

New undergraduate supervision pay rate methodology from Michaelmas Term 2024

In brief

- Supervision payment rates are set to rise in 2024-25 by 15% on average.
- A new methodology for calculating supervisor pay has been agreed by the Colleges.
- Payment rates were reviewed as part of a [programme of work](#) created to address matters raised by [the Justice for College Supervisors \(J4CS\) campaign](#).

Background

The new methodology represents part of a longer-term review of payment rates for undergraduate supervisions, which began in 2021-22 amid concerns at the time about rates keeping pace with cost of living rises.

Since 2021-22, supervisor pay rates have risen faster than nationally-agreed (UCEA) university pay. Cumulatively, the increase in the rate of pay for a supervisor is between 23.6% (for supervising a single student) to 42.6% (for supervising a group of four or more students) since 2021-22.

Since 2023-24 new supervisors have also been paid an 'Initial Payment' in recognition of the additional work required when first supervising, a rate also aligned with future UCEA increases (£100 for new supervisors in 2023-24).

Undergraduate supervision intercollegiate re-charge rate methodology

The Colleges and Cambridge UCU's J4CS campaign reached an understanding on the methodology underpinning the intercollegiate re-charge rate for supervisions, which is to be implemented in Michaelmas 2024.

The new methodology is designed to be more transparent and justifiable than the previous payment system, and is informed by the knowledge, experience, and skills considered necessary to supervise an undergraduate student, as well as recent research on the work typically required to deliver a supervision, including a comprehensive survey on undergraduate supervisor workload which was carried out in 2023-24. A report that shows the results of the survey can be read [here](#).

The new methodology stipulates that pay rates are to be pinned to the University's salary spine point 39. The resulting hourly rate is multiplied by 2.5 to create the re-charge rate for a supervision group size of two students. This multiplier then increases by 0.5 for each successive group size up to the rate for a group size of four or more students, and decreases by 0.4 for a group size of one student. The following table illustrates the resulting pay rates for the next academic year based on the new methodology, assuming that UCEA negotiations will see University salaries increase by 3% for 2024-25:

Assumed SP39 2024/25 salary	Wk. in Yr.	Hr. in Wk.	Hourly rate	Group Size 1 Mult.	Group Size 2 Mult.	Group Size 3 Mult.	Group Size 4+ Mult.	Group Size 1 rate	Group Size 2 rate	Group Size 3 rate	Group Size 4+ rate
£34,985	52.25	36.5	£18.34	2.1	2.5	3.0	3.5	£38.52	£45.86	£55.03	£64.21

Both parties have further agreed additional terms to accompany the methodology above:

- the payment rate methodology shall be fixed for at least four years, with the possibility of a review should there be any changes in the supervision system the result of which have a significant impact on the Colleges' total expenditure on supervisions;
- both parties will agree on a continued programme of work for discussions between the J4CS campaign and the Colleges, in which the question of contracts will begin to be addressed in Michaelmas 2024;
- an updated Supervisor Workload Survey will be planned, to take place in the academic year 2027-28, incorporating the learnings from the Supervisor Workload Survey carried out in 2023-24; and
- that the Colleges will be requested to publicise clear deadlines for termly CamCORS report submissions in open and accessible websites, and to communicate any delays in payments to supervisors.

Further work on the supervision system

In addition to the work necessary to achieve the above terms, the Colleges will continue to improve the undergraduate supervision system via the following work:

- Collaborating with, and providing support for, the ongoing [Teaching Review](#). Recommended terms of reference for Directors of Studies Committees, created via the Teaching Review, are in the process of being approved by the University and Colleges to ensure sufficient oversight of College teaching.
- Implementing new guidelines to establish clear boundaries for the work or services expected of supervisors.
- Creating a second report of the supervisor workload survey, detailing responses to the second half of the survey (primarily qualitative questions) and exploring the data in greater detail.
- Exploring the creation of separate rates of pay for coursework (e.g. dissertation and project report) supervisions.

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Malcolm Millbrook
Office of Intercollegiate Services