

Anomalies FAQ

What is the Anomalies Fund?

[Article 26](#) of the UMFA Collective Agreement establishes a fund of \$100,000 per academic year to address anomalies in the base salaries of UMFA Members. It is administered by a joint committee composed of two appointees by UMFA, two appointees by the UM administration, and a mutually appointed Chair. The Anomalies Fund is designed to correct salary inequities by awarding an increase to a Member's base salary.

Who is eligible to apply?

The joint Committee considers applications from individual UMFA Members as well as applications sent on behalf of Members by their department Head or Dean/Director. The date of eligibility is established by the joint committee, and this information is included in the information sent to UMFA Members. In recent rounds, Members as of March 31 prior to the academic year under consideration were considered eligible (e.g. for the 2019-2020 academic year, UMFA Members as of March 31, 2019, are eligible to apply). Salary adjustments are normally made retroactive to April 1 of the academic year under consideration. It is not possible to make salary adjustments prior to this date.

What is an anomaly?

A salary anomaly is interpreted to mean a salary that is at variance with normal salary ranges of department, faculty/school, or library colleagues having comparable experience, rank, and qualifications. Anomaly adjustments are not intended to deal with merit, general market conditions in a discipline, retention issues, altering past decisions about denial of satisfactory career progress increments, or slower progress in promotion than a peer.

How can anomalies arise?

Anomalies can arise for many different reasons. Some common examples include:

- Members in the same discipline with comparable qualifications, expertise, and previous experience who are hired at significantly different salaries (after accounting for differences in career progress increments and adjustments to the salary scale).
- Members with previous relevant work experience or experience in comparable positions elsewhere which was not taken into account when they were hired.

- An inexplicable salary differential with relevant comparators that has developed over time.
- Inequities that have arisen due to changes in the salary structure (e.g. changes in the salary floors and thresholds may cause a new hire to have a higher salary than Members with more seniority).

How is an anomaly determined?

The committee determines whether a Member's salary is anomalous by comparing it with the salaries of those in comparable positions, taking into account such things as discipline, career progress increments, previous experience, and special qualifications. For many Members, this will mean that their salary will be compared with others at the same rank in their department or unit. For example, if an assistant professor in English makes an application, their salary will be compared to the salaries of other assistant professors in English. In units where there are few comparators, or where the applicant provides compelling reasons to support using comparators outside their unit, salaries in cognate disciplines may be considered (e.g. an assistant professor in English might use comparators within the Faculty of Arts in the Humanities). Although departments/units tend to be homogenous with respect to discipline, there are a few departments/units at UM that house different disciplines where there may be a market-driven differential between them.

What is the process?

In addition to the material in the application, the Member's Dean/Director is asked to provide the committee with comments on the application and the comparators mentioned, and to provide any further information the committee may require, such as other comparable peers, details of any inequity at hiring, relevant prior experience, and the process by which starting salaries are determined. Deans/Directors are also able to help the committee understand qualifications and market factors affecting different disciplines.

In arriving at a final decision, the committee considers the information contained in the application, the comments of the Dean/Director, as well as its own independent analysis of salaries within a unit. Each member of the committee makes their own assessment, and those assessments are discussed by the committee as a whole. In some cases, the committee will seek additional information from Deans/Directors, with the goal of gaining a broad understanding of the salary structure within a given unit. It should be emphasized that the committee arrives at its own decisions regarding the merit of the case and the size of any salary adjustments. These amounts are sometimes higher than an amount recommended by the Dean/Director, and are sometimes lower.

How can I find out if my salary is lower than that of others in comparable positions?

Members can make an appointment with the UMFA office to come in and view the salary information that UMFA has on file. The following information is available on each Member: faculty, department/unit, salary, rank, highest degree, year of highest degree, years in current rank, UMFA start date, and gender.

Is an anomaly awarded based on those variables alone?

No. However, this is the information that UMFA has available on Members, so if this information indicates that your salary may be anomalous, we encourage you to make an application. The committee will have access to additional information from the Dean/Director that will be taken into consideration. For example, a difference in salary may be justifiable if a comparator has higher qualifications, special skills, more relevant work experience for the position in which they were hired, postdoctoral fellowships, appointments at other

institutions, professional certificates, competing offers, and so on. The information from the Dean may indicate if factors such as these explain the differences. The committee will assess this information, looking not only at the justification, but also looking for consistency in how salaries are determined within a unit.

