



## **Higher Pay in Higher Education?**

### **Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector – 2006**

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A Survey of Responses from Amicus Representatives in the Higher Education Sector regarding the Job Evaluation and Modernisation Process.

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# Executive Summary

- All institutions that have gone through regrading indicate a majority of people having improved their grade or stayed the same.
- 61% are using HERA – as recommended by Amicus.
- 91% have set up a steering group or other joint decision-making body.
- 74% have agreed an implementation date.
- 82% have a 50/50 Union/Management steering group.
- 85% of pilots had full trade union participation.
- 88% of respondents indicate they had training for the Job Evaluation process – piloted by Amicus.
- 87% of appeal panels are joint trade union representatives and management as recommended by both the 'Blue Book' and the Framework Agreement.
- There are a significant number of new grades indicated by respondents.
- 38% of institutions have restricted trade union access to data.
- 55% have not yet agreed harmonisation, a worrying figure considering the process should have been completed by August 2005.
- 84% of respondents have decided salary range for each grade

# Introduction

Supporting higher education workers through the job evaluation process has been Amicus' key priority in the sector. Amicus has worked hard to ensure that pay, job grades, terms and conditions of members are protected or enhanced, and, in as many cases as possible improved upon. The process has proved complex and divisive in many institutions and this has made it even more important that Amicus works to make it as painless and successful as possible. HERA and HAY are the schemes being used across the sector with HERA used in over 60% of Higher Education Institutions (HEI's).

Amicus has encouraged representatives to participate in training regarding Job Evaluation, and Amicus has facilitated a number of key training programmes to help representatives, members and Amicus officers to engage with and gain a greater understanding of what is a very complicated process.

This survey is the second of three surveys that Amicus will undertake to monitor the process of job evaluation and the challenges that have arisen during its implementation. Last year's survey<sup>1</sup> presented some interesting results and throughout this report we attempt to compare current responses to these. In several areas institutions have made significant progress while in others there has been little change.

We are extremely grateful for the positive response from Amicus representatives regarding the survey questionnaire. Amicus is aware that our representatives do their extensive union work on a voluntary basis. Without their considerable contribution Amicus would not have been able to produce this report.

# Methodology

Our survey questionnaire was distributed to all Amicus workplace representatives in the higher education sector by Labour Research Department London during March 2006. Representatives could respond either via an online survey or through a postal response. 43 completed questionnaires were returned. This represents over a 10% response of surveys issued, which is usual for this type of survey.

It is clear from the named respondents that one senior representative usually responded for each HEI. This means that the responses cover most of the main higher education institutions and present a useful cross section of institutions that have either nearly completed the job evaluation process, are in the process of job evaluation or are just about to start the process. Only a small number of institutions at this time (April 2006) have fully completed the job evaluation process and have adopted the new grading and pay structures. Many are still completing different aspects of the evaluation process.

Amicus is confident that this represents a robust statistical return on which to base the analysis of the survey responses.

<sup>1</sup> 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005

# Section 1: The Process

## 1.1 Scheme

It is encouraging to see that of those surveyed, 61% of institutions were using the HERA scheme for Job Evaluation. Amicus views HERA as being a more union friendly process than the HAY scheme. It is also positive that 79% had not been forced to accept a scheme that they did not want. Both these figures show that significant minorities did not follow Amicus recommendations and that more work needs to be done to see whether this has led to any significant failure in the eventual outcomes. It is in our view a worrying lack of partnership working that needs to be addressed in future.

In 54% of cases all members of staff were being evaluated. This figure is lower than hoped but does show that a small majority of institutions are following Amicus recommendations of a full job evaluation.

## 1.2 Union involvement

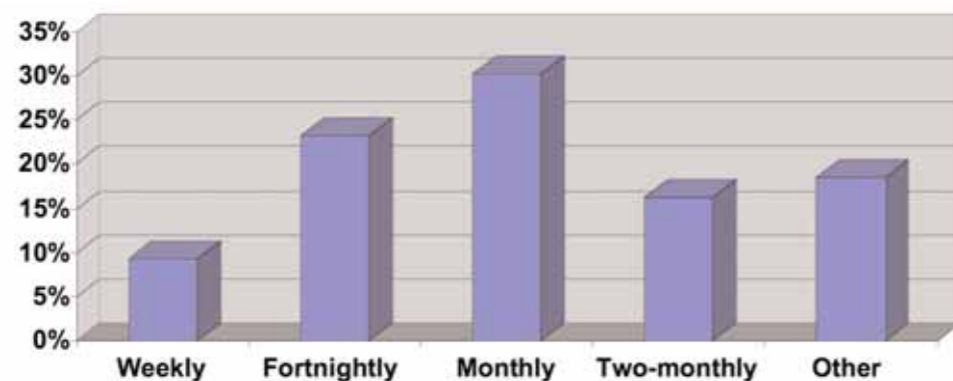
Amicus strongly believes that everything should be agreed in partnership with the trade unions and recommends setting up a steering group made up of equal numbers of union and management representatives. To this end it is a good sign that over 90% of institutions have set up a steering group or other joint decision-making body to oversee job evaluation. Of those, 82% had a 50/50 Union/Management ratio or better. A small minority of institutions are still trying to restrict union involvement in the process. This is not acceptable.

