

**From:** Julie Cogin  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 12:20 PM  
**To:** DL-STAFF-ACU <[DL-STAFF-ACU@acu.edu.au](mailto:DL-STAFF-ACU@acu.edu.au)>  
**Subject:** Update about wage underpayments



**From the Provost**

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to update you on progress we have made since advising you in January about wage underpayments for a cohort of **sessional academic staff**, and the actions the university has taken to remediate the situation.

We have been in contact with current and former sessional academic staff who have been directly affected by the underpayment, and I am pleased to advise that the majority of **current staff** who are eligible for a payment correction **have received their payment**. A small number of current staff eligible for payment will soon have their payments processed, following further review.

We have also taken steps to contact **former staff**. Of these, close to 270 have now received payment and, in the coming weeks, we expect to complete payments to these staff. It is taking some time to contact and confirm details with each person, and I thank those who are still waiting to finalise these steps for their patience.

Effective from 1 January 2024, the higher Co-ordination/PhD pay rates for sessional academic staff have been the standard rates of payment. University management reviewed this arrangement in March and resolved to continue it until the end of June 2024. This has been communicated to current sessional staff and those involved in engaging and paying sessional staff.

We have continued to engage with the university's Staff Consultative Committee (ACUSCC), the Community and Public Sector Union, and the National Tertiary Education Union. Regular updates on the processing of payment corrections and related matters are provided at each ACUSCC meeting.

As advised in the previous emails, we voluntarily disclosed the underpayment to Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TESQA), Australian Tax Office (ATO) as well other relevant external agencies and organisations. Following the disclosure, the Chief Operating Officer, Chief People Officer

and Project Manager had a positive meeting with representatives of the FWO. They provided an update on the current state of payments and what controls have and are being put in place to prevent a recurrence of the situation. Additionally, the Senate (the university's governing body) and the independent external Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee were briefed following the voluntary disclosure and will continue to be briefed at regular intervals concerning these matters.

ACU is committed to ensuring the accurate and compliant application of employee entitlements. We will continue to review our systems and controls, implement system and process improvements, and educate and inform relevant staff.

You can find answers to many of your questions about the background to the issue and the process of remediation in the [FAQs](#) on our [website](#). Staff and former staff who are directly affected can also contact People and Capability via Service Central, by email to [entitlements@acu.edu.au](mailto:entitlements@acu.edu.au), or telephone +61 7 3623 7272 and select option 4.

The university's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provided by Acacia EAP provides a 24/7 service telephone counselling service to staff. The EAP is available to both current and former staff for this matter. Refer to the [EAP web page](#) for further information or contact Acacia EAP directly via phone (1300 364 273) or online.

Regards,



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Provost and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)  
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