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The Same, but Different: Salary Scales, Progression Arrangements and Duties in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) and Universities

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INTRODUCTION

Third level education in Ireland has undergone considerable expansion in the last 20 years. The percentage of 17-19 year olds progressing to third level has increased from 20% in 1980 to 55% in 2004 (O'Connell et al., 2006). The National Skills Strategy aims to achieve a Higher Education entry rate of 72% by 2020 (HEA, 2008).

In absolute terms, the number of registered students has increased from 20,698 in 1965-66 (O'Connell et al., 2006) to 170,305 FTE as of 1st March 2008 (www.hea.ie/en/node/1216). In November 2009, the HEA reported an 8.3% rise in CAO acceptances for Year 1 places (45,582 – 46.5% in the IoTs and 44.5% in the universities) (www.hea.ie/en/node/1317).

There has been a corresponding rise in staff working in higher education, as academics, researchers and administrators. In December 2008[1], 4869 full-time equivalent academic staff were employed in the Institute of Technology (IoT) sector and a further 4576 in the University sector. Many hundreds more work in private colleges and teacher-training colleges.

The third level sector, and the staff working in it, is an important national asset. While the contribution of education to national development has long been recognised in Ireland (notwithstanding our considerably lower than OECD average investment in education, see Chapter 6, Lalor, de Róiste & Devlin, 2007), the third level sector is central in delivering the ambitious goals of the National Development Plan and the National Skills Strategy, both of which aim to progress Ireland towards a knowledge based economy, "where 48 percent of the labour force should have qualifications at NFQ Levels 6 to 10 by 2020" (Expert Group on Future Skills Need, 2007, p. 7).

The Irish third-level sector is quite diverse. Basically, a bilateral model of tertiary education exists, with seven Universities[2] and 14 Institutes of Technology (IoTs) (a number of other institutions do not fall into this simple bilateral categorisation, such as the Royal College of Surgeons, the teacher-training colleges and numerous private colleges). Historically, the Universities provided degree and postgraduate education. Since the late 1960s, Regional Technical Colleges (now Institutes of Technology) were established to provide sub-degree programmes. The focus was on skills-based vocational and technical training in areas such as business, engineering, electronics, science and food technology (but also containing from an early time elements of music, art, languages, media studies, social science and child care). In the last 10 years, this clear division between degree providing universities and sub-degree providing technical colleges has become blurred. Several of the larger Institutes of Technology are offering degree and postgraduate programmes. At the time of writing, Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and

[1] I am grateful to Mark Kirwan in the HEA for providing details of December 2008 Staff Returns.

[2] The acronyms for Ireland's seven Universities are widely recognized. The four NUI Colleges vary in their adoption of the recent 'NUI Location' appellation (for example, adopted by NUI Galway, but not by UCC), so this paper employs the names in common parlance, that is, DCU (Dublin City University); NUIG (National University of Ireland, Galway); NUIM (National University of Ireland, Maynooth); TCD (Trinity College Dublin); UCC (University College Cork); UCD (University College Dublin); and UL (University of Limerick).

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), have formally applied to the Minister for Education and Science for University designation. This is an on-going process, and the associated debates about 'mission drift' and the need for an integrated national vision for the strategic development of Ireland's tertiary education sector are outside the scope of this paper (see Skilbeck 2001, 2003; OECD, 2004). We should note however, if only in passing, that the OECD review of Higher Education recommended the retention of the binary system and the differentiation of mission between the two parts. This view is also expressed in the National Development Plan, which states "Current Government policy endorses this view and the strategy is to allow each of our existing Universities and Institutes of Technology to be supported in developing and enhancing their roles according to their existing strengths as part of a unified higher education system that aspires to world class standards" (p. 204).

In February 2009 the Minister for Education and Science announced a Review of Higher Education in Ireland, under the auspices of his Department and the Higher Education Authority. It is chaired by economist Dr. Colin Hunt, and is charged with providing a blueprint for the development of the sector in the next two decades.

A feature of higher education in recent years has been the growing competitiveness between individual Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs). As well as competing for Leaving Certificate students, IHEs are also competing for international students, for postgraduate students, for research funding and for places in the world university ranking systems (such as the Times Higher Education World University Rankings). And finally, for the purposes of this paper, IHEs are competing for the most highly qualified and most widely published academic staff (notwithstanding the current recruitment embargo). There have been a number of high profile instances of 'poaching' (or recruitment, depending on your perspective) of senior academic staff between Irish Universities. An important variable in attracting the 'brightest and the best' academic staff is the salary and conditions on offer. Thus, it is timely to consider the pay, salary scales[3], teaching loads and duties of lecturers in the IoTs and the Universities. Firstly, the career path of a lecturer is outlined. This is followed by an examination of the salary scales, duties and progression arrangements for Junior or 'entry level' lecturers and 'full' lecturers. The paper concludes by noting similarities and differences and by considering implications for staff, management, and Higher Education policy makers.

