

**PERSONNEL SERVICES**

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD  
Acting Director of Personnel and Related Services



To heads of departments and institutions, faculty board chairmen,  
departmental administrators and faculty board secretaries

Ref. EMS/5, EMS/6

cc. heads of division, divisional secretaries, Principal Administrator of  
the Conference of Colleges, Mrs Harkness, Mrs Kinahan,  
Mr MacDonald

30 September 2011

### **Changes to the template for contracts of employment for academic-related and university support staff**

*A revised format for contracts of employment for academic-related and university support staff is being introduced from 4 October 2011.*

*The new format is intended to make the completion of contracts more straightforward, and facilitate future updating. The template will also be compatible with the HR Information System (HRIS).*

*At the same time, the opportunity is being taken to reflect changes relating to the abolition of the default retirement age.*

*From 4 October the templates and guidance may be downloaded at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/recruit/contracts/templates/>*

#### **1. Action required by departments and division**

Departments and divisions should:

- a) ensure that they use the new-style contract templates for academic-related and university support staff with effect from 4 October 2011;
- b) note that a side-letter should in future be issued to provide specific information about the nature of any fixed-term appointment;
- c) note the changes in contractual wording that have been made to reflect the abolition of the default retirement age; and
- d) seek further information and advice from Kate Butler ([kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk)), if necessary.

#### **2. Background**

The wording of the new contracts has been amended to reflect the abolition of the default retirement age on 1 October 2011. At the same time, we have taken advantage of the imminent introduction of the new Personnel Services website (from 4 October) and the launch early in



2012 of HRIS to introduce a number of other changes and improvements to the templates for all academic-related and support staff contracts. The new templates will be available on the Personnel Services website from 4 October. With effect from that date these are the only templates which should be used.

### **3. New contract templates**

#### *Changes to contractual clause on retirement*

The wording of the new contracts has been amended to reflect the abolition of the default retirement age on 1 October 2011.

The templates for support staff contracts have been amended so that there is no longer any mention of a retirement age, although the employee is reminded that they may choose to retire in accordance with the rules of the pension scheme to which they belong.

The templates for academic-related staff contain an interim amendment to reflect the present position, i.e. that the Personnel Committee is proposing that the University adopt an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) of 67. This amendment will be replaced if Council decides to adopt an EJRA and the necessary changes to university Regulations are formally adopted.

#### *Other main changes to the contract*

- The separate templates for permanent, self-financing, open-ended externally-funded, and fixed-term contracts have been brought together so that there is a one template for academic-related staff and one for support staff. This is intended to make it easier to choose and follow the appropriate contract type.
- The contract is now consists of two parts: one document which is a statement of standard terms and conditions; and one document which holds details of the individual appointment (e.g. starting salary, probation period, etc). This is intended to simplify the production and checking of contracts.
- For fixed-term contracts, some of the detail which was previously included in the contract itself (such as the source of funding) has been removed from the contract and should in future be set out in a separate, accompanying side-letter. This is so that any incidental change in those details, such as a change of name for the funding grantor, can be notified by letter and do not require the contract itself to be amended or reissued.
- The guidance notes have been simplified to form a checklist.
- There is no longer a requirement to attach hard copies of policies and codes of practice. Instead the statement of standard terms and conditions provides links to the university websites holding statutes, regulations and policies. This is intended to save time and resource, and also to ensure that new employees always have access to the most up to date documents.
- The job description should be included as a standard attachment.



### *Offer letter*

A new pro-forma offer letter is available to be used should it be necessary or desirable to provide a candidate with formal confirmation of a job offer and of the main conditions attached to the offer.

### *HRIS*

The pro-forma contract templates will be available from the Personnel Services website until the roll-out of HRIS. They will require manual intervention to insert detail into, and select options within, a draft contract. We have endeavoured to make this process as clear and simple as the format allows. The templates have, however, been designed to be compatible with HRIS, so that, from the 'go live' of that system in early 2012, it will be possible to auto-populate contracts and offer letters from HRIS. This is intended to make the production of new contracts quicker and more accurate.

The new contract templates and accompanying guidance are on the Personnel Services website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/recruit/contracts/templates/> (available from 4 October).

Attached, by way of illustration, is a sample completed support staff contract in the new format together with a copy of the pro-forma job offer letter.

Further information may be obtained from [kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kate.butler@admin.ox.ac.uk).

*Copy for noticeboards: NO*

*Website: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/recruit/contracts/templates/>*

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