Most steering groups were making decisions on the scheme chosen (82%), managing the pilot (85%), and the types of data gathering (87%) as well as agreeing benchmarks (69%). Also 74% had agreed an implementation date with a further 12% still in negotiation. This suggests significant union involvement in the decision making process in many institutions but with more work to do in a minority of cases.

## 1.3 Meetings

Part of the successful progress of the job evaluation process is good communication from management with representatives and staff being fully involved in the decision making. It is therefore important that there is regular contact between staff and management. Chart 1 (below) shows the variety of contact available in various institutions.

Chart 1: Contact with HR regarding the Framework Agreement



Representatives have had varied levels of contact with HR regarding the Framework Agreement but most have met at least on a monthly basis.

77% of representatives said that partnership in their institution was going very well or reasonably well. This is a good sign and is considerably higher than the figure from the previous Amicus higher education survey carried out last year<sup>2</sup>, when only 52% viewed their partnership as going very well or reasonably well. It does however mean that nearly a quarter of representatives are not satisfied with how partnership is working in their institution. It is vital to successful job evaluations that there is a good working relationship between management and union representatives. Not every trade union representative found the process acceptable and some of the comments received are highlighted throughout the report.

“The scheme was moving well until the VC put her personal stamp on the process. We have had one dispute already and we are moving to another one as the VC states that the agreed implementation date of August 2005 was a mistake”

Another positive sign is that 93% of representatives have reached an agreement on facility time for job evaluation although only 54% had reached this formally. This is much higher than last year's figures<sup>3</sup> of 41% having a formal agreement and only 7% having an informal one.

## 1.4 Experts

65% of institutions have opted to recruit an 'expert' to help with job evaluation. This, however, has followed a worrying trend whereby just under 90% of these have been appointed without Amicus involvement and only 50% of these experts have been reporting to the joint body. This is an extremely negative response from the management of many institutions and illustrates that there is still substantial work needed to facilitate a partnership approach.

## 1.5 Pilots

Of the 79% of institutions that have run pilots, just over 85% had full union participation in the process and 88% had received training for the pilot. Amicus has been very pro-active in providing training for representatives and Amicus officers. This enables the representatives and officers to fully engage in the job evaluation process with confidence, ensuring members get the best possible advice and support.

Only 68% of representatives have received the results of their pilots and one interpretation is it reflects where the institution has got to in the process rather than management intransigence. Of those who have received results, approximately half have passed a copy on to Amicus.

<sup>2</sup> Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p5

<sup>3</sup> Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p6

## Section 2: Access to Information

38% of representatives have reported that their institution has tried to restrict trade union access to data. This figure is significantly worse than last year's 30%<sup>4</sup>, a very worrying sign. Also 58% claim that their institution has not provided access to the web-based HERA site. Amicus is extremely concerned that higher education institutions continue to hamper union involvement in the job evaluation process and will be undertaking action to try to re-dress this situation. The limitation of access means the qualitative analysis across grades cannot be completed and is not an open and transparent process.

Chart 2: How information/briefings have been given to staff about the job evaluation process