The career path of a lecturer

Broadly speaking, there is a common career path trajectory for lecturers, wherever they work. Most will commence on an entry level, early career grade. These are variously known as 'assistant lecturers', 'junior lecturers' or 'below the bar lecturers.' These scales are longer in some colleges than others (for example, eight years in the IoTs and UL, and 12 years in UCC, UCD and NUIM). Not all appointees commence at Point 1 (the bottom) of the salary scale. Various arrangements are in place to allow candidates to be placed further up the scale.

[3] In all instances, salary scales are those that apply for staff who commenced from 1995. All salary scales cited are those with effect from 1/3/2008.

In time, entry level lecturers will seek to progress to the 'full' Lecturer scale. In both the IoT and university sectors, this advancement is awarded on merit, typically achievements in teaching, research/scholarly activity, and contribution to the department, college and 'community' (academic and wider community). The majority of academics will reasonably aspire to complete this progression to 'full' Lecturer relatively early in their professional lives.

A smaller number of vacancies exist at the next level, typically termed 'Senior Lecturer'. Competition to progress to this grade (based on excellence in teaching and research) is typically high, with openings arising only very occasionally in many academic departments. For smaller numbers again, there will be advancement to associate professor, and professor, as well as higher management grades within the University, such as Dean (Head) of Faculty, President (or Provost, in TCD). In the IoT sector, Lecturers may progress to Senior Lecturers (Teaching) (SL1s), SL2 (Head of Department), SL3 (Head of School), Faculty Director, and President.

Permanent and contract lectureships

The trajectory described above assumes the lecturer is in a permanent position. An increasing number of lectureships are being offered on a contract basis. Of course, there shall always be a requirement for contract lecturers to cover maternity leave, sabbaticals, research projects, job-sharing and so on. However, there is concern in the sector that institutions are favouring contract positions because of the flexibility they offer to management. Some speculate whether we are moving, by stealth, to a US style of higher education where permanent (tenured) positions are not the norm until much later in one's academic career (with the result of considerable insecurity and pressure on early career grade lecturers). Of course, others see this as a positive development that will increase the research and publications output of junior academic staff. The table below shows the nature of academic posts advertised in Ireland during selected weeks of April and May 2008 (the peak academic advertising 'season').

Date	College	Permanent	Contract	'Multiannual'	'As appropriate'
28th March 2008	NUIM	1	1		
	UL			2	
	TCD	5	6		
	UCD	7			
4th April 2008	UCC	1	2		
	NUIG	3			
11th April 2008	UCD	1	2		
18th April 2008	IT Tallaght	2	1		
	UL		3		
	TCD	8			
	GMIT	6.5			
	LIT				9
	DKIT		1		4
	NUIG	6	2		
25th April 2008	NUIM	9	6		
	UCC	10	2		
	DCU	1	1		
	UL		1	1	
	UCD	3	4		

2nd May 2008	UL		5	1	
	NUIG	3			
	DIT	4	5		
Total		70.5	42	4	13

Table 1: Lecturer vacancies on selected dates (excluding research posts, Professorships, Senior Lecturers, Post-doctoral posts, 'Special Lecturer', pro-rata lecturers, job-sharing posts)

As we can see, 70.5 permanent positions and 42 contract lecturing positions were advertised in this period. A further 17 were somewhat ambiguously advertised as 'multiannual' or 'as appropriate'[4].

Some exclusions

It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an exhaustive comparison of all academic grades across all IHEs in Ireland. Instead, the focus shall be on those grades that perform the vast bulk of day to day work with students in the lecture halls, laboratories and studios; that is, Assistant/Junior Lecturers and Lecturers.

Focussing on the main career grades in the IoT sector and the seven Universities allows us to examine the overwhelming majority of lecturers working in Ireland today. But not all. Thus, we shall not examine salary scales and duties of lecturers in the private colleges, such as Dublin Business School, Portobello College, Griffith College, the National College of Ireland and Hibernia College. Also, some hundreds of academic staff in smaller colleges/academic institutions shall be excluded from this analysis, such as Mary Immaculate College, St. Patrick's College Drumcondra, NCAD, the Royal Irish Academy and St Angela's College, Sligo.

In addition, there are 2626 full-time and part-time researchers in the seven Universities. They are employed on a range of different contracts, although there is a move towards a common Irish University Association salary scale for researchers. This group, too, lie outside the focus of this paper.

Controversial 'exceptional' salaries paid in some universities to attract/retain 'academic stars' are also excluded from this analysis.

'ENTRY LEVEL' LECTURERS

With regard to 'entry level' lecturers, we shall examine salary scales, job description and duties, procedures for progressing to 'full' lecturer and the mechanisms for advanced placement on the scale (or, criteria for determining starting salary).

