

18.9 INCREMENT AND INCREMENTAL CREDIT

Increment

- 18.9.1 The salary of grades in the Public Sector consists of segment/s of a Master Salary Scale. Most grades have a salary scale comprising an initial and a top salary point and movement from the initial to the top salary point is incremental. A few grades have a flat salary. Increment on a salary scale is not as of right. It is a method for rewarding those who have demonstrated adequate yearly progress and whose work and conduct have been satisfactory. On appointment, an officer is normally granted the initial salary (in the salary scale of the grade), which is guaranteed (for an incumbent in the grade) and any movement in the scale has to be earned.

Incremental Credit

- 18.9.2 There is provision for the grant of incremental credits for previous experience/s acquired under supervision; temporary service completed in the same capacity prior to substantive appointment; and additional qualification/s obtained that are higher than those mentioned in the scheme of service.

Incremental Credit for Experience

- 18.9.3 Incremental credits up to a maximum of three are granted to specific categories of employees for experience acquired, under certain conditions, before entry into the service. At present, one incremental credit for each year of relevant experience acquired before entry into the service up to a maximum of three is granted in respect of the following categories:
- (a) post-registration experience of professionals such as in the case of Medical and Health Officer/Senior Medical and Health Officers and Dental Surgeon/Senior Dental Surgeons;
 - (b) experience after having obtained the right to practice from the appropriate registered professional body or Council as in the case of Architects, Engineers and others;
 - (c) post-qualification relevant experience acquired by other categories of graduates who may not normally require registration or authorisation before practice; and
 - (d) post-qualification experience in a recognised hospital for fully qualified nurses.

The grant of more than three incremental credits for experience is allowed in areas of scarcity.

18.9.4 Presently, officers serving in a Private Secondary School or Local Authority or Parastatal Body and Other Statutory Body reported upon by the PRB, and who subsequently moves to the Civil Service, are eligible for the grant of one incremental credit, for each year of experience acquired in a similar capacity up to a maximum of three. The same provision exists for employees of a Local Authority, Parastatal and Other Statutory Bodies reported upon by the PRB and the Private Secondary Schools, who move from one institution to another. However, the incremental credit is payable on confirmation. We are not bringing any change to the current provision.

Recommendation 1

18.9.5 We recommend that:

- (i) incremental credit for experience up to a maximum of three increments should continue to be granted to eligible officers, on confirmation. These officers should provide evidence of their experience, acquired locally or internationally, under licensed private practice or in a legally recognised institution or firm as per paragraph 18.9.3 (a) to (d);**
- (ii) incremental credit for experience beyond three increments may, subject to the approval of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR), be granted in cases where an organisation encounters difficulty in the recruitment and retention of staff;**
- (iii) the Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of the MCSAR comprising representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Mauritius Qualifications Authority, the Tertiary Education Commission, the Pay Research Bureau and, where necessary, the Ministry/Department/Organisation concerned, should continue to examine applications for incremental credit for experience acquired prior to joining the service and make awards as appropriate; and**
- (iv) officers employed in either the Civil Service or Private Secondary Schools or Local Authorities or Parastatal and other Statutory Bodies, reported upon by the PRB, who move from one institution to another where both are covered by the PRB should be eligible to the grant of one incremental credit, up to a maximum of three, for each year of experience acquired in a similar capacity.**

Incremental Credit for Temporary Service

18.9.6 At present, one incremental credit is granted for each year of temporary service in the same capacity as for the substantive position to all officers, whether on first appointment or not, provided that certain criteria are met.

Recommendation 2

18.9.7 We recommend that officers, whether on first appointment or not should be granted one incremental credit for each completed year of temporary service in the same capacity as for the substantive position, provided that:

- (a) their service is continuous;**
- (b) the adjusted salary is not higher than what the officer would have drawn had he been appointed in a substantive capacity on joining the grade concerned;**
- (c) in case of first appointment, the eligible officers appointed on or after 01 January 2016 do not draw a higher salary than officers appointed in the same capacity before 01 January 2016 and having a similar period of service or more;**
- (d) such incremental credit is payable as from the date the officer is appointed substantively in the post or the date of confirmation, as applicable; and**
- (e) where the temporary service, in the case of a confirmed officer, is less than one year, one incremental credit is payable as from the date the officer completes one year service in the grade or on 01 January, whichever is the earlier.**

Incremental Credit for Actingship/Assignment of Duties

18.9.8 Officers appointed to act/assigned duties in a higher office and subsequently appointed to the same office after a selection exercise and in cases when appointment takes effect as from the date of assumption of duty, are granted one incremental credit for each completed year of actingship/assignment of duties provided that:

- (a) such actingship/assignment of duties is continuous;**
- (b) the adjusted salary is not higher than what the officer would have drawn had he been appointed in a substantive capacity on the date he was appointed to act/assigned higher duties; and**
- (c) such incremental credit is payable as from the date the officer is appointed substantively in the post.**

Recommendation 3

18.9.9 We recommend that one incremental credit for each completed year of actingship of assignment of duties be continued to be paid to officers appointed to act/assigned duties in a higher office and subsequently appointed to the same office after a selection exercise provided that criteria at 18.9.8 (a) to (c) above are satisfied.