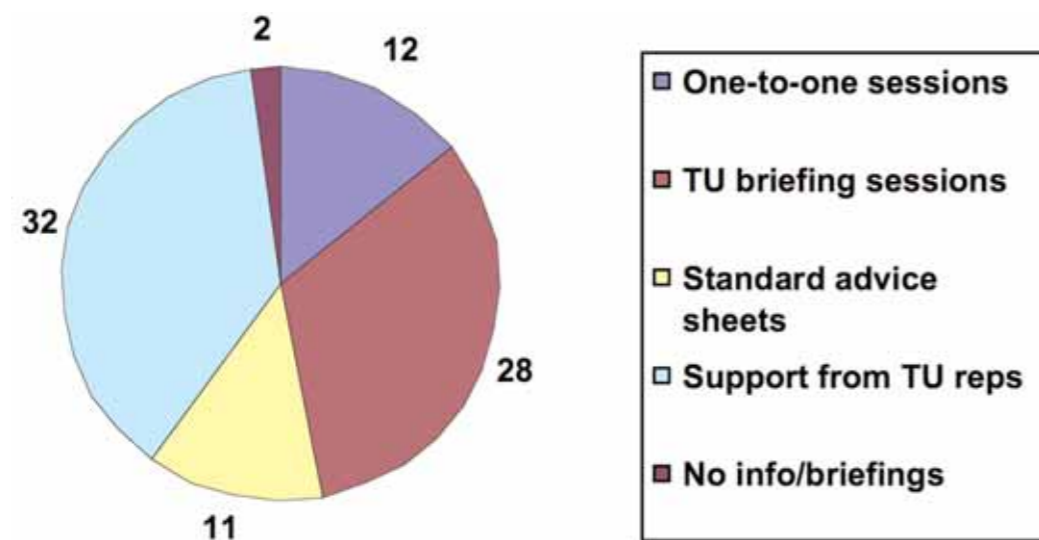


Chart 2 (above) illustrates that although a large proportion of institutions are providing staff with information a significant number are only providing minimum information while others offer no briefings at all, this is totally unacceptable, management must communicate with staff.

"Had one meeting to discuss scheme, had training, assessed different jobs for pilot, approx 15 months ago. There is no steering committee and have had no discussions since"

The vast majority of representatives report good relations with other unions in their institution with 61% working on a joint negotiating team and 28% working well. This is positive and in our view generally signifies unifying cooperative working between unions.

86% of representatives claim to have spoken to non-members at their institution about the process and given them the chance to join Amicus. This has proved to be an excellent organising opportunity, and has ensured that all staff are engaged and involved in the job evaluation process.

## Section 3: Protecting Members

It is important to Amicus that no members should lose out as an immediate result of regrading. Various legal cases have established a smoothing out process is acceptable and therefore Amicus supports the enabling Framework Agreement which calls for up to 4 years pay protection for all those whose pay could be reduced. Some of its clauses within the Framework Agreement represent guidelines and in particular examples the guidelines were exceeded. The majority of representatives have secured this minimum extension and a further 16% have managed to achieve a longer protection period. There were however 14% of representatives who reported an agreed period of less than 4 years. This is a troubling outcome as although only an aspirational figure, the Framework Agreement called for up to four years protection.

Protection for members nearing retirement appears to have been difficult with only 26% so far having achieved particular arrangements. This said it may be too early to assess this as nearly half (47%) report that it is still under negotiation.

A further 44% of representatives said that they had an agreement on red-circling, with 5% saying they had not and the remaining 47% saying that this was still under negotiation.

Red-circling agreements can be designed to help those who are due to revert to grade level. These often include maintaining purchasing power of pay protections on red circled salaries provided they have objective justification. These include applying Retail Prices Index (RPI) increases to red circle salaries; pinning red circle pay to a spine point; applying grade increases to red circle salaries for a fixed period; as well as ensuring additional work responsibilities and development opportunities are given to those on red circled salaries to enable job holders to move off red circled pay.

"This agreement [HAY] has undermined local pension schemes"

### 3.1 Appeals

In the vast majority of cases representatives had secured appeals processes for all those who go through job evaluation and need to appeal their grading. Just under a quarter (23%) said that this was still under negotiation. Another positive result is that 88% had joint appeal panels with management and trade union representatives and most of these panels (65%) would be made up of people not previously involved with individual's job evaluation. This is in line with the recommendations in the Framework Agreement. There is however a worrying minority (35%) of institutions that do not have impartial individuals on appeal panels. Amicus strongly opposes this. Lastly, it is a good sign that in every institution that had accepted an appeal process, members would be able to receive trade union advice before and during appeals if they needed it.

### 3.2 Equality Impact

Job evaluation schemes are a good opportunity to carry out equal pay audits. Although only 28% of institutions had or intended to carry out an equal pay audit before job evaluation over 60% said that there were plans to carry out the audit in the future. How concrete and serious these plans are, is not clear but it does show that it has at least been recognised that the issue needs to be addressed.

Amicus is keen to prevent that inherent pay inequality has not simply been passed on in the process. Amicus insists all job evaluation processes should be reviewed. This should include a detailed examination of the scheme after introduction to see if any direct or indirect discrimination has taken place. Amicus believes HEI's who refuse to carry out reviews leave themselves open to challenge and potentially exposed to claims for unlawful discrimination.

“Management have not been interested in addressing structural inequalities beyond protecting themselves against equal pay/value claims. [We are] disillusioned with partnership.”

There has been a disappointing level of success in negotiating backdating of pay with only 42% so far achieving any system. Of those that had agreed backdating systems there were six institutions that had opted for immediate implementation of new pay grades, one that had opted for phased implementation from when the process started, seven had opted to backdate pay from August 2004 and two said that they were still negotiating.