Salary scales for 'entry level' lecturers

Early career lecturers are variously termed Assistant Lecturers (IoTs, UCD, NUIM), Junior Lecturers (UL) and Lecturer 'below the bar' (DCU, NUIG, UCC, TCD[5]). The various salary scales in operation on 1/3/2008 are shown below:

[4] At the time of writing (November 2009), an embargo on recruitment in Higher Education is in place, meaning only a very small number of posts (sanctioned by the HEA) are being advertised.

[5] TCD operates a continuous 'Lecturer' scale. However, as there is a 'Merit Bar' at the 12th point there is, in effect, an entry grade lecturer and progression to 'full' lecturer system in operation.

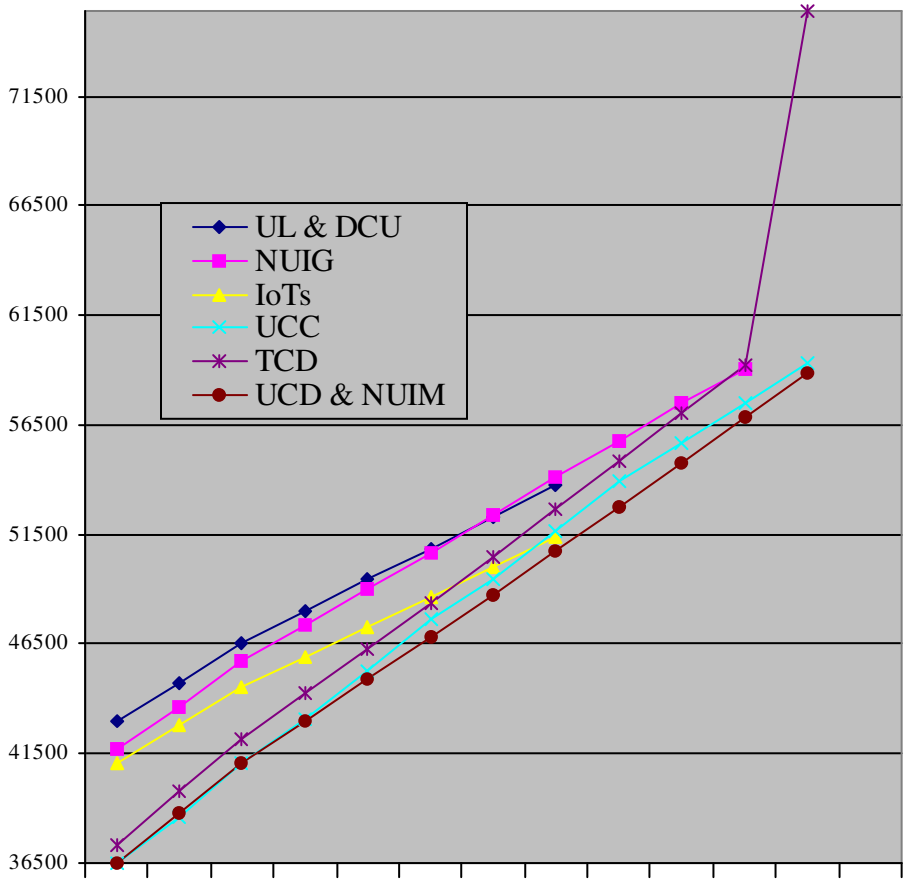

Figure 1: Entry level (assistant/junior) lecturer salary scales (€), with effect from 1/3/2008

UL & DCU	42978	44748	46553	47986	49463	50882	52327	53761				
NUIG	41667	43665	45709	47349	48984	50670	52379	54083	55792	57525	59098	
IoTs	41097	42789	44519	45886	47270	48652	50035	51404				
UCC	36500	38616	41037	43120	45308	47614	49452	51656	53959	55707	57497	59293
TCD	37343	39749	42179	44245	46303	48375	50502	52693	54833	57063	59223	75365
UCD & NUIM	36499	38740	41036	42986	44909	46847	48780	50783	52798	54793	56898	58909

Table 2: Entry level (assistant/junior) lecturer salary increments (€), with effect from 1/3/2008

There are a number of features of note in these salary scales. Firstly, there is considerable variation in starting points, from a low of €36500 in UCD & NUIM (who have identical salary scales) and UCC, to a high of €42978 in UL. This difference of €6478 in starting salary must make UL considerably more attractive than other Universities for someone about to commence his/her lecturing career. In percentage terms, the starting point at UCC is only 85% of the starting point at UL (however, we shall see later that very few new appointees at UCC begin at the bottom of the scale).

A second point worth noting is the low ceiling of the IoT scale and the UL/DCU scale. After an eight-point scale, their 'entry grade' scales stop at, respectively, €51404 and €53761. In comparison, NUIG and UCD/NUIM have longer (11 or 12

point) 'entry level' salary scales that progress to €59100 (approximately, there is slight variation between them).

