

# Academy school staff deserve a pay rise

## Branch plan action

**If you are an activist or Regional Organiser covering academy school staff, please read on.**

Most academy schools pay their staff according to nationally negotiated NJC pay agreements, which means staff should receive the 2018 - 2020 NJC pay rise. However UNISON activists and organisers need to ensure employers actually implement this pay rise in full and don't undercut our members.

Follow this step by step guide and get your members a pay rise. Plus it's a great opportunity to recruit and organise in academies.

We know a few academies pay their staff what they like, which means even though they're doing the same job, they won't get the pay rise they should. That isn't fair and we will need to convince these academies to adopt NJC arrangements. However our first priority is to ensure academies that have traditionally honoured NJC pay agreements, actually implement the pay rise in full.

Please note:

Branches do not have to write to the national multi-academy trusts (we define these as MATs with schools across 3 UNISON regions or more). The UNISON centre will do this. Here is the list of national MATs. [\[click here\]](#).

## Step-by-step guide

1. Send the model letter [\[click here\]](#) to NJC conditioned employers asking them to confirm in writing what month they paid the 2018 increases and requesting a meeting to discuss arrangements for implementation of the new pay spine. By this point in time this task may have already been undertaken by your branch. Depending on the response you got to this letter follow one of the two checklists:

### If the academy trust agrees to implement the pay rise:

1. Inform your Region
2. Arrange an initial meeting with the employer to discuss a timetable and arrangements for the assimilation process for year two. Model letters and suggested processes have been created for you to use as follows (contains links to resources to support the employer):

⇒ MATs with schools across multiple local authority areas [\[click here\]](#)

⇒ Standalone academy trusts and MATs with schools in a single local authority area [\[click here\]](#)

### If an academy trust won't honour the NJC pay deal in full:

1. Inform your Region of the response from the employer.
2. Get hold of copies of contracts, collective agreements and all written statements from the trust highlighting their commitment to NJC – speak to your Region about seeking legal advice on whether we have grounds for a claim.



### If the academy trust agrees to implement the pay rise:

3. Branches can also use UNISON's presentation with speakers notes at negotiating meetings [\[click here and download Powerpoint to view notes\]](#)
4. Make sure that you have an up to date version of the pay and grading structure(s) operated by the trust, headcount and 'full time equivalent' staffing figures for each scale point.
5. Agree arrangements and a timetable for carrying out the joint assimilation process and reaching agreement.
6. Make it clear to your employer/s that UNISON will not accept partial implementation of the pay award or cuts to jobs and conditions to pay for it. Tell them we will take all necessary steps, including industrial action, to ensure members receive the full award.
7. Ensure that the branch has adequate facility time arrangements in place with the employer to participate in the process.
8. Identify local training and admin support needs and means of meeting them.
9. Talk to GMB and Unite locally to get them involved.
10. Hold workplace meetings to tell members – and non-members – what will be happening. Make sure you have recruitment materials at the meeting.
11. Ensure that your membership records are up-to-date.
12. Consult your Regional Organiser about your sign off arrangements.
13. Agree consultation arrangements with members on the final proposals.

### If an academy trust won't honour the NJC pay deal in full:

3. Send second model letter [\[click here\]](#) to employer urging them to reconsider and seek a meeting. This second model letter can be amended to reflect local circumstances.
4. If you do not receive a positive response to the letter, send the members' leaflet [\[click here\]](#) and arrange members meetings to discuss campaign strategy.
5. Submit Freedom of Information request to trust on senior post holders' pay, spend on external consultants, third party related transactions and agency staff.
6. Speak to your Region about issuing local press release and other campaign ideas.
7. Prepare employer and membership records for further consultation and a possible industrial action ballot.

