



Bristol UCU Submission - Review of Pathway 1 Progression and Promotion

The below mainly relates to progression. On promotion, the proposal that UCU has heard mooted, that the two promotion committees will be reduced to one (removing the First FPC), is one we would support. We would also like to reiterate that as part of the pathway 1 review, early and mid-career staff, those academics who have been through the progression procedure, *should be heavily consulted*.

- Bristol UCU considers the principle of progression between grades/profiles enshrined in Pathway One (P1) a key element of P1. It is a principle that we consider a red line matter. This principle is enshrined at Bristol and forms part of our Collective Agreement with the University. As pointed out in our Bristol UCU letter, December 2016 '[o]ur starting point is the successful work done a decade ago by the University together with the campus trade unions to implement locally the National Framework Agreement'. In our 2007 'Agreement relating to the implementation of the National Framework Agreement at the University of Bristol' it states 'On Pathway 1, progression between Grades J to K and K to L will normally be from the fourth point of the grade'.
- Bristol UCU considers any proposed changes to Pathway 1 a change to our terms and conditions of employment, a policy and process affecting our members, and subject to consultation and our agreement. We are no mere 'stakeholders' with a view. The National Framework Agreement is clear: '[p]rogression of staff to a higher grade will be on an equitable and transparent basis, the details of which will be developed in partnership between HE institutions and their recognised trade unions - acknowledging in particular established arrangements for progression of present Lecturer A (pre-92 universities)'.
- Our comments regarding improvements to P1 relate primarily to the management of progression. Contrary to those, for example, who may consider progression 'too easy',

between Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, Grade K to Grade L, *we believe that progression is a rigorous process* – a skim through the HR pages on ‘Academic Progression Procedure’ confirms this. Only those unaware of the easily accessible Guidance for Managers would consider the Progression Procedure vague or lax. There are examples of best practice in certain Schools that could serve as exemplars for Heads of Schools unsure of how progression should work – see the School of Geographical Sciences.

- Bristol UCU would also impress the point that progression decisions should not be considered ‘one-off’ moments of managerial involvement. They follow on from the annual staff reviews, the setting of clear expectations and a holistic consideration of staff performance over a passage of several years. Progression decisions are not sword of Damocles moments: they are the culmination of the preceding stages of an academic’s career that should offer no surprises.
- Indeed, to emphasise a point made in our December 2016 letter ‘[a]cross the University as a whole, the evidence is overwhelming that our excellent staff routinely and comfortably meet the expectations delineated for progression from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer...We see no substantial evidence that staff who should not reach Senior Lecturer are doing so’.