A third feature of note is the very different arrangement that is in place in TCD. The scale of the 'Lecturer' grade in TCD is broadly in line with the 'Junior' or 'Assistant' grades in other colleges, with the exception of the last point of the scale before the TCD 'merit bar', which at €75365 is more than €15000 higher than the top points of entry level scales anywhere else.

In summary, we can say there are three categories of Junior Lecturer salary scales in operation:

- the lower scales of TCD, UCD/NUIM and UCC, which share only very small differences between the four institutions (with the exception of the dramatic rise at the end of the scale for lecturers in TCD)
- the higher salary scales of UL/DCU and NUIG
- thirdly, and mid-way between these two, is the IoT salary scale, which is characterized by a high starting point and a comparatively low ceiling or top-point, which it shares with UL and DCU.

Let us consider a fictitious young lecturer with maximum mobility[6]. She would be attracted to commence her career in UL because of its high starting salary. After seven years there, as she approaches the top of the scale, she should move to TCD where she will receive, at the increment just below the 'merit bar', €20000 more per annum than her former Junior Lecturer colleagues in Limerick (before they have successfully progressed to the 'full' Lecturer grade).

Of course, there are many factors other than salary which need to be considered by an aspiring lecturer. Below, we examine the job descriptions and duties in various IHEs.

Job description and duties for Assistant/Junior lecturers

At Ireland's largest University, UCD, an assistant lecturer's duties are "as directed by the Head of School." The number of contact teaching hours is not specified:

> "As part of the research duties, you are required to engage in research, scholarship and other creative and innovative activity as appropriate to your discipline. You are required to disseminate your research in academic publications, other outlets as appropriate and to participate in postgraduate supervision. You are encouraged to engage in initiatives to seek research funding, as appropriate. You are also encouraged to promote and engage in the development of research across disciplines as well as in your area of research.
>
> As part of your normal teaching duties you are obliged to give instruction and supervision, as directed by the Head of School, to students of the University in courses and programmes organised by your School or to which the School

[6] That is, a lecturer with excellent qualifications and a strong publications/teaching profile who, for the sake of argument, is able to choose, at will, the college in which she shall work (of course, in reality, permanent academic vacancies are rare and can be heavily over-subscribed by highly qualified candidates).

> contributes as a service to another School or College. Such duties include curriculum and course design, preparation and delivery of lectures, tutorials and general examination and other assessment duties. You are also expected to be available to students for academic counselling and advice. In some disciplines, academic activities may also include laboratory, workshop or clinical instruction, supervision of fieldwork, site visits and other off-campus activities" (personal communication with UCD HR office).

In NUIG, duties for 'below the bar' lecturers require that they "shall undertake such teaching, examining, research and other duties as may be required by Údarás na hOllscoile, on the recommendation of the Faculty/Faculties concerned given with the approval of the Academic Council" (NUIG, 2007). As in UCD, there is no stated number of contact hours a lecturer is required to teach per week/year. The same is true of UCC, where a range of teaching and research duties are detailed, followed by this 'catch all':

> "The above listing is not exclusive or exhaustive and the post holder may be required to undertake any such duties as may reasonably be expected. All staff are required to be flexible and cooperative and professional within the needs of the post and Department/School, College and University"

In UL, the employment contract states

> "you will be required to conform to such hours of work as are necessary to carry out your duties or as may be reasonably required from time to time by the University of Limerick. Your hours of work will be determined in accordance with requirements of your college/division or department."

By contrast, the DIT Contract of Employment for Assistant Lecturers specifies duties in much greater detail. The contract specifies teaching, assessment, course development, research, committee work, maintenance of records, student recruitment, engagement with academic quality assurance and supervision of tutors/demonstrators. Furthermore, weekly contact hours are explicitly stated:

> "There will be a norm of 18 class contact hours per week, which may be varied by Institute management from 16 to 20 following consultation with the Assistant Lecturer … (These arrangements are subject to collective agreements arrived at from time to time and authorised by the Minister for Education and Science" (DIT, no date a).

The DIT contract is very similar to that offered in all the other IoTs. In the Universities, on the other hand, the approach towards weekly teaching contact hours is much more loose and is based on 'custom and practice' or tradition. Such norms vary from department to department and from University to University. They are not published in any public form. Anecdotally, it would appear that a teaching load of 6-8 hours per week is typical. For example, in order to apply to progress across the Merit Bar at UCC, a lecturer should have "a teaching contribution that normally includes a minimum of 150 hours … subject to departmental and disciplinary norms, and associated examining responsibilities" (UCC, 2008, p. 3). Assuming a 24 week teaching year, this suggests 6.25 hours per week of teaching.

