

# Proposal for The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026

Summary information for UQ employees



# Background

**The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement is an important document that sets out the terms and conditions of employment for the majority of UQ employees.**

In June 2023, negotiations for a proposed new UQ Enterprise Agreement (the proposed Agreement) resulted in the signing of a Heads of Agreement (HOA) between the bargaining team – UQ, the National Tertiary Education Union, and Together union.

The Heads of Agreement was the result of considerable effort and collaboration by the bargaining team. It means that all parties agreed in principle with the terms of the proposed Agreement. These have now been translated into the proposed Agreement.

# Next steps

01

## Access period

UQ employees will have the chance to review the proposed Agreement between Monday 13 November through to 5:00pm AEST on Monday 20 November 2023, and eligible employees will then be invited to vote.

02

## Eligible employee ballot

Eligible employees are professional and academic employees who are employed on a full-time and part-time continuing or fixed-term basis and who will be covered by the proposed Agreement. Casual employees who are engaged during the access period will also be eligible to participate in the ballot between Tuesday 21 November until 4:00pm AEST on Monday 27 November 2023. The ballot process is electronic and all votes are confidential.

03

## Fair Work Commission approval

If the proposed Agreement is agreed to by the majority of eligible employees who vote, it is then provided to the Fair Work Commission for approval before coming into effect.



## Looking for more detail?

Find more information on **UQ's proposed Enterprise Agreement** here.

For questions about the proposed Agreement please contact [askhr@uq.edu.au](mailto:askhr@uq.edu.au)

# About the proposed Agreement

This guide is a snapshot of the key updates in the proposed Agreement and outlines how the benefits will apply to eligible employees. More detail can be found in the full proposed Agreement that will be provided during the access period.

## A simpler, less complex Agreement

Enterprise agreements are detailed legal documents, and can be challenging for employees and leaders to interpret and use effectively on a day-to-day basis. In preparing the proposed Agreement, efforts have been made to simplify, reduce unnecessary complexity, and make it easier to understand and apply.

## At a glance: key updates and changes

The proposed Agreement includes a range of new benefits for eligible employees:



**Casual academic conversion pathway** – UQ commits to internally advertising and seeking to fill a minimum of 50 Teaching Associate positions in each 12-month period following certification of the Agreement.



**Substitution of Australia Day public holiday** – ability for employees to substitute the annual Australia Day public holiday for an alternative day within the same year, subject to approval and operational requirements.



**Increased cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees** – from 5 days to 8 days of paid leave, and the introduction of 10 days of unpaid cultural leave.



**26 weeks of paid parental leave** – for continuing and fixed-term employees with greater flexibility around how the leave may be accessed.



**Increased family and domestic violence leave entitlements** – for continuing and fixed-term employees from 10 days to 15 days.



**Introduction of gender affirmation leave** – continuing and fixed-term employees can access up to 20 days of paid leave per annum for purposes of affirming their gender.



**Introduction of reproductive health and wellbeing leave** – allowing continuing and fixed-term employees experiencing reproductive health issues up to 5 days of leave per annum.



**Commitment to increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.**



**Reaffirmation of a commitment to academic freedom** for all employees.

# Pay, benefits and conditions



## Salary increases

The proposed Agreement includes:

- A **salary offer of a 15%** increase in annual salary levels over the life of the proposed Agreement –
  - **2%** which was paid administratively from 31 January 2022
  - **3%** which was paid administratively from 5 December 2022
  - **\$1,500** uplift to annual base salaries with pro rata increases for part-time employees and an adjustment to casual hourly pay rates – to be paid on the first available full pay period after a successful employee ballot. The \$1,500 is not a ‘one off’ or ‘sign on’ bonus.
  - **2%** 31 January 2024\*
  - **2%** 31 July 2024\*
  - **2%** 31 January 2025\*
  - **2%** 31 July 2025\*
  - **2%** 31 January 2026\*.

\* to be paid on the first available full pay period after these dates.

## Additional wage growth through annual step progression

In addition to scheduled annual increases, employees will still be eligible for annual step progression increases within their current level up to the top step of that level. This provides an additional potential source of wage growth over and above the annual increases in the proposed Agreement.

## Generous superannuation benefits – 17%

UQ employees enjoy higher rates of superannuation contribution than the community standard.

