

# Equal Pay Programme

## Introduction

In July 2023, the Chief Executive announced our plans to deliver a new expedited job evaluation scheme by April 2025 which will bring about fair pay for all the council's employees.

Together with support from our recognised trade unions GMB, Unison and Unite, we committed through the **Equal Pay Programme** to undertake a review of around 2,500 roles and, have a new pay and grading structure in place by April 2025.

The purpose of the Equal Pay programme is to ensure that every job evaluation undertaken is consistent, defensible and informs a new pay structure where no employee is paid less than another for doing a job of equal value.

## Background

The current pay structure has been in place since 2008 and has remained unchanged since that time. The programme will review all roles within BCC, Birmingham Children's Trust (the Trust), Acivico and maintained schools ("BCCG") with the aim of delivering a pay structure that is simpler, more transparent and, most critically, mitigates the risk of further equal pay claims arising in the future.

## How to find your personal information on Oracle

We have added three instructional videos to assist you in locating your Payroll number, National Insurance number, and Date of Birth on Oracle. Please take a moment to watch these videos to ensure your information is accurate.

- [How to find your Payroll Number](#)
- [How to find and check your National Insurance Number](#)
- [Finding and Checking your Date of Birth](#)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQs : Issue 5: 13 February 2025

### 1. What is Equal Pay and why is it important?

Equal pay is about the establishment of equal terms and conditions of employment, so as to ensure that male and female workers receive equal pay for equal work or work of equal value. This is required by law - hence its importance.

### 2. Why is this review being undertaken?

The aim of the review is to ensure pay equity within Birmingham City Council, the result of which will be to ensure that no employee is pay-graded less than another for doing a job of equal value, helping to make the council an attractive place to work for everyone. It will also ensure that every job evaluation conducted is consistent and defensible and protects our financial security in the future.

**3. Who will be affected by this review?**

All employees on Birmingham City Council terms and conditions, including those in schools, Birmingham Children's Trust and Acivico, will be affected by this review. This covers employees on both the NJC terms (sometimes referred to as "Green Book" terms) as well as senior roles on JNC terms. School Teachers, Soulbury employees, Youth and Community employees, and Coroners are excluded. Such employees are employed under separate pay structures as governed by their national terms and conditions and therefore not subject under the NJC for Local Government to this review.

**4. I am not employed by BCC directly – does this affect me?**

This review includes Birmingham Children's Trust (the Trust) employees, all Acivico employees and NJC employees in maintained schools as they are employed under the Birmingham Workforce Contract.

**5. Which jobs will be reviewed?**

All roles which are in scope, no matter when last evaluated, will need to be re-evaluated during this programme. This is to ensure that all roles have been assessed using the same method and process.

**6. What is the purpose of Job Evaluation?**

Job Evaluation is a process to analyse a group of jobs (as opposed to the individuals undertaking them). The results of the analysis are then used to give each job a numerical score in order to rank them. They will then be grouped into salary bands and all jobs within a particular band will be "rated as equivalent" for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. The process should accurately and reliably measure the factors that determine the value of different jobs, reflecting the true distinctions between jobs based on factors such as skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. The evaluation process should be objective and unbiased, using standardised criteria and methods that are consistently applied to all jobs, regardless of personal characteristics or preferences. To summarise, Job Evaluation is a way of comparing jobs that may have few or no similarities to ensure equal pay for work of equal value. This also provides an employer with a statutory defence to equal value pay claims.

**7. Is this just a cost cutting exercise?**

Put simply, No, this is not a cost cutting exercise. The programme will ensure we have a robust pay equity system. We need to ensure that each job is reflected and represented accurately and, in its entirety, and that the information we hold is up to date. BCC has changed significantly since the last pay and grading review and, as such, job information needs to be updated to reflect the current state. The programme is fundamental in ensuring we eliminate equal pay issues for the future.

**8. What does "Job Information" mean?**

Job information simply means the information we need to hold on a role to allow for an accurate evaluation. This will be formed of three complementary documents:

- The Job Description / Person Specification for the role (JDPS),
- A Job Description Questionnaire (JDQ) and
- An up to date Team Structure Chart

**9. What is the purpose of the Job Description Questionnaire?**

The job description and person specification provide an overview of the role, and responsibilities and requirements for the role. However, the Job Description Questionnaire (JDQ) provides further details, setting the context for the role and enables its evaluation using the 13 job factors under the NJC Gauge scheme.

