

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Why do we not just use our financial strength to subsidise staff costs?

We have been doing that, and this will be our third year of deficit, eroding our financial position. We cannot continue to spend more than we are earning and the sector-wide January collapse in the overseas market has created a significantly worse position and so we must act now to reduce our expenditure.

Why are we building new buildings when we are having to reduce staff costs?

At the same time as dealing with the harsh current financial realities, where our expenditures exceed our income, we must plan for the long-term future of the University. The NHS forecasts a shortfall of over 250,000 staff by 2036/37 and a requirement to double the number of adult nurses by 2031, and that is why we are making a long-term investment in the National Health Innovation Campus. This is being done in partnership with the NHS and we are not borrowing to fund the development.

Why are we building new buildings when we are mothballing current ones?

Over recent years, energy costs have escalated from £2m to £5m, so we have been taking energy-inefficient buildings out of service and removing buildings that are no longer fit for purpose. Our decision to upgrade to more energy-efficient buildings is not just about cost saving but to also provide a better sustainable environment for our students and staff. The National Health Innovation Campus not only offers energy-efficient buildings but also teaching efficiency in a modern environment and addresses the long-term growth requirements of the NHS workforce.

Is the future just about cuts?

No. Although we must address the immediate financial issues, there are new growth subject areas being introduced to the University, including Civil Engineering, Radiography and Dental Hygiene. We are also introducing new apprenticeship provision, distance learning provision and transnational education provision. With the support of colleagues across the University we will continue to explore opportunities for growth.

Why are there proposed changes to Professional Support Services?

The drop in student numbers and associated income impacts the whole of the University, not just the academic workforce. As Schools have evolved to address market forces a disparity has developed in the level of Professional Support Services offered across the Schools and there is also some duplication between those services offered locally and centrally. We need to ensure uniformity of support for our students and operate as efficiently as possible, so a One Team Huddersfield approach is being taken and we are looking at the optimum size, configuration, and location of each service.

Are there changes to School structures and academic departments?

Overall, School academic structures will remain the same, but some changes are proposed to academic departments to better align with student demand and resource allocation and to achieve greater efficiency and consistency in the student experience.

Why are there greater proposed reductions in some Schools than others?

The School income follows the student enrolment and some Schools have been impacted more than others, particularly in terms of international enrolment. We need to aim for consistent student experience across the University and it would be unfair for there to be significant overstaffing in one part of the University with understaffing in another.

What kind of University will we become?

Although the sector and the University must manage a financial crisis, we need to remain focussed on our strategy of being an 'An inspiring, innovative University of international renown'. We are an award-winning University that now co-authors papers with the majority of the top 100 Universities in the world and we need to maintain our momentum. The proposed changes will lead to a more sustainable, resilient, flexible, and efficient organisation with a greater uniformity of support for our students across the Schools. We will continue to innovate and create new knowledge and degree programs and we will continue our journey towards being a University of international renown. Our staff will be amongst the highest qualified in the sector and they will be committed to providing world-class teaching, research, and knowledge exchange. We value the contributions of our staff highly and are committed to making strategic decisions that ensure long-term stability for all.

Why aren't we reducing the number of managers?

We are reducing managerial roles to streamline operations and reduce costs. In recent years, we have moved from seven schools to five schools to achieve greater managerial efficiency. Additionally, to reduce the leadership costs further the Pro Vice-Chancellors have taken on Dean roles on top of their strategic responsibilities for the next 12 months, as we navigate these difficult financial times. We believe that cost-cutting should be fair and proportional, and we are committed to applying this principle across all levels of the university.

Will there be cuts in the Vice-Chancellor's Office?

Yes. We strive for fairness and equity in our approach and so the Vice-Chancellor's Office also has to reduce its costs.

How do you expect people to take on even more when some are already pushed to their limits with high volumes of work?

We are aware of concerns about workload and are committed to finding solutions that prevent overburdening our staff. The reduction in student numbers will lead to a consequential reduction in workload. The proposed changes are designed to increase efficiency and processes will be reviewed, to identify more efficient ways of working and to prevent duplication of effort. It is unlikely that UK undergraduate tuition fees will be increased in the medium term nor that the immigration policy will be reversed and so we need to continue to innovate to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Why did the University not predict the decline in international students?

