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Update on UCT's staff salary increment for 2023

The University of Cape Town (UCT) executive has signed an agreement with the Academics Union (AU) over salary increment for 2023; and will exercise the option to implement discretionary increment for professional, administrative support and service (PASS) staff.

Academic staff salary increment

Following the [last update shared on 21 January 2023](#), the UCT executive has delivered on its commitment to ensuring that an agreement is reached with the AU. Both parties signed an agreement for a 6% salary increment on Friday, 27 January 2023, bringing to a close negotiations over salaries and other related aspects for UCT's academic staff members.

The executive is pleased that, having taken on a very mammoth task of traversing a number of challenging factors, including the current economic climate, there was ultimately a way found to table an offer that was acceptable to both parties.

It was also important that both parties found each other without any impact on the university's activities.

The UCT executive acknowledges the crucial role by several stakeholders in this process, including the UCT Council, Council's Remuneration Committee, colleagues in the Leadership Lekgotla, the UCT negotiating team, as well as staff in the Finance and Human Resources departments.

PASS staff salary increment

In 2022, UCT notified all the relevant PASS unions that the university wishes to establish a single bargaining unit for staff in pay classes 2 to 12. The UCT executive had extensive engagements on this with the unions concerned in the second half of 2022.

The university makes it clear that this move does not in any way seek to bring to an end its long-standing relationships with any of the PASS unions. On the contrary, it continues to recognise the unions on substantially similar terms regarding organisational and similar rights as in the past.

The only material change that is proposed is that UCT wishes to engage in a single bargaining forum for PASS staff in pay classes 2 to 12, rather than under the current multiple arrangements. It should be noted that UCT has a single bargaining forum for all academic staff matters.

In November and December 2022, UCT held facilitated sessions with the four PASS unions – Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers’ Union (DETAWU); National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union (NEHAWU); University and Allied Workers’ Union (UAWU); and the UCT Employees Union (UCTEU). These were facilitated by an external senior commissioner accredited by the CCMA and chosen by all the unions.

The executive and the coalition of unions resolved a number of issues, except for the single bargaining unit one, which the UCTEU did not agree with. However, in spite of this, all parties agreed on the following as reflected in the final report by the commissioner:

- in order to cater for salary increases, the executive should implement a discretionary salary increase for PASS staff,
- the executive could proceed with legal steps in establishing a single bargaining unit and give timelines for doing so,
- once the decision on a single bargaining unit has been made via legal avenues, the parties are at liberty to negotiate above the discretionary increment.

In accordance with this agreement, the executive will therefore implement a discretionary 6% increase for PASS staff. The executive continues to value its long-standing relationship with the PASS unions and hopes to keep working with them under the new recognition agreement.

The salary increases for both academic and PASS staff will be implemented in the February 2023 pay run, backdated to January 2023.

ENDS

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