

THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD

VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME 2023

Purpose of the voluntary severance scheme

To help the University secure cost savings and realign and position its workforce for the future through transformation for success. The higher education sector faces many challenges – private providers have entered the marketplace, fees remain static whilst staffing and operational costs increase, some subject areas are experiencing ongoing decline in popularity and our competitors are being increasingly aggressive in their student recruitment tactics. All this must influence how we shape our strategy for the next few years.

Our hard work so far has ensured that we have fared well in an uncertain environment. As you will all be aware the University was the first winner of the Global Teaching Excellence Award and recently received a favourable REF outcome. We also have a number of other accolades to be proud of - the number one university in England for professionally qualified teaching staff; the only university in the UK where 100% of permanent teaching staff are fellows of the Higher Education Academy and the leading university for the receipt of National Teaching Fellowships for over a decade.

To build on this success and to ensure that we maintain and develop our place within the market we have begun a process of closely analysing the provision we offer, and this will continue on an ongoing basis. Where subjects are less popular we will consider the closure of courses. We also need to build capacity for new provision – subjects already being explored are dental therapy/hygiene, diagnostic radiotherapy and civil engineering. In addition, there are identified potential inefficiencies with the current organisational structure with work duplicated across schools and services with different processes, procedures and systems implemented in different areas which will need to be removed or minimised to deliver more effective and efficient ways of working.

The University's research agenda requires research leadership to be significantly more enhanced to enable the delivery of improving outputs, grant income and impact/public engagement. Across all academic areas, we need to be sure all can contribute to excellent teaching, supervise doctoral students as well as develop effectively and quickly from an early career researcher to deliver and publish internationally recognised and world-leading work. We must therefore position ourselves for the future to ensure the highest levels of academic authenticity through developing highly qualified and engaged individuals with the desire to continually achieve and deliver outstanding teaching and research - complemented by professional administrative and technical support.

While we are in the fortunate position of building on considerable success there is no doubt that the next few years are going to be more challenging than ever for us and for the wider sector.

The Voluntary Severance Scheme Offer

The University is offering the opportunity for staff to leave on 31 August 2023 with an enhanced payment upon leaving.

The severance payment you would receive is 6 months' gross salary and access to your pension dependent on membership, your age and pension scheme rules.

Illustrative Examples

As an illustration if you are paid:

- At the top of grades 9, 6, 5 and 4 with a severance payment of 6 months' gross pay could receive the equivalent of 9 months' net salary.
- At the top of grades 8 and 7 with a severance payment of 6 months' gross pay could receive the equivalent of 10 months' net salary.

Severance payments are currently tax free up to £30,000. You can get an indication of your severance amount by using the calculation tool which can be found at the dedicated severance website [here](#). The website provides detailed information about the scheme and the process.

Eligibility

To be considered as a candidate for voluntary severance, your Dean or Director must confirm that:

- a) there is no requirement to fill your post from your date of leaving; or
- b) your area of work is identified as diminishing or is over resourced; or
- c) voluntary severance will lead to other efficiency gains which may off-set the costs of severance.

In addition, staff must have a minimum of two years' continuous service with the University at the date of leaving and be currently employed on a permanent or indefinite contract that extends beyond 31 August 2023. Staff on fixed term contracts are not eligible to apply. Staff who have already provided a written intention to retire and staff affected by existing or proposed redundancy consultations are also not eligible to apply. Staff subject to disciplinary, capability and ill health procedures may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Re-employment

Staff taking VSS will not be re-employed. In exceptional cases and where alternative resourcing is completely impossible, re-employment may be considered on an ad-hoc, temporary basis and only where opportunities for casual temporary work arise either through the TaskMaster employment agency or through part time hourly paid lecturer contracts. However, any re-employment on a casual basis would have to follow a statutory break in service of a minimum of one month. Individuals may make future applications for any advertised position within the University and in all cases, appointment will only proceed at the minimum point of the relevant grade and any current record of continuous service would not count in the future.

Application for a severance estimate and a pension estimate

To apply for a voluntary severance estimate, please complete the "Request for Estimate" form, or email hr.vss@hud.ac.uk, as soon as possible. Any estimate is provided for your information it does not mean that you have applied for the voluntary severance scheme or that any application made by you will be approved. Requests for estimates should be submitted no later than 5 June 2023.

If you have more than one post in the University and you wish to consider voluntary severance this will be applied to all the posts you hold. You cannot take VSS for one post and stay in employment in another. You will receive one estimate that covers all your posts.

If you need to obtain pension estimates you must allow time for this when you decide to request a severance estimate. If you are in the Universities Superannuation Scheme or the Teachers Pensions Agency you can access an estimate by visiting their websites. Those in the West Yorkshire Pension Fund, aged 55 and over are advised to request a pension estimate no later than 10 May 2023 so that it may be returned prior to the scheme deadline for application.

Application to be considered for voluntary severance

If you have more than one post in the University and wish to consider severance you must apply separately as you will need separate approval from each Dean/Director if your posts are in different schools and services. Submitted applications are considered as requests for voluntary severance and once submitted you cannot withdraw your application.

You must complete the application form in full including outlining the business reason why you should be considered for severance and any other information that you consider helpful for your Dean/Director to make a decision. The completed form must then be submitted to your Dean/Director who will consider your application and make a recommendation as to whether your application meets the criteria.

You need to ensure that you allow your Dean/Director adequate time to complete their part of your applications. Applications must be submitted to your Dean/Director no later than 19 June 2023. Applications will then be considered following the closing date. Whether or not an application is approved is at the absolute discretion of the University. Applications may only be approved where the necessary skill base can be maintained, and if it is necessary to select between applications selection will be made taking into consideration such as but not exhaustive of maximising skills, cost efficiencies and individual performance within the role and overall contributions to the University.

You will be notified if your application has been approved, or not once all applications have been considered. If your application has been approved you will be notified and your severance payments confirmed. All outstanding annual leave should be taken prior to the leaving date. Where your manager confirms that leave cannot be taken in the time available any outstanding annual leave, accrued under the normal rules applicable up to your date of leaving, will be paid in lieu. Any such payments are contractual and therefore subject to standard tax and NI deductions. There is no appeal against non-selection for the scheme.

Voluntary Severance Scheme Timescales

Below are the important scheme deadlines.

VSS opens	3 May 2023
WYPF pension estimate request latest date	10 May 2023
Severance estimate request latest date	12 June 2023
Applications submitted to Dean/Director latest date	23 June 2023
Notification of Decisions	10 July 2023
Last Day of Employment	31 August 2023

Further Details

Further discussions can be held with Human Resources regarding the voluntary severance and how they affect you. Any discussions are without prejudice to you making an application or that application being approved.

If you have a query, or would like to arrange an appointment, please email hr.vss@hud.ac.uk as this will allow us to allocate your query/arrange an appointment quickly.