77% of those responding said that women members had been encouraged to participate in job evaluation and 65% said that black and minority ethnic groups had been encouraged to become more involved in the job evaluation process. This is a positive response to the initiative taken by Amicus representatives to ensure there is an increase in inclusion in their institution. It is also a marked improvement when compared with 48% in last year's survey.

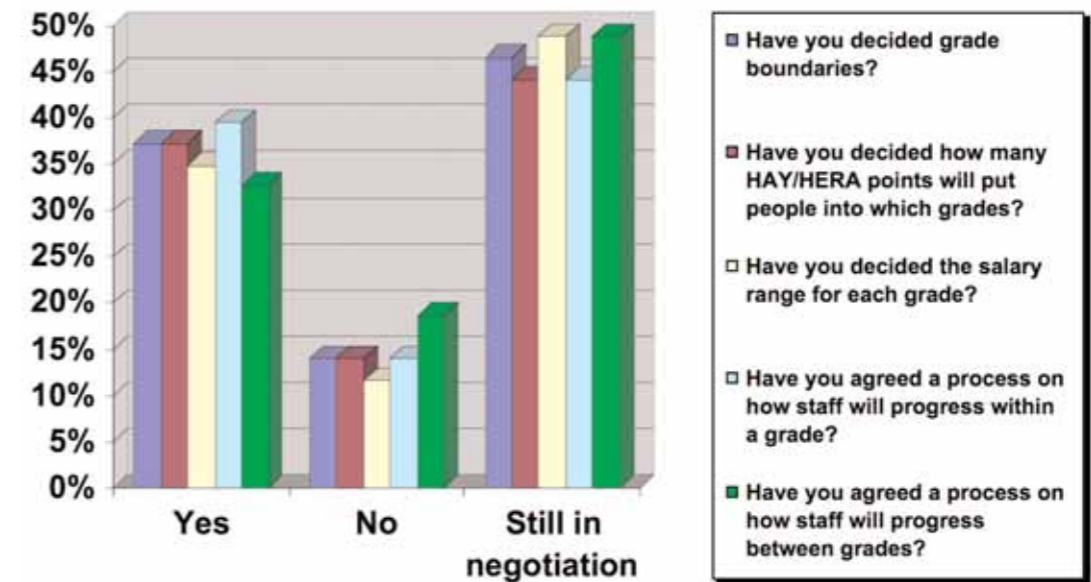
## Section 4: Training

In all institutions that we have had responses from 100%<sup>6</sup> of union representatives had been trained in job evaluation by the institution. Of those, however, most (84%) were not directly involved with the job evaluation process. This is viewed as a positive sign as it shows that even though for the most part only the lead negotiators need to be actively involved in negotiations regarding job evaluation, other representatives are trained if needed. This is especially important with regard to appeals processes. Amicus has worked hard to facilitate training amongst its representatives and other activists and is encouraged that higher education institutions appear to be taking this very seriously as well. With high number of Amicus representatives trained in the job evaluation schemes it means there is a large body of expertise available within the union.

88% of representatives that responded said that they had encouraged activists to become representatives and train in the job evaluation process. This is a great improvement on last year's figure of only 30%<sup>7</sup>. This again has provided Amicus and the institutions with an increase in representatives and a more comprehensive union lay structure.

## Section 5: Pay Grades

Chart 3: The grading process



As can be seen from chart 3 (above) negotiations over pay grades is still underway in nearly half of the institutions that responded. Of those that have finished negotiations, over 70% of representatives (just over a third of the total) have been able to decide grade boundaries, how many HAY/HERA points will put people into which grade, the salary range in each grade and the processes on how staff can progress both within and between pay grades. This is very encouraging when compared to last year's survey. In 2005 only 3%<sup>8</sup> of respondents were able to decide grade boundaries and the HAY/HERA points that will put people into each grade, while 7% were able to decide on salary ranges. This suggests that there has been significant progress in this area although it is hard to tell by how much without the results of those still under negotiation.

“The most important factor with regards to the HAY methodology is the quality of job descriptions. This is pivotal in arriving at an acceptable evaluation. Help should be asked for and given, when writing job descriptions.”

21% of respondents said that they had made arrangements for performance or contribution related pay arrangements at their institution with the rest either saying that they had made none or that no decision had been made yet. Amicus has not yet finalised arrangements with the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) on guidelines for performance related pay and staff development. Representatives need to be aware of adopting a system that has not yet been subject to national guidelines as the guidelines have yet to be issued.

Of those that were confirmed or able to estimate where the majority of staff that were regraded had moved to all reported that more people were likely to be better off or the same than worse off from the changes. The charts that follow illustrate how these break down for different workplace groups.