This was a sudden change in Government policy that has had a devastating sector-wide impact. As soon as the policy was announced the University acted by controlling costs and revising international student enrolment estimates. The immigration policy will not be changed, so we are entering the next academic year facing a major deficit, and that is why immediate action is required.

If other Universities are in the same boat – what are we going to do differently?

We have a reputation for being agile and will use our agility to rapidly adjust to the prevailing market conditions, faster than our competitors. For example, we have already launched a May 2024 start for international students that has brought in much needed additional income and innovation is taking place across the University to identify alternative income sources and more efficient ways of supporting our students.

Why is the University not offering an enhanced redundancy payment/voluntary redundancy?

We have already had several enhanced redundancy and severance processes and so this option is unlikely to bring major additional cost reductions. The cost of voluntary options is also significant which puts extra strain on university finances. Such voluntary measures have been offered to avoid compulsory redundancy but unfortunately, the scale of the problem created by the sector-wide financial crisis is such that compulsory redundancies are unavoidable.

Are our financial problems related to us not taking out any loans (being debt-free)?

The opposite is true. By not taking out any loans we have saved ourselves millions in interest rate charges and this has been invested back into the University.

For colleagues directly impacted by the proposals

How do I know if my role is at risk of redundancy?

You will receive a letter which will explain whether or not you are affected by the proposals.

Can I meet with someone from the University to discuss my options?

Yes. Having the opportunity to discuss your options is important. Following the initial announcement, everyone affected by the proposals will have the opportunity to attend a consultation meeting with their Dean, Director or alternative senior manager in the School or Service. A member of the HR team will also be present. To request a consultation meeting, please email hrrservices@hud.ac.uk.

If you are in the UCU or UNISON unions, you may also wish to speak with your Trade Union Representative for further advice.

Who do I contact if I have a pay or pensions query?

For any queries you may have about your pay or pension, please contact hrrservices@hud.ac.uk and we will ensure your query is addressed via a member of the Payroll team.

What happens if my role has been identified as a post that requires a reduction in FTE?

If your role has been identified as a post that requires a reduction in FTE, this means that there are currently more people (in FTE terms) working in that activity than is needed. A selection to stay process will take place and criteria will be based on retaining the required level of skill, knowledge and competence through specific criteria which reflect current and future workforce planning requirements. You will either be asked to provide a current CV and a 2-page written submission addressing each criterion within the person specification or invited to attend a face-to-face interview.

If you are unsuccessful following selection to stay, then you will be issued with formal notice of redundancy.

I don't want to be in a selection to stay process and would rather take the statutory redundancy payment instead.

You cannot opt to take the redundancy payment. If you are identified as being in a pool with others that carry out the same or similar activity, a selection to stay process will take place before any notification of redundancy will be issued.

Why are there staff members at risk in some areas and not in others?

Savings have been identified across all Schools and Services and a number of vacant posts have not been filled. This may have allowed certain areas to make the salary savings needed without putting any further posts at risk.

Why have I been selected to be at risk of redundancy when nobody has ever raised issues with my work performance?

The decisions about which posts are at risk of redundancy are made solely based upon a need to reduce FTE and an assessment of future service needs to determine which posts may no longer be required; or which the University can absorb the impact of losing.

Decisions are made regarding posts, not post-holders, and performance in the post is not an element in determining which posts are required or not required into the future.

Will I have an opportunity to make the case to retain my post, or to suggest other ways of achieving the required savings?

The consultation period allows staff to put forward alternative models, and the University will consider all reasonable suggestions in the context of the operational and business needs and priorities.

Why have I been selected when others who do the same job have not?

Where a number of different people are performing substantially the same job and a reduction in FTE is proposed across these posts, the post holders will be grouped together and selection to stay criteria will apply.

However, where a post has only one postholder and the activity is not substantially the same as any other post, or where the job is no longer considered as required or viable, the job will be removed and the postholder will be at risk of redundancy. Opportunities for redeployment will apply.

If my post is identified as being at risk of redundancy, would I be offered another job?

The University may be able to offer redeployment opportunities where other jobs are available to which your skill set can be matched; however, these may not be the same type of work, on the same conditions, or within the same department. There is no guarantee that you will be selected for these posts over other qualified candidates, nor that any suitable post will exist.