If we again imagine a fictitious young lecturer with her pick of institutions to work in, it would appear to be most advantageous to commence her lecturing career with NUIG. She might consider the IoT sector because of its relatively higher starting salary, but she is wary of being required to lecture 18 hours a week, when she may do about half this in NUIG, allowing her to concentrate on her research and publications output. NUIG's starting salary is not the absolute highest (this accolade belongs to UL & DCU), but the scale continues significantly beyond that of UL and DCU. She would also be attracted to the very high salary of €75365 which she would progress to in TCD, before having to apply to cross the 'merit bar'.

Procedures for progressing to the 'full' lecturer scale

The progression arrangements from Assistant/Junior lecturer to 'full' lecturer are similar throughout all 21 IHEs on which we are focussed.

For example, in UCC staff who have three year's service 'below the bar' may apply for progression across the 'Merit Bar'. Applicants are assessed on (i) Teaching and Examining, (ii) Research and Scholarship and (iii) Contribution to Department, University and Community. In each category, applicants are categorised as 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent.'

Similarly, in TCD, progression is by application across the 'merit bar' and applicants are assessed according to achievements in research, teaching, and service to college (for example, administrative duties, management role such as Head of Department) and service to the discipline or community (for example, external examining, editing journals, refereeing manuscripts) (TCD, 2007).

In NUIG, lecturers below the bar may apply for progression after five years, or after two years at the top of their salary scale. The applicant is required to show excellence in two of the standard three areas: teaching and examining (for example, course development, postgraduate research supervision, accessibility, attendance at teaching and learning seminars); research and scholarly standing (for example, publications, presentations at conferences, acquisition of grant funding); contribution to department, university, community (for example, administrative duties, committee work, organisation of seminars, conferences, contribution to adult education).

The progression arrangements at DIT depend on whether the applicant is in possession of a PhD or not. Those "with a PhD and relevant research experience may be considered for progression after three years continuous service." For those without a PhD,

> "Assistant Lecturers will progress to the grade of Lecturer on completion of one years' service after having reached the maximum of the Assistant Lecturer scale subject to a minimum of five years continuous service in the grade subject to ability, experience, academic qualifications, scholarship and demonstrated performance. Possession of an appropriate defined post graduate qualification or equivalent shall normally be considered an essential requirement" (DIT, no date a).

It is interesting to note that 'contribution to the wider community' is a feature of progression criteria in almost all Universities. However, this 'contribution' is not explicitly defined. It is interesting to ponder why a person's charitable, social or sporting activities outside the work place (in the broader 'community') are relevant to promotion in the academic work place.

Mechanism for advanced placement on the scale

The conditions for determining starting salary in the IoTs are outlined in a Department of Education and Science Circular Letter, No. IT 01/05. In this instruction from the DoES, the "expectation is that appointees will be admitted to the relevant salary scale at the minimum point of the scale" (Department of Education and Science, 2005). However, having set this parsimonious tone, the letter then proceeds to empower IoTs to appoint up to the 6th point of the Assistant Lecturer scale "where the appointee has relevant experience over and above the minimum required for appointment".

Given the vagueness of these guidelines, there can be little doubt that there is considerable variation in how each of the 14 IoTs interprets this and, consequently, there must be inconsistency in how starting salaries are determined.

UCC guidelines for starting salaries are detailed in *Salary Administration – Academic* (UCC, no date). New appointees are placed on a point of the scale that is cognisant of their educational background and relevant experience. The document states that, ordinarily, those with a Masters degree or equivalent, are placed on the fourth point of the Lecturer "below the bar" scale. An additional increment is awarded to those who hold a PhD degree. We saw in Figure 1 that UCC (along with UCD and NUIM) has the lowest starting salary (€36500) in the Higher Education sector. However, on the basis that an applicant is extremely unlikely to be appointed to an academic position without a Masters or a PhD degree, one must assume that the starting point, in reality, for the majority of new Lecturers 'below the bar' in UCC will be €43120.

In NUIG, candidates with a PhD are appointed to the 5th point of the Lecturer 'below the bar' scale (€48984). Credit is also given for prior experience. For example, a new appointee will be given credit for "two-thirds of actual years spent in a relevant post of lower than Lecturer below the bar status or in fulltime relevant professional employment deemed to be of lower than Lecturer below the bar status" (NUIG, 2005).

In UCD, the 'Scanlon formula' is used to determine on what point of the scale a new appointee should be placed. This formula is based on the year the person first graduated.

So, IHEs have considerable scope for appointing Junior/Assistant Lecturers above the bottom of the salary scale.

LECTURERS

In the second part of this paper, we shall examine the salary scales and duties of 'full' Lecturers, who are variously known as 'Lecturer' (IoTs, NUIM), 'Lecturer above the bar' (DCU, NUIG, UCC, TCD) and 'College Lecturer' (UCD).

