or 28 on half pay)  
• Can use annual leave / long service leave (as part of 104 weeks)  
• Return to Work Bonus  
  • Eligible for 12 or 22 weeks worth of salary for 1-5 or 5+ years of continuous service (can be taken as extra paid leave; research support; an allowance to offset costs such as childcare etc; to fund graduated return to work)  
  • Must give a return of service of 12 months or pay the bonus back  
• Only paid parental leave counts as qualifying service (for continuous service), but unpaid leave does not constitute a break in service |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff</td>
<td>• As per Academic Staff Agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts | • Staff are not eligible for parental leave beyond the term of their contract (and contracts cannot be extended just to cover parental leave) (also see below)  
• Most contract staff will not be eligible for the return to work bonus as most staff would not have enough time left on their contract to meet the 12 month return of service requirement. |
| UWA internal policy | • Staff who would normally be renewed on a contract should have this expectation even if they are pregnant / on parental leave  
• Staff who don’t meet the eligibility for paid parental leave (12 months service) will be able to take unpaid leave, and access any other leave that they might have owing (annual, sick) |
| Who pays / Process of recovery | • Parental leave is paid out of the project grant cost centre that employs the staff member  
• Return to Work Bonus: the latest information (memo from VC 19/12/05) is that ½ will be paid by a central fund and the other ½ will be paid at Faculty/Division level. Research staff are specifically covered in this memo.  
• Parental leave should be met at a Faculty level when essential that staff be replaced during the period of leave. Every attempt should be made to obtain funding from external bodies for these expenditures. |
### 3.6 Redundancy / Severance payouts

#### Redundancy – ongoing staff (generally)

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement:                      | • Voluntary Redundancy payout – 3 weeks pay for each year of service up to 10 years then 2 weeks for each subsequent year (up to 78 weeks pay); pro-rata basis for long service leave  
|                                                      | • Involuntary Redundancy payout – up to 2 years service 4 weeks pay; 2-3 years 6 weeks; 3-4 years 7 weeks; over 4 years 8 weeks pay. 
|                                                      | • If redeployed and need to relocate then reasonable expenses will be paid (e.g. legal fees, stamp duty etc.)  
| Academic Staff                                      |  

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement:                    | • Redundancy payout (the term “severance” is used in the agreement) – 3 weeks pay for each year of service up to 10 years then 2 weeks for each subsequent year (up to 104 weeks pay); 4 weeks pay in lieu of notice (8 weeks if did not go for redeployment); accrued & pro-rata annual leave; accrued annual leave loading; accrued LSL; pro-rata LSL; accumulated or bank flex  
|                                                      | • Efforts to find a new position within the Uni will be made by the university, if this is not possible or the employee elects not to take this up then the severance entitlements will be paid.  
|                                                      | • A staff member not in the area incurring redundancies can volunteer to leave so that one of those staff deemed excess can have their position and they will be eligible for the severance payout.  
| General Staff                                       |  

#### Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts

| • The Redundancy section of the agreement does not generally apply to Research staff as they are most often on fixed term contracts.  

#### UWA internal policy

| Who pays / Process of recovery                       |  

| • This is an automatic process in HR  

| Severance Payments – fixed term staff              |  

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement:                    | • If after six weeks from the expiry of a contract new employment with the Uni has not been found the following severance payment applies:  
|                                                      | • More than 1 yr up to and including 2 yrs service – 4 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 2 yrs and up to and including 3 yrs service – 6 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 3 yrs and up to and including 4 yrs service – 7 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 4 yrs service – 8 weeks pay (unless an offer of comparable employment has been refused)  
| Academic Staff                                       |  

| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement:                    | • If after six weeks from the expiry of a contract new employment with the Uni has not been found the following severance payment applies:  
|                                                      | • More than 1 yr up but less than 2 yrs service – 4 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 2 yrs but less than 3 yrs service – 6 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 3 yrs but less than 4 yrs service – 7 weeks pay  
|                                                      | • More that 4 yrs service – 8 weeks pay (unless an offer of comparable employment has been refused)  
| General Staff                                       |  

| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts | • Severance is paid on the basis of all service and the last contract (as long as the last contract was a research contract all service, research or not, will be counted in the calculating of the severance entitlement).  

| UWA internal policy                             |  

| Who pays / Process of recovery                       | • The severance is paid from the project grant cost centre that paid the employee, unless there are no funds in which case the payment would come from School funds.  

### 5.1 Staff Development/conference leave and related

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: Academic Staff</th>
<th>• There is nothing in the agreement regarding staff development leave / conference leave</th>
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</table>
| Enterprise Bargaining Agreement: General Staff | • Up to 5 hours per week to be enrolled in a part-time course approved by the Head (this included travel time)  
• Must be at convenience of school/section  
• Employee is doing equivalent (as far as practicable) load in own time  
• Employee is making satisfactory progress |
| Implications for research staff on fixed term (externally-funded) contracts | • No entitlement to study leave for Research staff. It is the Faculty’s responsibility to ensure that appropriate access to professional development opportunities occur. |
| UWA internal policy | • Policy and Procedure 35.3.4 (does not cover Research staff) |
| Who pays / Process of recovery | • Courses run by Organisational and Staff Development Services are at no cost to the School/Unit  
• Courses run by external bodies are paid for by the School/Unit/Research grant. General staff can apply for some funding from Organisational and Staff Development Services to help offset this expense: the school/unit must pay at half and the grant is limited to $750 each two years per staff member. |
APPENDIX 2. Recommendations of the Lake Report 2000 and progress

