



MUNASA Bulletin – May 19, 2022

Dear Members:

In September 2015, MUNASA signed an agreement with the University that states, “The University agrees, from the date of signing of the present Agreement and before implementing a salary policy concerning M staff, that it shall hold good faith discussions with MUNASA to discuss this topic and, in formulating the policy, shall take into account the concerns expressed by MUNASA on behalf of its members”.

In Fall 2021, MUNASA had “good faith” discussions with Labour and Employee Relations, which led to a higher percentage than what was first proposed. However, MUNASA was not aware that the **performance increase and economic increase envelopes would be integrated** into a total salary increase budget of 3.5%.

This is especially concerning since Statistics Canada reports that the inflation rate jumped to a new 31-year high of 6.8% in April 2022
<https://www.thestar.com/business/2022/05/18/statistics-canada-to-release-april-inflation-figures-today.html>. The 3.5% envelope is approximately half of what the cost of living increase is in Canada. Food, housing, gas, and other essential amenities have all increased exponentially.

The Annual Compensation Review exercise states that it ‘*sets the foundation and process for the **fair and equitable recognition** of all MPEX employees who make a sustained positive contribution to the University, while also providing the flexibility to reward those whose contributions significantly exceed objectives*’. However, this statement is very controversial since there isn’t any assurance that you will receive 3.5%.

In fact, it further mentions, “Each employee’s performance will be rated according to one of the five performance categories defined below. **Each performance category has a recommended increase in relation to the 3.5% budget and to the individual placement in the salary scale zone. Note that the minimum recommended increase range for eligible employees is 1.75% to 2.25%**”. This is most disturbing when you consider that the economic increase for the 2021 Annual Compensation Review was 1.8%. Now, 1.75% to 2.25% may be all you will receive. This will not only affect your salary but will have a long term impact on your pension.

Many managers believe that one's performance only marginally plays into the performance assessment. It has become an annual compensation review to evaluate where an employee's salary is positioned on the salary scale zone. The term 'merit' previously used in communications from Human Resources is nowhere to be found in the 2022 HR Notes that we received on March 15, 2022. It appears that the Annual Compensation Review is being used as a mechanism to retain employees because McGill's salaries for MPEX employees are lower than what other universities offer. If you are above the compa-ratio or the mid-point on the salary scale, you will most likely receive a smaller "performance increase".

Those above the mid-point and with many years of institutional knowledge and work experience often receive less. For example, a manager who has been at the University for almost 25 years and assessed at Category 2: Exceeds Objectives received a merit amount of \$375 in 2021. This is not a universal result, as it depends on the person's compa-ratio. It clearly demonstrates that the assessment is not based on performance but rather where an employee is on the salary scale. In contrast, academics receive a set amount based on their performance category. In 2021, academics received \$2,770 when receiving Category 2, and in 2022 the amount is \$3,050. Their economic increase is in addition to these amounts. While we are not comparing what managers receive to that of academics, our goal is to point out the sharp contrast. There is a specific amount allocated to each category for academics and therefore what you receive does not become a guessing game. The example above clearly demonstrates that the process is neither ***fair nor equitable***. For many it is demotivating and demoralizing.

While Total Compensation claims to "encourage a consistent application throughout the university as a whole", merit is often determined by a Committee that knows very little about your performance.

When there is a hiring freeze and positions are left vacant for long periods of time or abolished, when there are union strikes or emergencies such as the pandemic, etc., who does the University rely on? The University turns to its managers to keep things afloat. Yet, the increases we receive are not competitive and do not come close to the cost of living. Like the vast majority of employers, what is McGill's plan to help their employees to cope with the harsh current circumstances?

The purpose of this Bulletin is to emphasize that MUNASA is not satisfied with how salary policy (annual compensation review) is being exercised. Based on the responses we have received from the membership, we will schedule a presentation and explore other options available to us.

If you feel that your performance category or salary increase is not equitable, please reach out to MUNASA at info@munasa.com.

Sincerely,

The MUNASA Executive