Salary scales

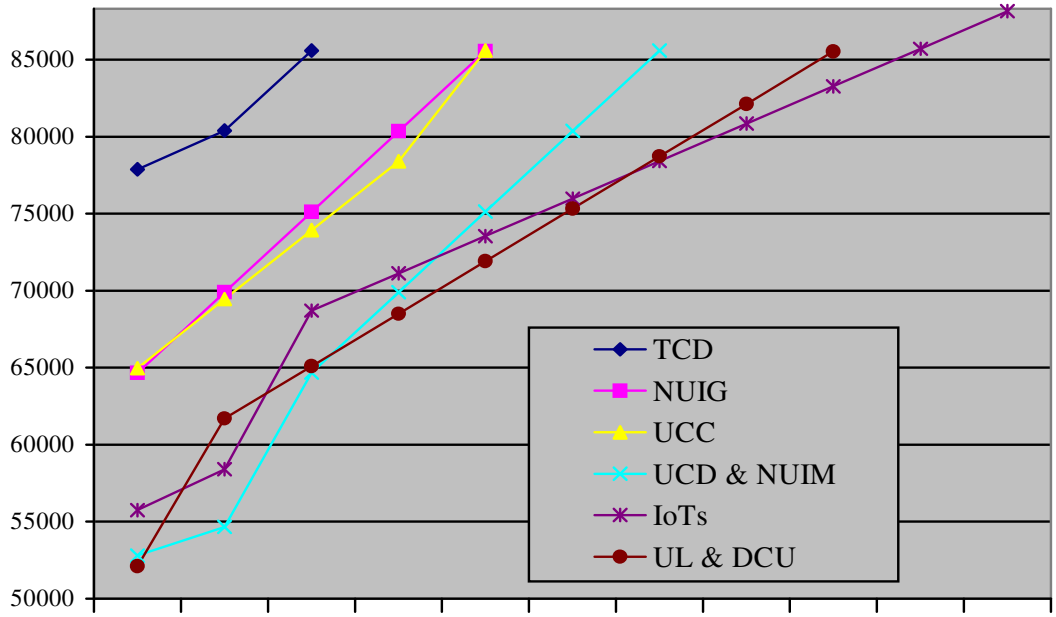

Figure 2: 'Lecturer' salary scales (with effect from 1/3/2008)

TCD	77875	80385	85599								
NUIG	64663	69897	75126	80357	85562						
UCC	64974	69450	73934	78400	85592						
UCD & NUIM	52797	54664	64671	69907	75138	80371	85585				
IoTs	55749	58,401	68714	71131	73551	75982	78426	80852	83276	85712	88142
UL & DCU	52112	61696	65098	68496	71912	75327	78730	82128	85531		

Table 3: Lecturer salary increments, with effect from 1/3/2008

As we can see in Figure 2, there is even greater diversity in Lecturer salary scales, than there is in Assistant/Junior lecturer salary scales. Again, a number of features are worth noting.

Firstly, the starting points of the scales in the IoTs, UL, DCU, UCD and NUIM are significantly below that of TCD (with NUIG and UCC occupying the middle ground). The greatest variation is the difference of €21415 between €52112 in UL & DCU and €73527 in TCD. This variation is particularly noteworthy given the common criteria used by all IHEs (except UCD) for progression to the 'full' lecturer grade. For instance, an 'entry grade' lecturer in, say, UL and TCD, both must demonstrate excellence in teaching, research and contribution to the community, in order to progress to the 'full' lecturer grade. However, having done so, the UL lecturer receives a starting salary of €52112, compared to €73527 in TCD.

Also of note is the near uniformity of the end point of Lecturer's salary scales. All of the Universities have a common top of the scale value of approximately €85600. The top of the scale in the IoT sector is slightly higher than this, at €88142.

The third point of note is the large variation in the number of increments on the scale: only three in TCD, and 11 in the IoT sector. What does this mean for the individual lecturer? Table 4 below shows the top increment, and the number of years it takes to get there, for a Lecturer, assuming s/he has progressed though each increment on the 'below the bar' and the 'above the bar' scales in his/her IHE.

	'Entry level' salary scale	Lecturer salary scale	No. of years required to attain top of Lecturer scale (assuming timely progression)	Top of Lecturer scale
NUIG	11 points	5 points	16 years	€85562
TCD	12 points	4 points	16 years	€85599
UCC	12 points	5 points	17 years	€85592
UL & DCU	8 points	9 points	17 years	€85531
UCD & NUIM	12 points	7 points	19 years	€85585
IoTs	8 points	11 points	19 years	€88142

Table 4: Length of salary scales and top points for Lecturers

When looked at in this way, NUIG lecturers have the quickest 'route to the top', taking 16 years to get to €85562. By contrast, lecturers in UCD and NUIM take 19 years to get to the same level.

Duties

There is a notable difference in the duties of lecturers between the University and IoT sector. In the University sector, duties are typically described "as per the need of the University and direction of the Head of School" or similar. In NUIG, for example, lecturers have identical duties to lecturers 'below the bar'. Lecturers above the bar "shall undertake such teaching, examining, research and other duties as may be required by Údarás na hOllscoile, on the recommendation of the Faculty/Faculties concerned" (NUIG, 2007). There is no stated number of contact hours.