**10. What is happening to Job Descriptions?**

All job descriptions and person specifications (JD/PS) will be reviewed by managers as part of the first stage of the programme. The manager will engage their teams to discuss the role and consider any changes which may need to be made (e.g. missing responsibilities, responsibilities no longer undertaken). The programme team have worked closely with directorates over recent months to gather all JD/PS's to ensure they are up to date and accurately reflect the jobs currently being done. For this we are using a digital system called Role Mapper which helps managers review the JD/PS by highlighting potentially discriminatory language or complex sentences. The manager is then able to discuss the JD/PS with their employees to confirm its accuracy. We have delivered mandatory training and support for managers to review JD/PS to ensure that they are accurate, accessible, and comply with our equality obligations. During the program we will continue to provide further training and support for employees reviewing the job information.

**11. Will everybody get an opportunity to input to the Job Information?**

For many of our roles all employees will have the opportunity to have direct input into the review of their JD/PS & JDQ since almost 90% of our roles have few enough people in them which means we can directly engage everyone together.

Where employees are in a role where there are too many people to meet in one go, employees will be selected at random to participate in the completion of a Job Description Questionnaire (JDQ) workshop. This workshop will provide more information about the context in which people do their roles. All data from the JD/PS and JDQ will be circulated to everyone in the role to allow them to provide their views or raise a disagreement before the role goes for evaluation.

We will keep colleagues informed of progress and confirm in advance when input is required from colleagues about their roles throughout 2025.

**12. What happens if we have had a recent restructure or are currently going through one?**

For consistency, all job descriptions will be reviewed as part of this programme and re-evaluated using a job description questionnaire including those undertaken under recent restructures. Whilst it's unlikely there will be many changes to recently designed job descriptions, managers need to review and confirm job descriptions even if there have been no significant changes to the role. Most restructures will have occurred before we rolled out the JDPS writing training, so managers will likely need to review how duties and responsibilities are expressed rather than making any major updates to the role (provided such changes have not occurred).

**13. What is RoleMapper?**

RoleMapper is a digital platform solution that will enable BCC to review inclusive Job Description / Person Specifications.

RoleMapper supports reviewers to ensure that JD/PS's are equality compliant, removing language that acts as a barrier to people with protected characteristics and ensures consistency of approach and application of common language.

RoleMapper also holds a complete history of how JD/PS's have changed. This means that we can review changes to JD/PS's and if necessary track changes, when they were made and by who so we can understand roles more.

**14. How will RoleMapper help managers and teams?**

RoleMapper provides us with a single digital place in which to develop, collaborate on and verify job information. Digitising the job information process through RoleMapper will provide greater efficiency ensuring that approvals are managed, and the information inputs are consistent and clear.

**15. When will managers have access to RoleMapper?**

Managers will be given access once they have been nominated to review a certain role within their service area and have undertaken the online RoleMapper training. This will be organised by the Equal Pay Programme Team.

**16. What is a benchmark role?**

In job evaluation, a benchmark role, often referred to as a benchmark job, is a specific position within an organisation that is used as a standard for comparing and assigning relative levels to other jobs within the company. Benchmark roles are carefully selected because they represent the key responsibilities, skills, and qualifications that are common across various positions in the organisation. Benchmark roles are the first roles that will be evaluated in the programme.

For the purpose of this programme, the benchmark roles were reviewed and selected by BCC, Birmingham Children's Trust, schools and Acivico, then agreed with the joint trade unions.

**17. How will my role be evaluated?**

Once the Job Information stage is completed, the job description, person specification and job description questionnaire (JDQ) will be passed onto the Job Evaluators. Job Evaluators are specialist's who have been selected and then trained by our independent evaluation advisors (West Midlands' Employers - WME).

These Analysts will conduct the evaluations using the NJC Gauge system.

**18. What pay protection is in place if my role is downgraded?**

Any job evaluation exercise may result in pay increasing, decreasing or staying the same for different roles. Discussion on the new pay and grading structure, and whether pay protection will apply, will form part of the discussions and negotiations with our joint trade unions.