What will the impact be on my workload/our team's services if I am selected to stay or am in a post which is deemed not at risk?

Services will inevitably need to adapt to these changes, and there will be a need to reprioritise activities in order to continue to deliver the best possible services for students and staff across the institution. Decisions about how this is done in the most appropriate manner will be taken by colleagues and management. We have a lot of expertise across the University and by bringing together people from different areas, we will be able to share our expertise and develop more efficient and effective processes to support us in future.

What are the timescales for the different stages of this process?

The consultation document from HR details the timeline and stages of the process.

What notice period will I need to serve?

If your post is made redundant you will be paid in lieu of notice. Your last day of service will be 31 August 2024.

Can I take time off to look for another job/retrain?

If you've been continuously employed for 2 years by the date your notice period ends, you're allowed a reasonable amount of time off to look for another job or arrange training to help you find another job. The amount of time that you can take, depends on your circumstances.

This is very stressful. Is there anywhere I can turn for wellbeing support?

We recognise that it is a very challenging time. The staff wellbeing team offers a [range of support](#) so do check out what they offer. Don't forget that you can also access the University's external employee assistance programme - Staff Wellbeing Confidential Support. This service provides colleagues with a range of information and practical support to help with mental health and wellbeing including access to a 24/7 independent and confidential telephone counselling from appropriately qualified and caring professionals. Access to Staff Wellbeing Confidential Support can be found here or via telephone 03303 800658.

What has been done to mitigate compulsory redundancies?

The University has been through a series of voluntary severance schemes in recent years. and has scrutinised its non-pay commitments to achieve value for money across all expenditure.

Will my working patterns change?

This depends on the job you have. In the majority of cases there will be no change and managers want to be as flexible as possible to help you settle into the new structure. There may be some circumstances where your current working pattern may need to change but this will be discussed with your current or new line manager.

Where will I be working from?

Initially you will continue to work from the desk you currently use. Over time, teams will work together to determine the best location and distribution for themselves. It depends on the job you move into/continue to do. Some services and teams will be brought together into one location, using existing offices around the University. Others may need to split themselves across more than one location in order to provide the best service to students and staff.

What will be my hours of work and will hybrid working arrangements continue?

The hybrid working framework remains in place and is at the discretion of management. Your hours of work are unlikely to change unless you are offered a different type of role or a different FTE. Your exact pattern of work and working arrangements will be agreed with your new manager.

What directorate will I be in and who will be my manager?

The answer to this question will vary. You will have received an individual letter from HR which details how you will be affected as an individual. Please read this carefully. Any questions can be directed to hrservices@hud.ac.uk, your trade union or current/future line manager.

How do I find out about redeployment options and how to apply?

Your letter and consultation pack will provide you with all the information that you need. If you have any questions about the process, please contact hrservices@hud.ac.uk.

I am a member of PSS, will I continue to work with the School I used to work in?

This will depend, but wherever possible colleagues' existing knowledge, experience and professional networks will be considered to enable an element of continuity and institutional knowledge.

Will my existing annual leave be honoured?

Yes, however future annual leave patterns will be determined by your new job and should be discussed with your new line manager.

What will happen to my team?

You may find that some of the colleagues you worked with previously will move to the same area as you. Some may move to jobs elsewhere in the University and some may leave through the redundancy process. Although your existing team may disappear, new teams are being created and they offer the opportunity to work with a wide range of colleagues as well as those you already know.

What can I expect when I start in a new job?

Your new manager will work with you to provide an induction and throughout the autumn will engage in a series of events to (re-)introduce ourselves to colleagues, find out more about what's happening in the new structure, make new connections and build on existing relationships.

I am a member of PSS - What if I have concerns about the move?

It can be an anxious time for colleagues. If you have any queries, you can discuss them with your new Director or line manager. If you have queries about the redundancy process, please contact HR. Remember that it's normal to worry about change and you will find that your colleagues are likely to be feeling the same.

The professional support service we provide in Schools is very specialised. How will this be maintained with centralisation?

Across the University central services are accustomed to working with Schools and Services with different needs. Where desirable and appropriate, the support will be individualised. Wherever possible it will be consolidated into common systems and processes to offer greater efficiency.

Can I apply for flexible working if I'm offered a post in the new structure?

The University is not obligated to grant the request if the business needs mean that it is not possible to facilitate it. But you can submit a request and your manager will consider it in the context of the new structure.