In contrast, duties are comprehensively listed in the IoT sector and weekly contact lecturing hours explicitly stated. At DIT, the duties of a Lecturer are almost identical to those of an Assistant Lecturer (the contractual duties for the former further include 'course coordination' and 'promoting scholarship') (DIT, no date b). Contact hours are explicitly stated in the contract:

> "There will be a norm of 16 class contact hours per week, which may be varied by Institute management from 14 to 18 following consultation with the Lecturer … (These arrangements are subject to collective agreements arrived at from time to time and authorised by the Minister for Education and Science" (DIT, no date b).

To progress to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, or other senior grades, Lecturers must again compete on the basis of their achievements in teaching, research and contribution to the community. As with other grades, there are differences in

procedures and salary scales from IHE to IHE. However, conditions at these senior levels are outside the scope of this paper.

Discussion

Ireland's academic staff are an important national resource. Their salaries and duties should be such as to attract the 'brightest and the best' to educate and train the next generation of skilled and highly educated citizens and workers. Some reflections on the three foci of this paper (salaries; duties; progression arrangements) are presented below.

Salaries

There is considerable variation in salary scales across the IHE sector in Ireland. At Junior/Assistant Lecturer level, the variation is not due to differences in duties, which are comparable across the sector. Nor do the variations appear to have any particular rationale. For example, UL/DCU share a common salary scale, which is understandable given their common origins as NIHEs. However, only two of the four NUI Colleges share salary scales (UCD and NUIM). UCC's is very similar, but not identical. By contrast, the fourth NUI College (Galway) has a significantly higher salary scale in place.

At Lecturer level, there is even greater variation. Starting points on the scale range from €52112 in UL & DCU to €77875 in TCD. The number of increments varies considerably (three in TCD; five in NUIC & UCC; seven in UCD & NUIN; nine in UL & DCU; and 11 in the IoTs). The end point is almost identical in the seven universities (approximately €85500), but slightly higher (€88124) in the IoTs.

Should there be greater similarity in lecturers' salary scales? On the one hand, it could be argued that people with similar qualifications that do similar jobs throughout the country (and who are all ultimately paid for out of the public purse) should be on similar, if not identical, salaries. On the other hand, it could be argued that salaries should vary as a function of performance. For example, among the seven Universities and DIT, some are placed considerably higher than others in the THES[7] annual ranking of international performance[8]. Should lecturers in TCD, as the highest-ranking Irish University, be rewarded by having considerably higher salary scales than lecturers in IHEs lower down the ranking? Indeed, to extend the argument, perhaps salary scales should be a function of performance of individual departments as, of course, not every department at TCD (or anywhere else) will be performing at equally high levels.

Commenting on the increasing emphasis on research activity, and associated publications in universities internationally, Hazelkorn (2008) suggests differing categories of academic staff are emerging:

[7] The methodological and conceptual limitations of this ranking system are acknowledged, but it serves to make the general argument.
[8] In October 2009, the THES World rankings placed Irish IHEs as follows: 43rd in the world (TCD), 89th (UCD), 207th (UCC), 243rd (NUIG), 279th (DCU), 326th (DIT), 400-500 (NUIM & UL).

> "Escalating research intensity is rapidly demarcating faculty into categories of research-active and research-inactive, employed on a wide array of contracts - personally negotiated in some circumstances - with different categories of faculty performing different functions. This enhanced division of labour is heightening tension between faculty with respect to salary and promotion, benefit-in-kind including timetabling preferences, resources, and other opportunities. In place of the traditional collegial environment where all faculty perceived themselves as peer-equals, the new competitive and meritocratic environment encourages stratification along elite and reputation lines, widening gaps between faculty and institutions. This is especially true for younger faculty who are committed to advancing their career and less to traditional collegial or vocational values – with which they are also less likely to be acquainted" (p. 157).

In such a climate, the common salary scales of old may become more diverse and fragmented. In his Inaugural Erasmus Lecture in October 2008, Peter Sutherland touched on numerous aspects of tertiary education in Ireland, including salaries. He called for institutions to have greater flexibility in fixing 'individual rewards':

> If salaries are automatically incremented, independently of performance and salaries are rigidly kept within standard scales, then we may have problems in recruiting and retaining the academic stars who contribute to building excellence in our institutions" (Sutherland, 2008, p.10).

This is an interesting suggestion, but it should be pointed out that Irish lecturers' salaries compare very favourably with our closest neighbours. For instance, in October 2008, the Lecturer's salary scale in the University of Edinburgh was £34793-41545 (compared to, approximately, €55,000 – 85,000 paid to lecturers in Irish IHEs). In the UK, following negotiations between the UCEA (Universities and Colleges Employers' Association) and Trade Unions, a new nationally agreed 51 Point Pay Scale (pay spine) across academic grades was introduced in August 2007.