**19. How does this Job Evaluation process differ from the previous scheme in 2007 and how are we sure that this time the Equal Pay issue will be sorted?**

The NJC Gauge scheme was used previously so the factors and Gauge system are the same however, there have been many nationally agreed updates incorporated. The main difference really is the pace as we have to deliver this programme in a fairly tight window. Training is being given by WME, who are West Midlands' Employers, and they are acting as an independent organisation to help make sure that we maintain the correct standards. They will also be doing some quality assurance and there will be moderation panels also attended by our trained joint trade union colleagues and Job Analysts. We are running sessions so that you feel comfortable and understand the clear process around the JD/PS and JDQ's process. We will bring in managers and employees, we can have these sessions face to face, and we do have a team in place. The team can provide technical expertise and technical support to guide you through the process. Looking forward there will need to be strict governance of the future management of the pay and grading and the evaluation structure, in particular when creating new job roles. That will be a key difference and deciding factor going forward.

**20. Do you have the different weighting scores for the 13 different factors that are assessed in order to give the role an overall evaluation score?**

Yes, each of the 13 factors is weighted differently and is part of the NJC Gauge scheme. The different factors are Knowledge, Mental Skills, Interpersonal & Communications Skills, Physical Skills, Initiative and Independence, Physical Demands, Mental Demands, Emotional Demands, and other responsibilities covering Wellbeing, Supervision. Financial Resources, Physical Resources and Working Conditions. These factors are assessed as part of the evaluation and have different weighting on each score. Details of the different weighting is available as it is a public document and a recognised scheme. You can find more information here [NJC Job Evaluation Scheme | Gauge+ | Pilat HR Solutions \(local.gov.uk\)](#).

**28. How is the job evaluation process different to the equal pay claim?**

Job evaluation is the process to review and re-evaluate roles within the organisation to reflect the current responsibilities of each role.

Equal Pay claims are not part of this process and are handled by our legal team with the trade unions.

**29. I am not affiliated with a Trade Union so how will I know what is happening?**

Once we have negotiated and agreed the reshaped pay & grading structure with the three recognised Trade Unions we will communicate to all employees to explain what the reshaped structure looks like and explain what this means to them.

**30. Are you able to provide an update please on the job evaluation for the benchmark roles, including when we can expect an outcome and any next steps?**

We have agreed with the Trade Unions to release outcomes once 90% of employees' roles have been evaluated. We will then release further outcomes of any remaining roles once they have all been evaluated

## Webinar Recordings

We are now sharing with you the Equal Pay Programme update which was hosted as a webinar on 13th February 2025.

- [Equal Pay Programme Webinar recording - 13 February 2025](#)
- [Equal Pay Programme update - webinar slides](#)

### MD Webinar 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025: Answer to Questions

- 1) Officers are concerned about potential salary reductions, with the ongoing pay review and to help with budget pressures the Council faces, what would you say to this?**

The Equal Pay Programme is not a cost cutting exercise. The programme will ensure we have a robust pay equity system. We need to ensure that each job is reflected and represented accurately and, in its entirety, and that the information we hold is up to date. The programme is fundamental in ensuring we eliminate potential equal pay issues for the future.

- 2) Job Evaluation is only half the story, can you share how you're expecting the new grade structure to look? Are you planning to stick to tall grades that allow meaningful progression or more to short grades that curtail progression?**
- 3) Restructure - Smaller grade bands = more people top of grade, less increments, more people with no progression? How will this be addressed? It's not all about the money, it's the opportunity.**
- 4) That doesn't tell us how it may affect us I'm afraid. Are we going to end up with no movement, are we potentially going to be at the top of our grades when we aren't already?**
- 5) Regarding equal and fair pay, what happens if you're on the same grade as someone but performing at a higher level? Is there any mechanism for accelerated pay within the pay scales?**
- 6) All staff who are on the same grade and doing the exact same job should all be on the same pay. How can one member of staff earn £6245 per year more than the other for the doing the exact same job? BCC seem to reward loyalty more than performance. I hope this is addressed in the new pay grade.**

#### **Answer to questions 2 to 6:**

When the reshaped Pay and Grading structure is implemented, full details will be provided so employees will be able to see how it works. One of the guiding principles was to ensure that we have a structure that can reward, retain and attract people.