Higher Qualification Incentive

- 18.9.10 Incremental credit for additional qualifications has been effective since 01 July 1995. At that time, the philosophy behind the Award of Incremental Credit for additional qualifications was to provide an incentive and to motivate officers to pursue higher studies with a view to increasing their knowledge, skills and overall potential to better perform their duties and upgrade the standards of service. In successive reviews, attempts have been made to further improve the benefits attached to the scheme.
- 18.9.11 In the context of this review exercise, the MCSAR has acknowledged that the scheme has rightly served the purpose for which it was introduced but opines that the scheme needs to be revamped for the following main reasons:
- (i) the academic profile of public officers has considerably changed;
 - (ii) nowadays, there is no longer a dearth of qualified officers in service;
 - (iii) those joining the service are highly qualified/overqualified for the post(s) they are occupying/holding;
 - (iv) according to MCSAR and the MOFED there has been cases whereby senior officers who have obtained lump sum for additional qualifications have had their salaries superseded by junior officers who have acquired the same qualifications afterwards but have benefitted from elongation of salary scales following publication of Reports;
 - (v) the scheme has been considerably diluted since 1995; and
 - (vi) in the absence of a clear timeframe for submission of applications, there were no provision to debar late applications. When one officer who is already eligible for incremental credit under one PRB Report, then applies for same under a subsequent Report, this results in considerable back payment.
- 18.9.12 Against this background, the MCSAR proposed that the grant of incremental credit be replaced by:
- (i) the grant of a non-pensionable lump sum calculated on the last incremental point of the respective salary scale;
 - (ii) the payment of a lump sum limited to directly relevant qualifications only;
 - (iii) the grant of incremental credit for lateral qualification be waived; and
 - (iv) a time frame of 12 months as from the date of conferment of the qualification for submission of applications be recommended in the next Report.

- 18.9.13 The various representatives of the Federations and the Unions have, amongst others, requested that:
- (i) the principle of compensation by way of lump sum for incumbents who have reached their top salary be waived and incremental credit be granted beyond the top salary scale; and
 - (ii) the number of increments granted be reviewed upwards taking into consideration the costs involved as well as the time and efforts put in to earn higher qualifications.
- 18.9.14 The Bureau has examined all the proposals made and held discussions with the relevant stakeholders. During consultation sessions held with the MCSAR as well as the staff side, it has also been vented that the different options available have made the scheme more complex to administer and the grant of incremental credits could not be applied in a fair and equitable manner. Furthermore, certain provisions such as incremental credit for partly relevant qualifications, in spite of well-defined parameters, could not be considered/approved and this has led to strained industrial relations at workplace culminating to disputes before the Tribunal/Courts.
- 18.9.15 Consequent to discussions held with different stakeholders, the Bureau carried out an in-depth analysis of the submissions from different quarters. Taking into consideration the findings of our survey on recruitment and retention, and foreign experience as well as the fact that new recruits are already highly qualified, there is need to review the scheme. With a view to adapting to the existing market trend and to be in line with current practice in foreign jurisdiction in respect of the mode of compensation for higher qualifications that are directly relevant to the employee's occupation, we are, in this Report, reviewing the existing provisions. The new recommendation is expected to be simple and implementable and would address almost all the qualms of our stakeholders.

Recommendation 4

- 18.9.16 We recommend the payment of lump sum rates of Higher Qualification Incentives (HQI) as per table at (v) for qualifications which are directly relevant to the performance of the duties of the grade and are higher than the qualifications specified in the scheme of service for the grade and subject to the following conditions:**
- (i) the additional qualifications are obtained following an examination and are duly recognised by the Mauritius Qualifications Authority or the Tertiary Education Commission;**
 - (ii) where different qualifications are laid down in a particular scheme of service, the highest one would be taken as the basic**

qualification for the purpose of determining eligibility for payment of HQI;

(iii) only officers holding a substantive appointment would be considered for the grant of HQI for additional qualifications;

(iv) officers who have already benefited from the payment of HQI for additional qualifications in one capacity would not be granted HQI anew for the same qualifications in another capacity;

(v) the payment of a lump sum rate of HQI for additional qualifications should be as follows:

Qualification	Amount (Rs)
Doctorate and above including specialist qualifications for medical profession.	30000
Master's Degree	20000
Bachelor Degree	16000

(vi) an officer should not be eligible more than twice in his or her career.

18.9.17 We also recommend that no HQI should be granted for higher qualifications in the event that same is a requirement for promotion/selection in the hierarchy/cadre.

18.9.18 We further recommend that the Standing Committee under the chairmanship of the MCSAR and comprising representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Mauritius Qualifications Authority, the Tertiary Education Commission, the Pay Research Bureau and, where necessary, the Ministry/ Department/Organisation concerned should continue to look into the award of HQI and consider all related cases of disputes. However, straightforward cases should be dealt with at the level of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.

Officers in the Workmen's Class

Recommendation 5

18.9.19 We recommend that notwithstanding the provision at paragraph 18.9.16 above, the Standing Committee may consider granting a HQI of Rs 8000 to employees of the Workmen's Group for a course or training course leading to an additional relevant craft certificate.

Parastatal and Other Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities

Recommendation 6

18.9.20 We recommend that the application of provisions for HQI should be extended to Parastatal and Other Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities.

18.9.21 We also recommend that all cases of dispute in Parastatal and Other Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities, as regards the award of HQI should be submitted through the Parent Ministry for consideration by the Standing Committee.