I've been slotted into a new post but the job isn't quite the same; why is this?

The new job description is substantially the same and it differs only in some small detail. In order to protect employment where possible, we have slotted in as many people as possible.

I'm slotting into a new job, when will that new job start, and what about my existing duties?

We expect that staff who are slotting into new posts, will be contacted by their new manager or director in the initial weeks of the consultation period. They will arrange meetings and provide details of how the transition to the new roles and departments will be managed; in all cases managers will wish to work with you to garner your perspectives and circumstances so transition can be effectively managed. In some circumstances there is a need to appoint managers and leaders and this will need to take place first.

Will training and development that is planned or underway be honoured?

We will honour ongoing commitments to Continued Professional Development wherever possible. However, this will be dependent on the circumstances of your job and should be discussed further with your line manager in due course.

Will my salary change?

Individuals that move into roles at the same grade, the salary will be maintained. However, if you move into a new job with a different grade, the salary will be amended to reflect the new grade.

Will my existing (booked and authorised) annual leave be honoured?

Yes, any leave that has already been booked for the current leave will be honoured.

What will happen to my accrued flexi time balance when I move job?

Flexi leave will not be carried over so you must make sure you take this before 31 August 2024.

If I am made redundant and leave the University can I apply for any jobs that may be advertised in the future?

Yes. Our policy does not restrict anyone made redundant applying for future positions providing you meet the criteria specified for any advertised post, you can submit an application in the usual way. You would need to have a one-month break in service and if you were successful you would be appointed at the starting point of the salary grade.

If I am made redundant what benefits and other government financial help can I get?

The links below provide useful information from the Gov.uk website.

[Check benefits and financial support you can get](#)

[Being made redundant: finding work, claiming benefits and managing debts](#)

UNISON also offer benefits for their members which include [saving plans](#) and [financial advice](#).

How can I access careers support?

There are a number of ways you can access careers support.

If you are looking for advice on CVs and applications you can use our guides which can be found here [CVs - University of Huddersfield](#)

If you would like to check the quality of your CV or application you can access [Graduates First](#) where there is a section specifically on matching your CV with a defined job description.

Preparing yourself for an interview is best done in [Graduates First](#) where you can access the 'Practice' section and have a mock interview.

For a more comprehensive individualised focus on your career you can utilise this [workbook](#).

There are also some excellent resources which you can access through LinkedIn learning and even gain certificates and recognised qualifications <https://www.linkedin.com/learning-login/>

If you have utilised these recommended resources and have been unsuccessful in securing a new role with the University of Huddersfield a number of Careers appointments are available by contacting C.aydogan@hud.ac.uk.

I am affected by the proposal and hold a visa. How does this impact me?

Selection to stay does not take into account immigration status. Most visas which permit the holder to work in the UK, will not be affected by changes to that person's employment. However, Skilled Worker, Tier 2 and Temporary Worker (GAE) visa holders are sponsored on the basis of a particular role, therefore any changes made may have an impact on their continued sponsorship. Please contact HRServices@hud.ac.uk should you have any queries.

Useful information for Academic colleagues

Who do we engage within the professional support services for e.g. course administration, timetabling, booking of events, travel etc?

A contact method and details will be provided by the Director of Service and/or their colleagues to explain the newly formed teams and how they will interact with School and other Services. It is anticipated that this will happen during a transition period from 1 September and with minimal disruption. Until then colleagues will still remain in post and queries can still be directed to the School Operations Manager in the first instance.

Who do I direct to for queries from students about student administration?

A contact method and details will be provided to staff for engaging and dealing with queries related to all the different types of services moving from school to central. Students will also be issued with guidance about where to direct queries and central information services will be increased across campus to provide guidance to students and answer their questions.

Where can I find more information about services that are centralised?

Initially Schools will provide an overview briefing to show colleagues the new structures and where specific services are located. Each School will have a School Operations Manager who will be responsible for liaising with central services and can be contacted in the first instance.

Who can I contact if I have further questions about the way professional services will work?

For any questions or assistance regarding services that are consolidated, please contact the School Operations Manager in the first instance.

Do I need to communicate to students about the proposed changes to professional services?

Communication with staff and students will be organised centrally and once that has happened staff can help signpost students to the correct place.