- 7) How could the changes to grading structures affect us?**
- 8) Just slightly concerned that initially it was voiced that results and the pay grade structure were due to be made public in Autumn with letters going out to staff in January. Delays in this Equal Pay programme mean that workers have very little security and very little time to assess their individual situations before April?**

#### **Answer to questions 7 and 8:**



When we implement the reshaped Pay and Grading structure, hopefully in April, we will set out how it works and how people will be affected. We anticipate that we will have more details upon this in the coming weeks. The intention is that from April 2025 people will move over on their existing spinal column point into the reshaped Pay and Grading structure.

- 9) When will the job evaluation be finalised and communicated to all staff members with their new grade and salary?**
- 10) Job Evaluations- are all jobs going to be evaluated? if yes, then how can one get more information around when to expect this to happen?**
- 11) When will individual or teams who have already completed their job evaluation, find out their results, please.**

**Answer to questions 9 to 11:**

We have set out a roadmap for completing the majority of the job evaluation by the end of 2025. We will likely be in a place to communicate results to over 90% of job holders in the autumn of 2025.

- 12) We were initially told the job evaluation programme had to end with all jobs being evaluated by 31 March 2025 and we would have a new pay and grading structure and a new contract of employment, which was dependent on both these activities. As all jobs are not going to have been evaluated to the original timescale, when will the new contract of employment be shared and implemented?**

We are aiming to implement a reshaped Pay and Grading structure in April 2025. This has now been separated from Job evaluation. We aim to complete the majority of Job Evaluations by the end of 2025.

- 13) We have an equal pay programme which normally take years to complete properly and in BCC it is being done within 12-18 months, this is not realistic and there will be errors, anomalies - how will these be addressed?**

The programme is ambitious however, the plan being worked through takes account of the complexities, and resources have been made available as appropriate. To date the job evaluation has resulted in over 50% of colleagues' job descriptions being reviewed. This is alongside developing the reshaped pay and grading structure, and ongoing consultation throughout with our recognised Trade Unions. Behind the scenes there has also been extensive data checking working with the Oracle team, People Services and across Directorates. Clearly, with a project of this scale and complexity errors will arise. We have put in place support processes for all colleagues to ensure all enquiries are dealt with promptly and resolved. Colleagues will receive clear communications as and when appropriate and will have access to a helpdesk in addition to other resources.

- 14) Can you share the link to the pay and grading page that you've mentioned that has been set up on the Council's website please?**

These pages are currently under construction and the links will be communicated once they go live. We will also post the link on here. Updates and additional information will be added to these pages as the reshaped pay and grading structure is implemented.

**15) What percentage of staff will see their current salary affected by these changes?**

At this stage we are not in position to state this, but we anticipate being able to do so quite soon

**16) How do we appeal against our new Job Descriptions?**

Job Evaluation (JE) outcomes will not be known until later in the year (2025). A clear set of principles for appeals have been agreed with our recognised Trade Unions and when Job Evaluation outcomes are communicated, the appeal process will be communicated at this time.

**17) If pay and grading does result in a reduction will there be a period of grace to allow workers to adjust financially. In previous years when this happened, the period of grace was 2 years. Also, is there an option to challenge and appeal the pay and grading outcome, especially if the outcome is a reduction in salary / grade?**

Any job evaluation exercise may result in pay increasing, decreasing or staying the same for different roles. Discussion on the reshaped pay and grading structure, and whether pay protection will apply, will form part of the discussions and negotiations with our joint trade unions.

Any further questions can be put through to the programme team: [EPPSchools@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:EPPSchools@birmingham.gov.uk)



## Equal Pay Settlement

### Introduction

In December 2024, the Council announced that, subject to formal agreement, it had reached an agreement with GMB and UNISON to settle their members' equal pay claims, which are currently proceeding in the Employment Tribunal.

The settlement has not yet been finalised or agreed, and discussions continue between the parties' representatives.

As matters progress, any updates and details will be posted on here.

If you have an existing claim and any queries about that claim, **please contact your legal or Trade Union representative.** We are unable to communicate with colleagues involved in ongoing claims, as they are legally represented.

All other queries relating to Equal Pay Settlement should be directed to [equalpay@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:equalpay@birmingham.gov.uk)

Building a fair and positive workplace for everyone, together.

## Pay and Grading

This will be sent at a later date