Fair Wages, Fair Remuneration and Living Wage Policy

1. Purpose

To establish a transparent process for statutory minimum-wage compliance, fair remuneration and assessment of a local living wage benchmark across the University's workforce.

2. Scope

This policy applies to teaching and non-teaching employees, including regular, probationary, temporary, part-time, fixed-term and contractual employees. For outsourced workers, the University shall monitor the contractor's compliance through contract conditions and verification mechanisms, without misrepresenting the contractor's employment relationship.

3. Definitions

- **Statutory minimum wage:** The minimum rate of wages prescribed by the competent government for the applicable employment, category, skill level, zone and period under the law in force.
- **Fair remuneration:** Pay determined through transparent and consistently applied job-related criteria, including designation, responsibilities, qualifications, skills, experience, performance and approved institutional salary arrangements.
- **Living wage benchmark:** A documented estimate of the remuneration required to meet reasonable essential living costs in the relevant locality, using a transparent methodology and current data. It is an institutional assessment benchmark and is not automatically the same as a statutory minimum wage.
- **Institution-approved salary structure:** The salary framework approved by VISTAS for its teaching and non-teaching employees. VISTAS currently follows its institution-approved salary structure; this policy does not state that the University adopts UGC 7th Pay Commission scales.

4. Policy Statement

VISTAS is committed to statutory wage compliance, fair remuneration and the progressive promotion of living wages. The University follows an institution-approved salary structure for teaching and non-teaching employees. Remuneration shall be determined in accordance with approved institutional norms, appointment terms, job-related criteria and applicable law. The University shall not represent its institutional salary structure as a UGC pay-scale structure unless formally adopted and applicable to the relevant post.

5. Policy Principles and Commitments

- Every employee shall receive remuneration in accordance with the applicable appointment terms and statutory requirements.
- VISTAS shall maintain documented salary structures and salary-fixation procedures for teaching and non-teaching employees.
- Pay decisions shall be based on relevant and documented factors such as role, responsibilities, qualifications, experience, skills and performance.

- The University shall periodically verify that remuneration for employees covered by minimum-wage legislation is not below the applicable statutory rate.
- Human Resources and Finance shall develop a documented local Living Wage Benchmark using reasonable essential household expenditure, such as food, housing, utilities, healthcare, education, transport and clothing.
- The benchmark methodology shall state the locality, reference period, household assumptions, number of earners assumed, data sources, calculation method and limitations. A poverty-line figure shall not be treated as a living-wage figure without a reasoned and documented methodology.
- The University shall compare relevant remuneration categories with the benchmark and identify any gaps. Any corrective action shall be considered by the Competent Authority in light of applicable law, institutional resources and an approved implementation plan.
- Contractors shall be required to comply with applicable wage and statutory benefit obligations for workers deployed at the University. VISTAS shall monitor compliance through Policy 05.
- Individual salary information shall be treated as confidential. Reports for institutional review shall use aggregate or appropriately anonymised information.

6. Implementation Procedure

1. Human Resources shall maintain an updated list of employee categories, designations, employment types and the applicable institutional salary arrangements.
2. Finance and Human Resources shall identify the current statutory minimum-wage notifications relevant to covered categories and record the source, effective date, skill classification and applicable zone.
3. Human Resources shall verify salary fixation and appointment terms against the approved institutional salary structure. Finance shall validate payroll data and payments.
4. At least annually, Human Resources and Finance shall prepare or update the Living Wage Benchmark using documented local cost data and a consistent calculation method.
5. The University shall compare the lowest relevant remuneration in each appropriate employee category with the statutory wage floor and the Living Wage Benchmark. Differences between gross pay, basic pay, allowances and legally countable wage components shall be treated in accordance with applicable law.
6. Any statutory shortfall shall be escalated immediately for correction in accordance with law. Other gaps against the institutional living-wage benchmark shall be placed before the Competent Authority with options, cost implications and a proposed timeline.
7. Finance and Human Resources shall prepare an annual Wage Compliance and Fair Remuneration Statement for review by the Competent Authority.
8. Outsourced worker compliance shall be reviewed under Policy 05 and reflected separately in the annual statement.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Human Resources	Maintain employee categories, approved salary structures, appointment and pay-fixation records; coordinate annual review.
Finance Office	Validate payroll, wage calculations, statutory payments and budget implications.
Administration / Contract Managers	Obtain and review contractor wage and statutory compliance documents under Policy 05.
Heads of Schools / Departments	Provide accurate role, responsibility and employment information.
Competent Authority	Review the annual statement and decide on corrective measures and resource allocation.

8. Records and Supporting Evidence

- Approved institutional salary structures for teaching and non-teaching employees
- Appointment orders and salary-fixation / revision records
- Applicable minimum-wage notifications and a dated applicability register
- Documented Living Wage Benchmark, including data sources and calculation method
- Annual Wage Compliance and Fair Remuneration Statement
- Corrective-action proposals, approvals and implementation records
- Anonymised contractor compliance summary, cross-referenced to Policy 05

9. Review and Amendment

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every three years, or earlier if applicable law, University structures, identified risks or implementation reviews require amendment. The review date and approved amendments shall be recorded.

Created / Revised on: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Signature / Seal: _____