

Policy Accounting Transferred to Edinburgh

Scottish Widows' Policy Accounting Department, which manages the financial controls around the processing of client transactions with the policy administration systems, is currently split between Edinburgh and Chatham. There are 64 staff based in Edinburgh and 13 staff based in Chatham. Scottish Widows has decided to merge the Edinburgh and Chatham teams into one team based in Edinburgh.

The key features of Scottish Widows' proposals are as follows:

- **SW has said that its aim is to redeploy all displaced staff into a suitable alternative role. The proposed changes will impact on 1 employee graded at Band 4, 3 employees graded at Band 5, 9 employees graded at Band 7 and 2 temporary staff. SW believe that vacancies exist within City Office, Gillingham, for the Band 7 population, which fit their current skill set.**
- **The transfer of work to Edinburgh will commence in November 2005 and it will be completed in March 2006.**
- **There will be no increase in overall headcount for the Edinburgh team it will be expected to absorb the Chatham work based on current numbers.**

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With so much uncertainty it is obviously essential that members fully understand their rights and entitlements. This Newsletter is designed to do precisely that: in particular explaining how staff should approach being faced with the prospect of being redeployed into an alternative role; and how to calculate the Voluntary Severance and Voluntary Early Retirement (VS/VER) Terms.

Rod Ransome will be at the announcement on Wednesday to speak to members individually about their concerns. Brian Bailey, LTU's Regional Officer, will also be available to speak to members.

Members needing more advice should telephone LTU's 24 Hour Advice Line service on 01234 262868.

Redeployment and Redundancy Rights - Key Questions

Below are answers to some of the key questions typically asked concerning staff redeployment and redundancy rights.

Q. Can I be forced to accept an alternative job?

A. It depends on whether the role meets the definition of 'suitable alternative employment'.

To be defined as such, a role must be:

- * a position at the same band or level of seniority;
- * within the skills, competencies and experiences of an individual, subject to adequate training;
- * a 'proper job' rather than one of only a short term nature;
- * with similar working patterns;
- * within recognised mobility parameters.

It is possible, however, that if no jobs are available that meet the above criteria then staff may be forced to accept a lower grade.

Where a member of staff is asked to accept such a 'suitable' role, but refuses, they are in danger of forfeiting their right to receive any form of Redundancy Payment.

However, if no such role can be offered within a reasonable period of job search, an individual has a right to be offered a Severance Payment.

Q. Can I be forced to accept a lower grade job?

A. It depends upon the circumstances.

For many staff, a drop of one grade may be possible if no other suitable roles are available. In these

circumstances, pay is managed according to the Bank's Protection of Pay and Allowances (PPA) Policy.

This means that salaries will be protected and managed in the new Band. This guarantees annual pay awards of no less than the median movement of the Market Indicator for Bands 6 to 2 for the three Annual Pay Reviews following the downgrade, regardless of the individual's position against the Market Indicator or Pay Zone.

However, where the downgrade would involve a drop in 'Status Grade / Benefit Break (ie from a Band 3 to 4, Band 4 to 5, or Band 5 to 6) then an individual can insist on being offered Severance Terms as an alternative to downgrading.

Q. Can I try out a new role on a trial basis?

A. Where the new role differs significantly from your current position, you should be offered a Trial Period of between four and twelve weeks before confirming acceptance of the position.

Q. What if I am made redundant or forced into a job I consider unsuitable?

A. If a member, you can take a Job Security Appeal with the full support and representation of LTU.

Q. Are the terms for voluntary severance and compulsory redundancy the same?

A. Yes, they are exactly the same.

There is also an agreed form of words used by the Bank which means that irrespective of whether staff leave on voluntary or compulsory redundancy, they will be entitled to receive Unemployment Benefit.

Joined After 1st January 1997

All staff joining the Bank since 1st January 1997 are entitled to the Severance Terms detailed in this section.

Staff who are made redundant will be entitled to receive a lump sum calculated according to a formula based on age and length of service, as the table beneath shows.

AGE OF EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENT

< 40	4 weeks' pay per year of service
40 - 49	4 weeks' pay per year of service plus an additional 2 weeks' pay for each year of service between 40 - 49 inclusive
50+	3 weeks' pay per year of service (max 104 weeks) reduced by 10% for each year of service over 50

Service used for the calculation of redundancy payments is actual service for the Group at the date of termination rounded up to the next whole number of years, and age as at last birthday.

The pay figure used to calculate the redundancy payment will include the following;

- Basic Salary
- Territorial Allowance
- Company Car Limit
- PSRP averaged over 12 months

The total pay figure is then divided by 52 to arrive at a weekly figure. This figure is then multiplied by the factor calculated as above.

The maximum entitlement is 104 weeks pay and the first £30,000 of any payment is free of tax.

These terms may not apply to all staff, if members have any concerns please contact LTU's Advice Team on 01234 262868.

Job Security Appeals

Where staff feel they have been treated unfairly during a reorganisation like this - either through being pressurised into accepting an unsuitable alternative job or having been told they are being made compulsorily redundant - they can pursue a Job Security Appeal with full representation from LTU.

This procedure, which has been used successfully by a number of LTU members, means that staff can have their cases presented by an experienced Union Representative in front of a Panel consisting of an equal number of senior Union and Bank Officials.

It is up to the Appeals Panel to decide whether staff have been treated fairly and, where they believe this

hasn't been the case in terms of redeployment, they can decide that staff should either be offered a different role or offered Severance Terms instead.

It goes without saying that the best chance staff have of succeeding with a Job Security Appeal is if they have their case presented professionally by an experienced Union Representative with a detailed knowledge and understanding of Lloyds TSB and its Job Security Policy.

It is essential that any members who are concerned with their treatment or who require any advice or assistance telephone LTU's Advice Team on 01234 262868.

Importance of Professional Representation

It is sometimes difficult for staff to appreciate the real value of union representation until a major reorganisation takes place.

Equally, it is only when the need for Union membership is at its greatest that it is really possible to understand that no all unions are the same. Indeed, there can be quite considerable differences in the depth and quality of support. This is particularly true within Lloyds TSB.

With LTU, our members can count on :

- **Representation by professional Officials with specialist, detailed knowledge of rights and entitlements within Lloyds TSB.**
- **Negotiations on your behalf by full-time officials who all have a minimum of 16 years experience in Lloyds TSB.**
- **Face-to-face visits by full time Officials.**
- **Detailed Newsletters providing important information on staff rights, entitlements and developments as they unfold.**

- **A genuine 24 Hour Advice Line, enabling members to speak direct to a fully trained and experienced official at any time; whether during the day, night or weekend.**

It is inevitable that many staff will need LTU's support over the coming weeks. This might be in relation to seeking Severance, concerns over pressure to redeploy into roles individuals might consider unsuitable, or to resist compulsory redundancy.

Whatever the issue, LTU's Officials have considerable experience tackling these types of problems.

Of course these services are available exclusively to LTU members. Non-members are not permitted to join once they have problem.

It is essential, therefore, that any remaining non-members working within Chatham join LTU straightaway.

Mark V Brown
Assistant General Secretary