The proposed Agreement retains UQ’s 17% employer superannuation contributions for continuing and fixed-term employees. Casual staff will continue to receive employer superannuation contributions consistent with Commonwealth legislation.

## Leave

The proposed changes to some leave clauses carefully consider the needs of employees. UQ’s commitment is to ensure that our leave entitlements remain as relevant, applicable, and beneficial as possible.

Existing leave entitlements for eligible employees include:

- **20 days of annual leave** per year, including 17.5% annual leave loading
- **1.3 weeks of long service leave** for each completed year of service, accessible after 10 years of continuous service
- **26 weeks of paid parental leave** subject to eligibility criteria
- **generous personal leave** entitlements.

## New or changed/increased leave options

UQ recognises the need for flexibility around when leave is accessed, and we are committed to supporting employees with a broad range of leave options that can be applied for, depending on individual circumstances. This is reflected in the proposed Agreement through:

- the ability to substitute the Australia Day public holiday for an alternative day in the same year
- more options for how paid parental leave can be accessed, including for primary carers, including –
  - spreading the paid component over a greater number of weeks
  - allowing employees to return to work and use the remainder of their parental leave flexibly
- an update of the existing special leave clause which outlines circumstances where this type of leave may apply, such as personal or family circumstances, epidemic or a pandemic, a declared emergency or other disaster
- an increase in paid leave available to employees experiencing family and domestic violence, in addition to the range of other support options already available.

**Two new leave types** are included in the proposed Agreement:

- for the purpose of affirming gender
- for employees experiencing reproductive health issues.



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment

Aligning with UQ's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the proposed Agreement:

- increases cultural leave provisions to allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to access up to 8 days of paid cultural leave and 10 days of unpaid leave
- introduces a language allowance of \$3,500 per year, subject to eligibility criteria, in recognition of the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages
- provides that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees engaging in cultural activities requested on behalf of UQ will have those activities identified and recognised in their workload allocation and considered in criteria for promotion.

## Academic freedom

The proposed Agreement reaffirms the rights of all employees to exercise academic freedom, in alignment with **UQ's Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy**.

## Job security

In response to the need for greater job security for casual academic employees, and to facilitate the reduction in the overall use of casual academic employment at UQ, the proposed Agreement establishes continuing Teaching Associate positions. UQ is committed to internally advertising and seeking to fill a minimum of 50 Teaching Associate positions in each 12-month period following the certification of the new Agreement.

UQ is committed to job security and will continue to include specific provisions in the Agreement that ensure:

- casual employment is a supplement to, and not a substitute for, the creation of continuing and fixed-term positions
- compulsory redundancy is a last resort and should be avoided if possible
- natural attrition is the preferred method of effecting change.

# Span of hours, time off in lieu, and overtime

The proposed Agreement has simplified the existing clauses to make them easier to read and apply for professional employees, including the following changes:

- **Span of hours for eligible administrative employees** – to be amended to 8am to 7pm, meaning overtime may be applicable for work conducted outside those hours where flexible work does not apply.
- **Time off in lieu (TOIL) for HEW 1-7 employees** – a new mechanism for payment of TOIL where accrued but unused TOIL will be paid out twice per calendar year at the relevant overtime rate.
- **TOIL for HEW 8 employees** – TOIL can be accrued at the relevant overtime rate where employees are required by UQ to work beyond their ordinary hours. Payment for directed overtime for HEW Level 8 employees will be on a time for time basis only.

## Other proposed changes

- **Revised casual academic employment clause** – simplifying how pay rates are applied, and relevant minimum engagement periods for various activities.
- **Greater clarity on pathways available** to professional employees to raise concerns about their workload.
- **Revised academic workload clause** – with a commitment from UQ to review existing academic workload allocation models by 30 November 2024.
- **Introduction of a concurrent casual appointment clause** – providing clarity on requirements where a continuing or fixed-term employee is engaged by UQ in a separate and distinct casual appointment.
- **Introduction of an end-of-year closure clause** outlining processes for accessing leave if UQ closes between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
- **Introduction of a stand-down clause** – outlining when stand-down with or without pay may occur and the process for any affected employees.





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For more information, visit the website  
[staff.uq.edu.au/ea](http://staff.uq.edu.au/ea)