

LOA #6 Joint Compensation Working Group Report to JCAA: FAQs

1. What happens if the QUFA Membership endorses the LOA #6 Report to the JCAA?

The LOA#6 Report recommends a non-binding framework that was agreed upon by the parties through the joint working group. Endorsing this report provides the bargaining team with the direction to pursue gains for the Membership within this framework. It is a high-level document, and much of the details need to be bargained (and/or determined through any subsequent working groups). Furthermore, any tentative agreement produced in bargaining would be subject to a Membership ratification vote.

2. Will this displace other aspects of the bargaining mandate?

No, an endorsement of this report means it will form a part of the bargaining mandate. We are still going to be opening other articles of the agreement, along the themes detailed in the bargaining mandate, and seeking gains for Members of all ranks and status.

3. What are the transparent criteria used to assess merit, and how will they be determined?

This is still to be determined. The working group was concluded with the creation of a new joint working group to establish the procedures through which the transparent criteria would be selected. It was agreed, though, that the criteria would be determined through a collegial process involving both QUFA Members and University administration. QUFA and the administration share the understanding that these criteria shall be collegially determined, transparent, objective, and discipline-specific; QUFA will advocate for separately achievable criteria in each area of responsibility (teaching, research, and service), and criteria that are achievable at every career stage.

4. How are the transparent criteria going to reflect the type of research that I undertake?

The transparent criteria should be reflective of disciplinary differences. The development of the criteria will require extensive consultation with Members from all disciplines in

order to ensure that they adequately capture the range of research performed by QUFA Members, and include criteria that are achievable at all career stages. Further, the bargaining team will seek to negotiate a process to ensure that the criteria remain relevant and incorporate disciplinary developments through the creation of a joint standing committee that will perform ongoing, regular reviews of the criteria.

5. What if the transparent criteria are so stringent that they are unachievable?

While it is envisioned that fewer Members will receive merit each year compared to the current system, the University wishes to have a merit system that motivates behaviour. Having criteria that Members cannot meet would be contrary to that goal. In fact, their argument for a cap on the funds available for merit is due to a concern that too many Members will meet the criteria. What to do in the event that more Members meet the criteria than there is funding allocated for in any given year is something that would be subject to negotiation during bargaining. It should also be noted that the parties have agreed that the University will provide an annual report to QUFA outlining the successful recipients of the meritorious performance awards.

6. If my employment letter doesn't include research, can I still be considered for merit based on my research activity?

We envision the decoupling of career development increments (CDI) from merit to result in two distinct processes. The CDI portion will become binary where Members are assessed, based on their employment letter and their relevant Unit Workload Standard, to have either "met expectations" or "not met expectations." If your employment letter doesn't include research, then you will not be assessed for research in the annual performance review for CDI. The same would be true for service. However, with merit being a distinct process, you could indicate that you want to be considered for merit with respect to research (perhaps by ticking a box on your own annual performance review). A similar self-nomination process is envisioned for merit with respect to teaching and service.

Note: *Career Development Increment (CDI), sometimes referred to as Progress Through the Ranks (PTR), refers to the component of our annual salary increase that recognizes increasing professional competence with years of experience. Under our current salary model, the CDI increase corresponds to an overall merit score of 10 points. The CDI component is sometimes referred to as a salary “step.” The “Merit” increase refers to the component of our annual salary increase that recognizes contributions that exceed expectations. Under our current salary model, the merit increase corresponds to the merit score in excess of 10 points, so 2, 5, or 10 additional points for merit scores of 12, 15, or 20 respectively. Our current salary model also includes an annual Across the Board (ATB) component. The ATB increase is typically a percentage increase and is meant to protect the value of our salary against inflation.*

7. The report mentions “a central University committee, under the direction of the Provost, that recommends successful candidates to the Provost for final approval.” How much influence would the Provost and other University administrators have over the merit process?

The influence of the Provost and other University administrators should be limited to their involvement in the

collegial process for the determination of the transparent criteria used to determine merit. The transparent criteria are intended to reduce arbitrary decision-making; if you meet the criteria, there is no decision to be made and you would receive merit. In addition to self-nominations, a Member may be nominated for a merit award by their Unit Head or Dean. A colleague may also nominate a Member for a merit award. The role of the Provost and the central University committee would be limited to ensuring that the Members nominated for merit awards actually met the transparent criteria. Furthermore, QUFA will bargain for a central University committee that would be comprised of as many QUFA Members as senior administrators.

8. If junior increments and senior abatements are eliminated, what does that mean for a cost-neutral merit system?

Currently, the number of Members receiving junior increments each year is negligible, whereas the vast majority of Members receive abatements. Removing these without changing anything else in the current salary model would lead to an increased salary mass. Managing the implications of this would need to be part of the negotiations at the bargaining table.

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