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON RESEARCH STAFF TO THE TEACHING & RESEARCH NEXUS WORKING PARTY JULY 2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation 1: That the term &quot;research staff&quot; be used in preference to &quot;research only staff&quot; to indicate the broad involvement of these staff members in research, teaching and administrative activities in the University.</td>
<td>The use of the term “research staff” has increased since 2000, however it is timely to remind all staff that this is the University’s preferred position and the reasons for it.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 2-16: These relate to the teaching commitments of teaching-and-research and research staff, including issues of transparency of workloads, recognition and payment, student supervision, Teaching &amp; Research Fellowships.</td>
<td>These issues are outside the ambit of the PARC Report and are not discussed here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation 17: That the University address the staff development needs of all staff by making available at central or departmental levels mentoring programmes, networking/support seminars and workshops, and a formal staff development programme.</td>
<td>In general, the 2003 Working Life Survey found three-quarters of research staff were satisfied with staff development opportunities compared to two-thirds at the time of the Lake survey. This change is likely to have been strongly influenced by the Organisational and Staff Development Services Raising Researchers program (which included a mentoring program) that ran successfully for two years in 2002 and 2003. The program has not been run since due to funding constraints, and recommendations to enhance the program with streams targeted at middle and higher level researchers have not been taken up.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 18: That the University encourage research staff to attend staff development programmes.</td>
<td>Many of these recommendations have not been actioned and, as such, form the basis of the current report. This includes: uniformity of titles (related to R.20); clarity on the appropriateness of general and academic classification (R.21); use of short-term contracts (R.22); and the use of ongoing contracts for long serving staff (R.24). A number of changes have occurred with respect to increasing staff awareness of their employment rights (R.23). These have included: • an incorporated UWA Researchers Association (2004) • a UWA web site for research staff (2003) at: <a href="http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/welcome/for_researchers/resources_for_research_staff">http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/welcome/for_researchers/resources_for_research_staff</a> These initiatives have been due to the work of a determined network of researcher staff with support from UWA Research Services, Organisational and Staff Development Services and the UWA branch of the NTEU. There is little evidence however that Human Resources, Schools or chief investigators are skilled in making researchers aware of their rights.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 19: That the Centre for Staff Development review the skill needs of potential employers in order to guide the development of appropriate programmes for research staff.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 20: That a uniform categorization of academic and general staff agreement levels, duties and titles, be developed for UWA research staff.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 21: That the transfer of an individual from an academic staff agreement to the general staff agreement be avoided unless there are valid reasons.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 22: That Departments and grant holders be strongly encouraged to employ staff for the length of a project or grant rather than on shorter contracts.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 23: That Human Resources and Heads of Department encourage research staff to become aware of their employment rights.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 24: That Departments be encouraged to transfer long serving staff from fixed term contracts to ongoing contracts when possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECOMMENDATION</td>
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<td>Recommendation 25: That opportunities to broaden the research experience of UWA staff be explored (for example, exchanges between the University and industry) as a means of enhancing career opportunities for individuals.</td>
<td>Research staff express low levels of satisfaction with their career opportunities, with only two out of five expressing satisfaction in the 2000 Lake Survey and three years later in the Working Life Survey. Study leave is not an option and access to conference and other travel funding is ad hoc.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 26: That the role of research staff in Departmental activities, including: - attendance and voting rights at academic or general staff meetings; - input into the Department’s direction on research and budget; and - workload allocation be clarified and research staff be encouraged to participate. That research staff be given similar rights to teaching and research staff in the areas in which they are operating.</td>
<td>Representation of research staff on university-wide committees is increasing but may not be formalised; at Faculty, School and Unit level, their representation is ad hoc.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 27: That the budgeting process within Departments and Faculties be transparent to all staff.</td>
<td>There is little evidence of systematic induction of research staff including provision of information on conditions and entitlements, or information about the UWA Researchers Association and its webpage. UWA News has been the primary source of information on the activities and contributions of research staff to the wider University community.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 28: That the access of research staff to assistance such as travel grants be reviewed and that research staff be encouraged to make full use of such grants.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 29: That travel grants be more available to research staff either through the expansion of current central and Faculty based schemes incorporating the setting of priority areas (eg new staff), or alternatively, that the Research Committee consider establishing a travel grant scheme for research staff.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 30: That, as part of research staff induction into a Department, the entitlements of research staff be explained.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 31: That the University promote the activities and contributions of research staff to the wider University community.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 32: That, to maintain optimal relations between different sectors of the University, an education programme clarifying the organization of funding and support for teaching and research activity within the University be developed.</td>
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<td><strong>RECOMMENDATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>PROGRESS</strong></td>
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<td>Recommendation 33: That the University provide funding for a safety net scheme based on support for individuals who had high quality grants that were not funded (either Chief Investigator or staff member employed by the grant) and were likely to be funded in the near future.</td>
<td>A safety net scheme has been established. The PARC report reviews the performance of the scheme and makes recommendations for its enhancement.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 34: That the initial review and prioritisation of safety net grant applicants be made at the level of Faculty following a formal invitation from Faculty to Departments for applications.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 35: That the safety net scheme be funded by a mixture of Faculty funds and matching central funds, possibly through the Research Matching Fund.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 36: That the Research Committee overview the safety net scheme, addressing issues such as how grants are prioritised and funded at a central level and how funding is distributed to Faculties.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation 37: That the University seek to increase the amount of funding available for on-going Professorial Fellowship appointments for research</td>
<td>This issue is outside the ambit of the PARC Report and is not discussed here.</td>
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</tbody>
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