Section 25 (4) of the [Irish] Universities Act (1997) empowers the Minister for Education to approve salaries paid to universities employees. It is not clear why there is such variation across the sector; whether it is strategic or the product of local arrangements made from time to time.

Duties

The lecturing load for early-career assistant lecturers in IoTs is considerably greater than for their university counterparts. This is inequitable, given the contractual requirement that new entrants to the IoT sector, like their university counterparts, should be research active, published, and at, or close to, completing a PhD. The difference in teaching loads would be justifiable if the two sectors had explicitly different missions; 'teaching and research' vs. 'teaching-only'. It would also be more understandable if IoT lecturers were recruited, and contracted, to a primarily teaching function. Whereas this may have been the case in the past, 'research' is now explicitly stated in Assistant Lecturers' contracts in the IoT sector. In addition to teaching, assessment, course development and other duties, he/she is required to

engage in "research, consultancy and development work as appropriate".[9] What's more, they are being recruited into a sector with explicit research expansion agendas and associated strategic plans. The heavy teaching load is the 'elephant in the room' of the IoT sector's research expansion plans.

Will Ireland's IHEs evolve towards those primarily with a 'teaching mission' and those with a 'research mission'? Can it be argued that this is already the current situation; that lecturers in the IoTs have a heavier teaching load as this is their primary 'mission'? Is it the case that university lecturers are more 'culturally expected' to be research active? In a competitive work place, how can a lecturer in an IoT compete with her counterpart in a University in terms of research output, when the former has, perhaps, double the teaching load of the latter?

The higher teaching loads in IoTs relative to Universities is reflected in IHEs throughout Europe (Hazelkorn, 2008), and reflects the traditional central teaching (rather than research) mission. Not surprisingly, the Forfás (2005) report on research in higher education found that 10% of staff time is spent on research in the IoT sector, compared to 42% in the Universities.

Interestingly, the 'McCarthy Report' notes the lack of specific teaching hours in the university sector. Having considered potential savings in the IoT sector, the report states:

> The position in the university sector is also problematic. The Group understands that the current academic contract at the universities makes no specific provision in relation to teaching hours. This must be addressed in the interests of improving efficiencies in the universities and improving the service to students.

It recommends "agreement on increased teaching hours for non-research active staff and minimum teaching commitment for senior academic staff (Department of Finance, 2009, Vol.2, p. 65). The group envisions a reduction of 10% of staff numbers across the sector in the medium term.

Differing staff-student ratios should also be noted. These are a primary determinant of 'unit costing', the system used by the HEA to calculate the cost of running courses and the allocation of funding. Whilst university lecturers may, on average, have lower lecturing loads, they typically have considerably larger groups of students as a result of the type of teaching they do. Consequently, the staff-student ratios in the universities are considerably higher than in the IoTs. Having said that, the applied, vocational nature of programmes in the IoTs requires smaller cohorts of students. Thus, for example, while UCC may deliver first year economics lectures to 400 students this approach is not desirable when delivering, say, child protection lectures to social care students, or sculpture to fine art students.

Progression arrangements

[9] Institutes of Technology Contract of Employment for Assistant Lecturers, http://www.tui.ie/_fileupload/Image/PWT%20Asst%20Lecturer%20IOT%20CONTRACT.doc

Promotions should reward those who are teaching, researching and contributing to the 'college community' at a high level. All IHEs in Ireland operate a system whereby junior/assistant lecturers must illustrate their competence and achievements in order to be awarded promotion or progression 'across the bar.'

Conclusion

The Irish Higher Education sector is in a state of flux. It is unclear whether the existing binary structure will continue, or whether it is an anachronism that has passed its 'sell-by' date. Stakeholders have diametrically opposed views as to how the sector should develop (as is evident from the submissions made to the Review of Higher Education group in June 2009, see www.hea.ie/strategy-for-higher-education).

There is considerable variation in salaries and duties *throughout* the Higher Education sector overall (and also *within* the University sector) and no compelling logic to explain these differences. There is merit to considering the efficiencies and transparencies gained by the introduction of a common pay spine in UK IHE's in 2007.

The teaching contact time required of lecturers in the IoT sector is considerably higher than that of colleagues in the university sector, regardless of levels of research/scholarly activity. Equally, low levels of contact hours are required of university lecturers, regardless of individuals' levels of research/scholarly activity. Notwithstanding this, each of the Universities and many of the larger IoTs have ambitious research agendas and aspirations.

It is not necessary that each and every anomaly and inconsistency be 'tidied up' in Ireland's HE sector. However, the diversity of salaries and duties in the sector is surely partly a product of the lack of a clear overall vision of what we expect of our IHEs. No doubt the Minister for Education and Science is expecting the *Review of Higher Education in Ireland* group to provide some pointers for the next decade.

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