



# Scottish Funding Council - Description of Human Resources Management Modernisation in the University Sector

**Institution: University of Stirling**

## **Context:**

*The University of Stirling offers a broad range of course programmes including subjects such as accounting, finance, economics, and environmental sciences. Founded in 1967 it has quickly expanded and now caters for close to 8,470 students<sup>1</sup>, a third of whom live on campus. It employs 1,872 members of staff<sup>2</sup>. The institution is well-known for the flexible learning opportunities it offers its students and is also noted for pioneering the two semester academic year.*

## **Human resources strategy and human resources management modernisation:**

The University of Stirling's human resources (HR) strategy seeks to demonstrate 'organisational coherence' between its human resources management practices and wider strategic goals. The HR Strategy stresses that in a challenging and uncertain external environment there is a need to focus the institution's performance in research and enterprise and learning and teaching. Providing an attractive and competitive employment environment to attract staff as well as supporting their capacity to perform is seen as key to meeting organisational goals.

It is recognised that modernisation of pay structures in the institution creates an opportunity for the institution to address a range of historically complex pay and rewards issues, including simplifying a complex array of arrangements for different supplementary allowances. Pay modernisation based on comprehensive and systematic job evaluation has allowed a more direct comparison of role and job size and how that then links to grading and salary levels. There is a strong expectation that pay modernisation will not only allow the University to achieve more equitable pay arrangements for different staff, but it will also allow the institution to make gains in improved organisational efficiency and staff productivity.

Pay modernisation is also seeking to harmonise previously disparate terms and conditions, and improving other processes relating to: recruitment and selection processes; market supplements, flexible working; promotions procedures; career development; performance management. Developing flexible working policies are highlighted as an important component element of the University of Stirling's overall approach to recruitment, employment, performance and retention.

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<sup>1</sup> Higher Education Statistics Agency 04/05 student figures

<sup>2</sup> University website 'Facts' section: [http://www.external.stir.ac.uk/visitor\\_info/facts/index.php](http://www.external.stir.ac.uk/visitor_info/facts/index.php) (retrieved May 2007)

The University is also in the process of developing a comprehensive, accurate and flexible human resource information system to support these improvements and also provide management information for strategic decision-making purposes.

Mention is made in the HR strategy of supporting staff development linked to wider organisational goals, especially those linked to strengthening leadership and management and those geared to helping deliver improved learning and teaching, research and enterprise in the institution. The University sees the need to build on the successful model of partnership working achieved with the campus trade unions during implementation of the *Framework Agreement for the Modernisation of Pay Structures*. The HR function in the University has set itself a series of six performance objectives to clarify its support role to human resources management in the institution and as service standards for future performance by the unit.

The University of Stirling's overall human resources strategy can be found online at:

<http://www.personnel.stir.ac.uk>