Does UMFA have information about Members' work experience or qualifications before they were hired at UM? Can I see what qualifications my colleagues had before they were hired?

No, UMFA does not have this information. It is considered part of a Member's confidential file. The information that UMFA has only starts once a Member is hired at the University of Manitoba.

Can I ask the Dean/Director of my faculty to provide me with information about what factors were taken into account when I was hired?

You can request that the Dean provide you with their assessment, with the understanding that confidential information about comparators may be redacted.

How much money is awarded?

Each case is unique. The committee has a total of \$100,000 available. Any money not allocated goes to the Library for acquisitions. In recent years, the average award has varied between \$2,000 to \$3,000, ranging from \$500 to several times the average award. Any award is applied to a Member's base salary, so it will be included in their salary on an ongoing basis. It is not a one-time payment. The success rate is about 2/3, varying somewhat from year to year.

Do certain ranks tend to have more anomalous salaries than others?

Yes. Because anomalies are often created by inequitable starting salaries, there are typically more cases in the lower ranks. There are also more cases at the early stages of years in rank. As Members progress through the salary structure, career progress increments and salary thresholds and maxima for each rank will compress differences in salary, including differences between disciplines. This process tends to reduce any anomalies over time, so that there tend to be fewer anomalies at the higher ranks and after several years in rank. However, they can still occur in any rank, and in any unit. If you believe your salary may be anomalous, we encourage you to make an application.

Do I need to ask for a specific amount?

Some applicants will suggest a range for the award if they are uncertain about a specific amount. The Committee will look at all salaries within the unit when making its analysis and determining the size of an award.

Are awards limited only to those who apply?

No. The committee reserves the right to make salary adjustments where anomalies are identified through the course of its work, or where an award to one Member will create an anomaly for other Members who may not have applied. However, the committee does not undertake a comprehensive review of all UMFA salaries.

I was hired at the same time as another person in my department, but they now make more than I do. Do I have grounds for a claim?

Not necessarily. For example, a Dean may grant one Member an Extraordinary Salary Increase (ESI) for retention purposes. In this instance, the salary difference is justifiable, and not grounds for an anomaly award.

A recent hire in my department is making the same salary as I am. We have comparable qualifications, but I have more years in rank. Do I have grounds for a claim?

It depends. If the new hire is eligible for career progress increments then you may have grounds. However, if you are both above the salary maximum for your rank, and therefore ineligible for increments, there are no grounds. The rationale for this position is that the UMFA Collective Agreement specifies a salary structure that was arrived at through collective bargaining, including eligibility for increments. The joint committee will not impose a salary structure that has been, or that could be, negotiated through collective bargaining. However, if the new hire were making more than you, then the joint committee would consider that an anomaly, and you could ask for an award to make the salaries the same.

My research and publication record since arriving at UM is stronger than my comparators. Can I apply to the Anomalies Fund on these grounds?

No. The Anomalies Fund does not address questions of merit. In this case, you could apply for a Merit Award. A Merit Award is one-time only, and does not go into base salary.

I have had an anomalously low salary for several years. Is the Anomalies Fund able to make a retroactive award?

No. The Anomalies Fund can only grant an award based on the year that the application is made. For example, the current application treats the 2019-2020 year, and any award would only correct your base salary retroactive to April 1, 2019.

I have earned more qualifications than I had when I was hired. Can I apply to the Anomalies Fund for a salary adjustment?

No. The Anomalies Fund does not assess the value of increased qualifications, and only considers qualifications at the point of hire. However, you could speak to your Dean about the possibility of an Extraordinary Salary Increase (ESI).

Can I base my claim on salaries of people who are outside of my unit?

You can, but you will need to justify why these comparators are appropriate. Please avoid using comparators in disciplines where there is a market-driven differential. The committee will use the information you provide to assess the merit of your claim.

Can I appeal if I did not get an award, or if I disagree with the amount of the award?

No, the decisions of the committee are final and binding, as per the UMFA Collective Agreement. However, you can apply again in the following year.