<sup>5</sup> 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p23

<sup>6</sup> This was an increase on the 78% that had received training last year. (see 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p15)

<sup>7</sup> 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p23

<sup>8</sup> 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p16

Chart 4: Are staff from the old Technician grades better or worse off under the new pay structure?

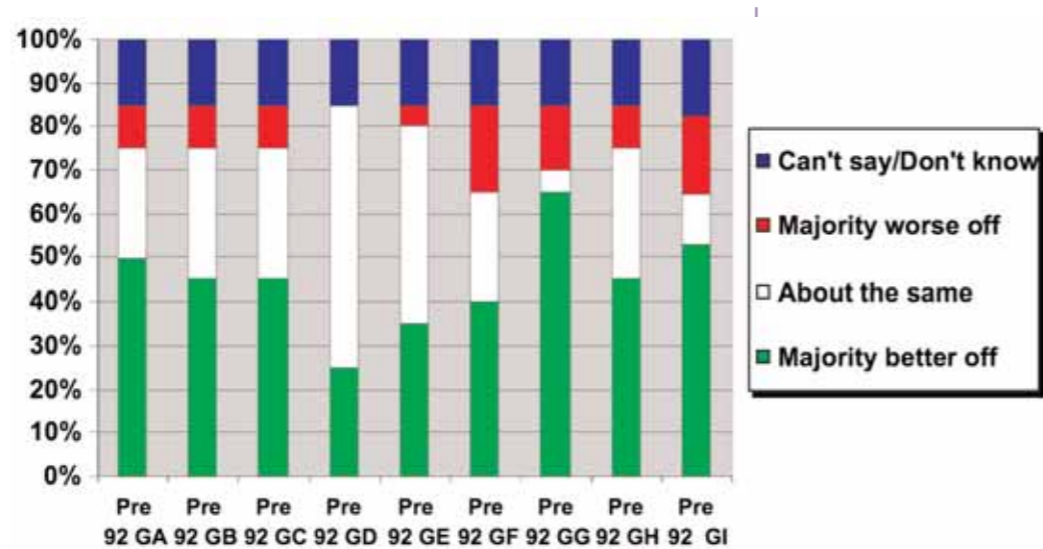


Chart 5: Are staff from the old Manual grades better or worse off under the new pay structure?

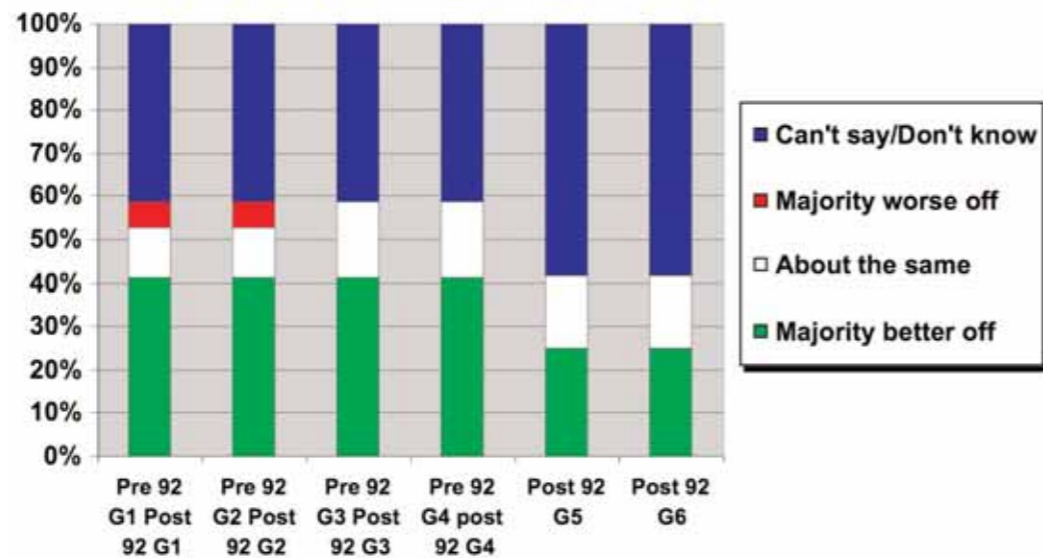


Chart 6: Are staff from the old Clerical/Admin grades better or worse off under the new pay structure?

