Notice of revision of HR policies

As you will be aware through previous announcements, UKRI is moving to a revised set of non-pay employment terms and conditions, supported and underpinned by HR policies that have been reviewed jointly with our trade unions with the overriding aim of there being no detriment to employees.

We are pleased to announce that we have reached agreement with the trade unions to implement the revised policies with effect from 6 January 2020. The new policies will apply to all UKRI employees, except for those who are in the groups listed in Annex 1.

The aim of revising the policies is to consolidate the policy content into fewer documents, whilst ensuring that UKRI clearly informs employees of the rights and obligations that the policies confer upon them.

While there is a longer-term ambition to make the policies more accessible through digitisation, the revised policies are designed to be easier to understand and use and also to facilitate consistency in the way that they are applied. Comprehensive guidance is included in the appendices to the policies in order to aid the transition to allowing a greater level of management discretion from the current policies and this is supplemented by a HR Policy Framework and a HR Delegations Framework.

The revised policies replace most of the existing UKRI HR policies, including the former Research Council policies, as well as local HR policies, Conditions of Employment Memoranda and Employment Codes. The revised policies can be viewed on the UKRI Hub.

Annex 2 details the names of the revised policies together with what is superseded by their introduction. A number of the current policies will remain in place for the time being whilst they are being reviewed and these are also shown, as are any policies that, whilst not replaced, are being withdrawn.

The introduction of the revised policies does not impact materially on terms and conditions of employment. Pay and allowances, pension provision and the benefits that employees take currently fall outside of the scope of the changes so will continue unaltered. The other major terms and conditions, which are listed below, are all unchanged:

- Continuity of Service;
- Job Title;
- Annual leave (including Public and Privilege holidays);
- Working location;
- Working hours;
- Notice periods;
- Sickness absence and sick pay provisions;
- Grievance;
- Protection from Bullying and Harassment;
- Conduct and Discipline;
- Redundancy;
- Right to work in the UK; and
- Probation (only applicable for those employees who are in their probation period on 6 January 2020).

There is a slight improvement to the provision of Shared Parental Pay, where some of the restrictions for when Shared Parental Pay can be claimed will be relaxed. The other provisions for family leave and pay are unaltered.
Whilst there are no material changes, some ambiguities and anomalies in the Special Leave provision have been removed.

Although the work on this phase of the policy review and revision is almost complete we shall continue to consult with the trade unions, with a view to reaching agreement, on the remaining policies and, thereafter, on an ongoing basis, in order to maintain, monitor and review HR policies to reflect changes to legislation and best practice.

Any questions should be emailed to ppm@ukri.org.
Annex 1 Employees to which there may be a variation in application of revised policy:

1. Senior staff with personal employment contracts, who may have specific different terms, arrangements and provisions.
2. Those retained consultants whose individual contracts have specific different terms, arrangements and provisions.
3. Rutherford International Fellows and Marie Curie Fellows whose individual contracts have specific different terms, arrangements and provisions.
4. Employees working abroad with alternative or additional local terms and conditions (e.g. those working in UKIO Brussels).

Employees to which revised policies do not apply

1. Employees working in:
   - Laboratory for Molecular Biology (LMB);
   - London Institute of Medical Sciences (LMS);
   - National Centre for Replacement, Refinement & Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs);
   - MRC Harwell Institute.
2. Pilots, mariners and the employees working predominantly in the Antarctic with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS).

The current policies will remain in place for employees in these groups.

The pilots, mariners and the Antarctic staff have some terms and conditions that relate to the specific types of work that they undertake, which cannot be accommodated easily or fully within the standard UKRI policies.

The governance arrangements of the four MRC institutes and centres allows them autonomy to decide whether to adopt the standard UKRI policies or to develop and maintain their own.