Reasons for Pay Dates at Rhodes University

Rhodes University does not pay the staff of the institution on the same day each month but has a long-standing practice of usually paying on the last Friday of the month except when the last Friday is the last day of the month and in the months of December and January. This practice of staggering the pay dates has been as a result of:

* Paying staff before the Christmas shutdown period and allowing some time for staff to query any pay anomalies. The alternative is that staff with pay queries would need to wait until January when the institution opens again. This is not seen as viable;
* Due to the early December pay date and that expenses over Christmas are likely to be higher for families, the pay date in January is brought forward, usually to have a 4 week pay interval (the duration between the pay date in one month and the pay date in another month) between the December and January salary. This is on the basis that staff often find it difficult to have a 5 week pay interval at this time of year e.g. if salaries are paid 15/12 and then only again on 30/01, this would be a period in excess of 6 weeks; and
* In addition, based on a request from staff, payment of salaries in June takes into account the period of the National Arts Festival and that this is a very busy time in town. In addition, many staff e.g. Food Services and Housekeeping Staff are very involved in the National Arts Festival and they are able to attend to their personal matters before the busy-ness of the Festival.

The practice of paying on Friday allows for many areas to schedule their working hours in order to provide a Friday afternoon off for staff to do shopping and pay debts/accounts. Examples of where this occurs are Facilities Servicing and Central Cleaning Services. In addition, one shift of Food Services staff is also off duty over a week-end. There are exceptions to paying on Friday when the Friday is a public holiday. For example, Human Rights Day in March 2014 fell on a Friday and payment was made on the Thursday.

Some of the concerns related to differing pay dates include (*the institutional response is in italics*):

* One never knows when you are going to be paid.

*Once the pay dates are determined for the next year (this is always done in advance) by the Salaries Office, they are put on the Salaries website:* [*http://www.ru.ac.za/finance/salarydates/*](http://www.ru.ac.za/finance/salarydates/) *with a link to the HR website:* [*http://www.ru.ac.za/humanresources/policies/information/salarydates/*](http://www.ru.ac.za/humanresources/policies/information/salarydates/)*. There is also top-list communication about these dates.*

* One cannot have stop-orders.

*Stop-orders can be set for the last day of the month on the basis that Rhodes will always pay on the last Friday of the month except when the last day of the month is a Friday.*

* One cannot budget.

*Irrespective of when one is paid, a budget can be set with the staff member knowing what money needs to be paid to whom. Where such payment is automatic from a bank-account, this budget can also include this information.*

* There are sometimes 5 weeks between pay dates which is very difficult for staff.

*Even if payment of salaries was on the same date each month, there would still be periods in excess of 4 weeks as the average month has 4.333 weeks per month. See the table below for an illustration.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Pay date* | *Pay date* | *Interval* |
| *28th of July* | *28th of August* | *32 days, 4.57 week, 4 weeks, 4 days* |
| *28th of October* | *28th of November* | *31 days, 4.4 weeks, 4 weeks, 3 days* |

*The use of 5 weeks, merely means that in some weeks, staff wait a few days more e.g. 3 or 4 days to be paid.*

**Is this an alternative?** Yes, Rhodes could pay on the same day each month but this would mean staff may be paid on a week-end, after a public holiday and late in December and January. The current system for all the reasons above is considered more advantageous for staff. **Last updated: 1/09/2014**