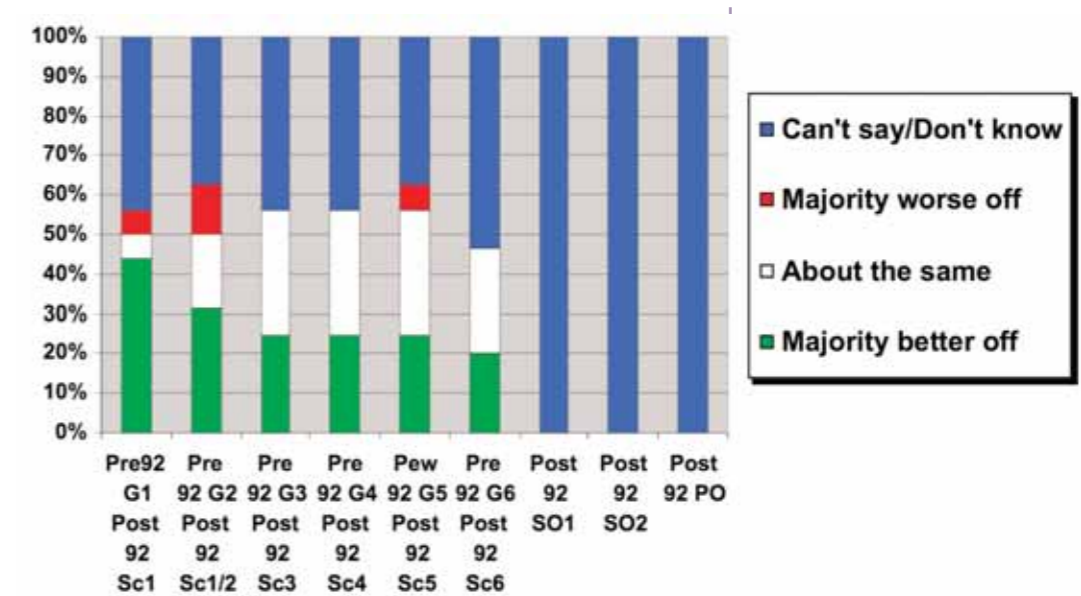
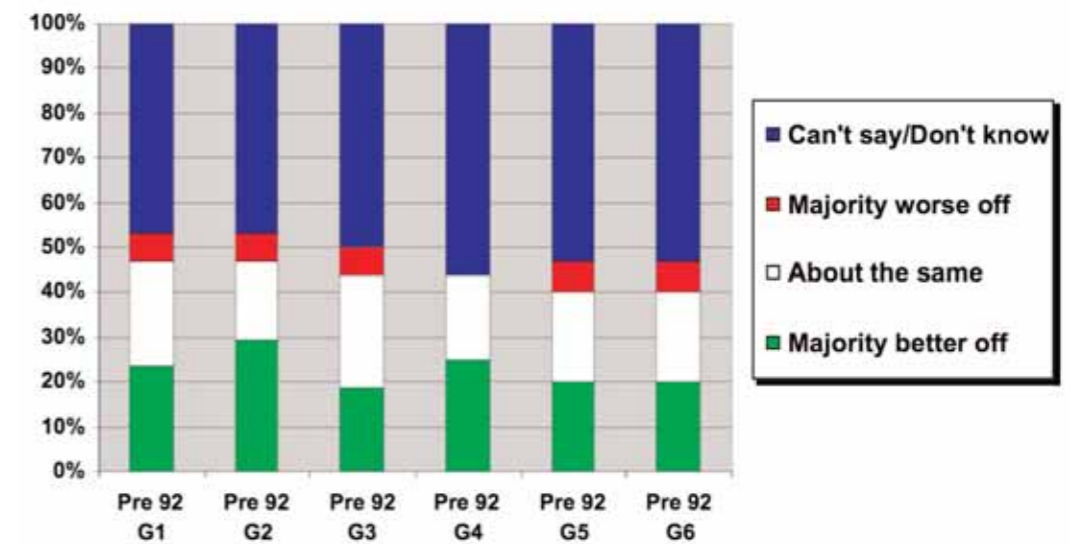


Chart 7: Are staff from the old Academic-related grades better or worse off under the new pay structure?



All four charts show large percentages of people gaining significant pay increases and also a large number of grades that have remained the same after the job evaluation process. Substantial numbers of Amicus members who have been evaluated have been placed on or above their existing pay levels. This does not mean staff did not get anything from that process. Because of the Framework guidelines on moving over to the new pay spine many Amicus members received salary increases. Some moved up to new spine points within the grade and as the green areas on the chart shows around 20% received a substantial pay increase. There are still some institutions, however where there is significant work to be done as the number of "Can't say or don't know" data indicates.

Amicus has a considerable amount of further data about where staff have moved in comparison with old grade boundaries and these will be the subject of further research and report

Our early research on the detailed data is showing that substantial numbers of Amicus members have received increases from the introduction of the Framework and job evaluation process. These range

from small increases £50 a year to £1000's of pounds for those green circled staff who have been re-evaluated to correct skill levels.

