

Job Evaluation Procedure

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Introduction

1.0 This procedure is designed to guide you through the key steps associated with evaluating jobs through the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) scheme.

Vacancies

2.0 There is no requirement for a head of unit to ask for a role to be graded where it is a duplicate of an existing role or is broadly the same as an existing position at the same grade within the unit or elsewhere in the university, or if the vacant role is a straight replacement for a leaver. In these cases, the existing associated grade will be used.

New roles

3.0 When a new role is established, information and evidence is required to enable the Reward team to assign the appropriate grade. This will normally be captured by the line manager completing a role outline form and sending it to the reward@open.ac.uk.

3.1 If the line manager is having difficulty completing the HERA role outline form, they may request an interview with a HERA role analyst at which the Role Outline Form will be completed through questioning and discussion. It is anticipated that the interview would take up to two hours.

3.2 In both instances it is the manager's responsibility to ensure the required supporting documentation as stated on the form is

provided and head of unit (or delegate) signature is obtained, adhering to any local unit level approvals process prior to submitting the form.

- 3.3 A role analyst will examine the information provided or captured at the interview and confirm the associated grade.
- 3.4 Where a role bears strong similarities to roles carried out by central administrative units – most commonly, Finance, People Services and IT– as part of the grading process, the role analyst may seek comments from the head of the central unit.
- 3.5 Senior academic related roles will also be graded through Willis Towers Watson using the information provided.
- 3.6 If the role analyst disagrees with the grade proposed by the manager, please see section 5 below ‘Resolving disagreements’.
- 3.7 The Reward team will normally notify the head of unit or nominee of the grading outcome within five working days of receipt of all the information. For senior roles, where a second grading is required, the outcome will normally be confirmed within 10 working days.

Re-grades

- 4.0 Exceptionally, roles with existing incumbents may develop to a point at which the head of unit may then wish to request re-evaluation. A role holder may also approach their line manager and request a re-grading of their role. (N.B. staff who reach the

top of the appropriate salary scale for the established grade cannot be promoted to a higher salary scale unless they apply for, and are appointed to, a role at a higher grade).

- 4.1 The head of unit's decision on the requirements of a role is final as they have responsibility for the operational management of the unit. However if the individual disputes the accuracy of the Role Outline Form, then a People Services Assistant Business Partner may be approached by management or the individual member of staff and asked to help resolve that dispute within the unit.

Head of unit requests for re-grading

- 5.0 When a head of unit proposes that a role is re-graded, the process is the same as for new roles (see section 3 above), except that the Reward team will normally notify the head of unit or nominee of the re-grading outcome within 15 working days of receipt of all the information.
- 5.1 Where a re-grading is unsuccessful, the case will not be re-examined for at least 6 months from the date on which the final decision was conveyed.
- 5.2 Any re-grade will be effective from the date that all of the required information is received by the Reward team. The role holder will be placed at least on the bottom point of the scale for the appropriate grade or, if less or equivalent to current salary, on the next higher salary point. An auto-increment will

be paid on 1st October, regardless of when the re-grading took place.

Role holder requests for re-grading

- 6.0 The role-holder should discuss any request for a re-grading with their line manager in the first instance.
- 6.1 If the head of unit supports the proposed re-grade, follow the process detailed in paragraph 4.0.
- 6.2 If the head of unit does not support the proposed re-grade, the role holder may still request that their role is submitted to the Reward team for re-evaluation. Within one calendar month of the role holder making this request to their manager, the line manager and role holder should update and agree the Role Outline Form, or alternatively, an interview involving the manager, role holder and a role analyst may be requested. The head of unit (or nominee) will be given the opportunity to comment on any submission made by the role holder.

Resolving disagreements

- 7.0 For new roles and re-grades, where the role analyst disagrees with the unit's proposal, the situation will be discussed with the head of unit or nominee (and the role holder if appropriate) and, if necessary, further information or a revised Role Outline Form requested. The role analyst may wish to interview the role holder and/or the line manager to clarify their understanding of the role. The role will then be analysed using the HERA scheme.

The resultant grade will be communicated to the head of unit and the member of staff (for re-grades).

- 7.1 If the Reward team confirms that the current grade continues to be appropriate, for new roles the head of unit may appeal the decision, and for re-grades either the head of unit or the individual role holder may appeal the decision as detailed below.

Appeals

- 8.0 The head of unit or the individual role holder may proceed directly to the 'Final appeal stage' outlined below. The appeal must be made within 15 working days of the notification of grading outcome. Alternatively, where the re-grading request is a personal re-grading request, requested by the individual but made without head of unit support, then a review meeting may be requested within 15 working days.
- 8.1 The main purpose of a review meeting is to consider the Role Outline Form and any further explanations that the role holder or head of unit or nominee should wish to provide to a panel of two reviewers. The head of unit or nominee will attend a review meeting in order to verify any information provided.
- 8.2 One reviewer will be a HERA trained role analyst from People Services (but not the analyst who originally considered the role) and the other will be from a panel of trained reviewers nominated by the appropriate and recognised union (but not a

member of staff from the sub-unit where the role under discussion is located).

- 8.3 Where a re-grading case involves a change of staff category, for example from grade 6 to 7, then the two unions concerned would either agree who to nominate jointly or both would nominate one each to participate in the process. After private discussion, in the event of the review panel reaching consensus on the grade of the role then the Reward team will notify all parties of the outcome. If consensus cannot be reached or the head of unit or role holder is unhappy with the consensus reached, then the head of unit or role holder may appeal to the final stage.

Final appeal stage

- 9.0 The individual and/or the head of unit may appeal the outcome of the grading and in this case the role will be scored by two more senior managers in People Services, within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal. The outcome of the scoring at this stage will be the final determinant of the grade.

HERA guidance for those with staff responsibilities

- 10.0 Anyone who has a role in recruiting, managing and/or supervising staff may be required to complete job evaluation documentation. Guidance is available on the People Services intranet site. Advice on the implementation of these procedures is available by contacting the People Services Hub.

Useful references

Job Evaluation Policy

HERA Job Evaluation – Frequently Asked Questions

HERA Role Outline Form

HERA Glossary of Terms

Overview of HERA Job Evaluation Process

Version Number 11 – effective from 24 January 2024. **Summary of revisions:** formatting and branding update.