
Summary Terms of Reference – Job Evaluation Lessons Learned

Background

1. In 2018, a comprehensive job evaluation exercise was initiated with the aim of evaluating support staff roles across the college sector. National bargaining in the college sector is a Scottish Government priority, with the implementation of a national job evaluation scheme for support staff recognised as a key component. The final costs of the retrospective implementation of job evaluation will be confirmed upon the conclusion of the project.
2. SFC funded the exercise until January 2023 and asked colleges to provide for the income and costs relating to the exercise in their financial statements. As of 2023–24, responsibility for the job evaluation exercise and funding of the outcome has moved to the Scottish Government.
3. SFC has supported College Employers Scotland (CES) and the recognised trade unions throughout the job evaluation exercise, which has not yet been completed. The lessons-learned review is necessary to ensure that the issues affecting the earlier delivery of the programme are not repeated in the future.

Current position

4. The most recent update provided on the National Negotiating Committee website, in May and June 2026, highlighted that the Joint Secretaries would undertake a piece of work to explore alternative scheme providers for Job Evaluation, to understand if any scheme providers (including that of the current provider ECC-FEDRA) are able to provide the level of satisfactory transparency to move forward. The Joint Secretaries had held preliminary discussions with six Job Evaluation scheme specialist providers and have prepared a report to the Job Evaluation Project Board, outlining their findings. These discussions have been put on hold until there is clarity about the job evaluation lessons-learned review.

The Lessons Learned Review

5. SFC has appointed KPMG, through a competitive process, to conduct a Lessons Learned Review of the Job Evaluation exercise. The review will be conducted in autumn 2026 and will involve a review of documentation and interviews with key stakeholders. It will examine the key areas of programme governance and delivery.

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6. The broad aims of the project are to:
 - Understand the factors that delayed the delivery of the Job Evaluation exercise, including the governance.
 - Identify lessons learned that can inform the future of the exercise.
 - Develop practical recommendations to support the next steps of the exercise.
 7. The review will consider areas including:
 - Governance and oversight arrangements.
 - Roles and responsibilities across the key organisations involved.
 - Stakeholder engagement and communications.
 - Programme delivery, including planning, project management and risk management.
 - Budget management and funding arrangements.
 - Practical actions that will support the next steps of this exercise.
 8. The Review methodology will be as follows:
 - A review of relevant documentation.
 - Interviews with key stakeholders.
 - An anonymised survey of a key stakeholder.
 9. All feedback received from the participants will be held confidentially at a consolidated level and will be anonymised within the report.