These extremely encouraging results are to be attributed to Amicus' significant input, training and the dedication of Amicus officers and representatives who have pushed for proper evaluations and equal pay reviews.

"The University of Warwick's Pay and Grading offer appears to be one of the worst in the sector!" April 2006. (Since this comment was made a positive settlement was reached further illustrating the good work that Amicus is doing in the sector)

As we would expect a small minority of members were already above grade average or on higher grades and would either have to take on more work or fall back into the general population. Amicus will obviously continue to protect people during their "red circling" period i.e. with the 4 year agreement, RPI increases or grade increases. These trends are expected to continue as the process concludes in the remaining institutions.

### 5.1 Harmonisation

Harmonisation arrangements had been made by 42% of respondents. There is obviously still a significant amount of work to be done on harmonisation and Amicus will be encouraging representatives to become fully involved in the process. Amicus will be working hard to ensure that no member ends up with a detriment to their terms and conditions of work or that where harmonisation is to a common level for all employers those that are likely to be disadvantaged are adequately compensated.

Workers on manual grades have enjoyed a significant improvement in their terms and conditions. For example, members from manual grades have experienced a reduction from a 40/39 hour week to a 37 hour week without loss of pay. At present in some institutions manual workers have been 'blue-circled' this means their evaluation and grading will be completed later than other workers due to the different complexity of work compared to existing grades.

### 5.2 Recruitment and Retention Premium (RRP)

The vast majority of institutions (86%) had not agreed a recruitment and retention premium (RRP) for any grades. Of the four respondents that said they had, only two gave details of the agreement both having local agreements on market rates. This is very disappointing. Of these four some have adopted 'market pay' policies. This means where a number of jobs are advertised and there are few applicants the market pay policy allows unions and management to address this problem with a recruitment and retention premium at the point of advertisement.

## Section 6: Data Gathering

74% said that they had made arrangements for benchmarking, facilitating the grade profiles to which all jobs are being matched. 77% of institutions have agreed to let someone not individually evaluated to ask for a full assimilation this to be done while a further 5% are still negotiating these arrangements. Representatives indicated that all jobs can be assimilated individually and this is especially important where institutions are opting for the use of 'job families.'

As a result of these responses in our view care needs to be taken to ensure that there are not different assimilation processes for some staff and not others. Other "no detriment" measures should also apply equally to all staff and not to "special" categories. Amicus would welcome any particular examples where this may have occurred.

When asked who usually verifies the information about the person's job, the highest percentage (72%) indicated said it would be the member's line manager, 16% said verification was done in conjunction with the head of department/school and 9% said the HR department. 91% of role holders were then given the opportunity to check the information for accuracy, this is an excellent result and shows that the checks and balances that Amicus encouraged are being used in many institutions.

## Section 7: Evaluation and Analysis

In over half of cases (56%) there was an equal number of trade union and management nominated role analysts/job evaluators, this is the same as in the Amicus survey of 2005<sup>9</sup>. Role analysts checked for consistency in several different ways. 67% used moderation by joint groups, while 19% had moderation only by the human resources department. The figure of 67% is a large and positive increase on last year's figure of 26%<sup>10</sup>. This shows that Amicus' recommendations are being successfully put into practice.

9 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p20

10 'Modernisation and the Higher Education Sector' Amicus survey, published 2005, p20

## Section 8: Monitoring and Review

A monitoring process should have taken place before the application of the Framework Agreement ensuring reviews are sensible and in line with statutory requirements both on equal pay and other discrimination aspects.

42% of Steering Committees have managed to set up a method for monitoring the job evaluation process, and reviewing it once it is completed. This again is a significant rise from last year's figure of only 22%.<sup>11</sup> A further 40% are still in the process of negotiation.

Although the survey shows there has been a rise it is Amicus view based on the returns that not all HEI's are doing all they are statutorily required.

Any failures by Employers to monitor and review all aspects of the impact of evaluations leaves open the possibility of serious failures by Employers to apply equal pay for equal value and other discriminatory practices.

The vast majority of representatives (86%) also planned to ballot or had already balloted their members on the outcomes of the job evaluation process. This figure grows when the 5% still negotiating is taken into account.

The balloting process has been a key Amicus recommendation and the data returns supports the experience that Amicus members are being fully involved in deciding whether to accept or reject a scheme.

## Section 9: The Future - Amicus recommendations

In last year's survey report Amicus made the following recommendations:

- Further work needs to be done to encourage institutions to adopt and implement partnership working.
- The lack of data exchange with our representatives needs to be addressed by Amicus and the HEI's as well as the job evaluation software providers.
- All higher education institutions should be encouraged to undertake equal pay reviews. Any failures to be highlighted to Amicus who will publish the HEI's concerned.
- Institutions should make public their pay grading, boundaries and pay scales in line with equal pay guidelines.
- Those institutions that have not yet started the job evaluation process should be encouraged to move forward on implementation as failures to implement will have equal pay consequences.
- Communication between all parties, regarding job evaluation implementation noting the strong co-operation between unions locally.
- Higher Education institutions should be offering training regarding job evaluation to all representatives.

Whilst continuing to work for improvements on these recommendations our latest survey results lead us to call for the following additional recommendations:

- Negotiators need to look at whether job descriptions properly reflect individual work, supervisory responsibilities and job complexity whether evaluation has picked up the subtlety of people's jobs e.g. those working in manual grades often self supervise and therefore should be on higher grade points.
- Negotiators also need to look at why some evaluation scores lead to poor grade scoring in comparison with other institutions.

# Comment

This survey report is a result of collaboration between Amicus Researchers Janet Golds and James Lazou and a sizeable number of our representatives. The survey itself was carried out by Labour Research who collated the returns.

It is the second of Amicus surveys into application of the Framework Agreement first supported by Amicus in 2003. It will be followed by a further detailed analysis of the returns as well as other future surveys to gauge the full impact of the job evaluation and harmonisation process within the Higher Education sector.

Its purpose is to give Amicus negotiators as much detail as they require ensuring Amicus members have the best possible outcome in the evaluation process.

There is strong evidence from the survey returns that limitations are being placed on data by HE managers and restrictions applying in providing Amicus representatives with the transparency needed to evaluate the details of local schemes.

In our view this means that schemes risk proper robust analysis by the sectors independent trade unions.

This means that HEI managers and JE owners are in fact self reliant on analysis and this in turn could lead to a self delusion that the evaluations are robust when in fact they are not.

There are sufficient returns to show that trade unions are co-operating positively at local level on negotiations and implementation.

The Framework Agreement allowed for red circling protection in order to smooth transition to eventual pay levels. In most cases Amicus members have had reasonable negotiated arrangements. However there is a limited core of HEI's who have tried to limit red circling for no apparent justification than cost saving to the HEI rather than any objective justification. Amicus opposes these artificial arrangements based simply on cost saving grounds.

Amicus has sought to ensure that any appeals process mirrored our previous Blue Book arrangements of 50-50 parity on appeal panels. From the survey returns the majority of HEI's have applied those parity arrangements.

One most disturbing aspect of the survey has been the number of HEI's that have not carried out equal pay audits. A further expected failure on monitoring looms despite joint unions pressing UCEA to issue firm advice to UCEA subscribers. Amicus reserves the right to challenge and reopen negotiations at any HEI that fails to properly carry out audits, monitoring and statutory requirements.

Amicus training has been offered to all of our representatives either locally or at our national centre in Esher. The survey bears out the numbers who have had that training. In turn that training has delivered measurable results borne out other impacts in our survey. Amicus has a large number of trained representatives and on a like for like comparison probably more than any other HE union to assist members.

It is the results on pay and grading that show the real effect of our representatives working, protecting and delivering gains to a large majority of Amicus members. Even with a number of "can't say or don't know" returns Amicus has every confidence our local negotiators will continue to deliver achievements for Amicus members in all areas we negotiate manual/skilled, clerical/administration, technical and academic/related areas.

These are solid sustainable increases in salary, real benefits for the majority of our members.

Amicus will be issuing further specific breakdowns in a future research study to show the detailed percentage increases.

The harmonisation of hours terms and conditions has benefited most of our manual skilled areas who have applied the evaluation.

One of the main areas of concerns has been the failure of any HEI to agree Recruitment and Retention Premia. Amicus view is that Vice Chancellors and HR managements have sought to avoid such Premia. In our view future market pressures will lead to RRP policies having to be applied.

Amicus introduced the ballot process in many HEI's. This is an important safeguard to our members who are entitled to approve or reject the terms on offer.

One final reiteration; Unless HEI's audit, monitor and review the introduction of job evaluation and harmonisation outcomes Amicus reserves the right to challenge discrimination application of schemes.

My appreciation to the Amicus Research Department and Labour Research for their work,

My thanks to Amicus representatives for their responses that show Amicus is protecting and advancing members salaries, terms and conditions within equal pay guidelines.

**Mike Robinson**  
**National Officer**  
**Education Sector**

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# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the Amicus representatives in the Higher Education Sector who kindly took the time to respond to our survey. The survey and the survey report were a collaborative effort and the following people had a role to play in its production.

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