

Classifying and Grading Hourly Positions

HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SERIES FOR SUPERVISORS

- I. History of the Reclassification System
- II. Administration of the Classification System
- III. Attachment A Reclassification Form
- IV. Attachment B Job Description Format
- V. Identifying Essential Functions

I. History

The reclassification project was undertaken in 1993 to update the University's position classification system. Technological advances and new responsibilities brought about by a period of substantial growth necessitated changes in many positions. The classification project provided a fresh look at every non-exempt position, creating job descriptions that could be objectively classified. Additionally, "essential functions" for each position were defined in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

To begin the reclassification project, an experienced consulting firm was selected to oversee the project. Information was collected from employees and their supervisors in order to develop standard position descriptions. Those descriptions provided employees and supervisors with a summary of the duties and responsibilities applicable to individual positions. In addition, those descriptions provided a basis upon which the relative weight of each position could be calculated.

Each position was evaluated using a standard measuring system. Two scoring systems were utilized; one for clerical and technical positions and one for security, maintenance and trades positions. The factors that were evaluated for clerical and technical positions include the following: education, experience, required independence of action, supervision received, effect of errors, contact with others, confidential data handled, type of supervision, number of employees supervised and working conditions. The security, maintenance and trades group had the following additional factors evaluated: physical demand, machinery operated, and possible damage to equipment or injury to personnel if an error is made.

The information provided on each factor was analyzed and a point score was assigned. The total number of points for each position dictated the grade level assigned to the position. Generally, positions requiring higher degrees of education and experience resulted in a higher graded position. Employees who felt that their grade level did not accurately reflect their position had an opportunity to appeal the determination. It is important to mention that meeting the criterion of one or two factors does not translate into a move to a higher grade. Rather, the "total job" and all of the factors associated with that job must be considered to determine the grade level. Also, the classification system focuses on analyzing the position itself and not the individual who may be in that position.

It is important to highlight items that do not count in the job evaluation process. Those include volume of work, efficiency of the incumbent, unusual qualifications of the incumbent, scarcity of people in the marketplace and the amount of overtime worked. These factors are related to the employee. The factors used in the grading process are related to the position, and the contribution of the position to the institution's attainment of its overall mission is the object of all classification systems.

II. Administration of the Classification System

PURPOSE: To provide fair and equitable pay for regular, full-time and continuing part-time staff members.

THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS: From information provided by employees and supervisors, position descriptions are developed for clerical, technical, security, maintenance, and trades employees. Based on this information, positions are evaluated using a common measuring device for either clerical/technical positions or for security/maintenance/trades positions.

Special compensable factors have been established for clerical/technical positions, as well as the maintenance, security and trades group. The information provided for each factor is analyzed and points are assigned. The total number of points dictates the grade level for each position.

THE SALARY STRUCTURE: The University maintains a salary scale that is periodically reviewed to ensure that it is competitive within the local hiring area. The current salary scale structure was developed in 1993 as part of the reclassification project and has been adjusted regularly in consultation with various salary surveys.

The minimum rate for the lowest grade was established by examining the salaries of the incumbents within that grade. A mathematical progression was used to increase the minimums of the subsequent grades. Midpoints and maximums were determined by applying a percentage distribution. Up to this point, the University has not used the midpoints or maximums in developing its salary administration plan.

HIRING PAY FOR NEW EMPLOYEES: Newly hired employees are paid at the minimum for the grade, except that candidates being considered for a position in the top two grades of each plan may be hired at a rate between the minimum and the 25th percentile of the range when warranted by the circumstances.

PAY OFFERED EMPLOYEES WHO ARE PROMOTED WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY: A transfer to a different position will not be considered a promotion unless the new position is in a higher grade level. Transfer to a higher grade will be accompanied by an increase either to the new minimum salary for that level or a 3% salary increase per grade -- whichever is greater.

Generally, transfers to lower graded level positions will not be allowed. If an exception for extenuating circumstances is granted, a salary reduction normally equivalent to 3% per grade will occur. In no case can the new salary exceed the maximum of the lower grade.

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF GRADE ASSIGNMENT: An employee who feels that there has been a substantial change in the duties and responsibilities assigned to his or her position may request a review of the position through his or her supervisor.

If the supervisor and the Division Vice President concur that there has been a substantial change in the position, the request is submitted to Human Resources. Human Resources will review the position to determine whether or not a substantial change has occurred and whether that change warrants movement in grade level. To more clearly understand a position, Human Resources may observe the individual(s) performing the duties of that position and may "interview" the incumbent(s) to gather further data.

To request that a position be re-examined to determine if there is a grade change, a reclassification form (see Attachment A) must be submitted along with an updated job description (Attachment B). This same information is necessary to determine the proper grade level of a newly created position. Upon conclusion of the analysis, Human Resources will inform the Supervisor of the results of its findings. The Supervisor may then request an appeal hearing with Human Resources to review the results of the job analysis and present additional information.

Sample Job Description
Bold print text should appear on all job descriptions.
Job descriptions should be limited to one or two pages.

University of Scranton
Job Description

Position Title:

Reports to:

Classification: Choose appropriate job classification:
Professional, Administration, Paraprofessional

Job Purpose:
One or two sentences summarizing the position

Primary Responsibilities:
Describe the six to ten primary responsibilities in broad terms in order of importance. Remember the most important duty is not necessarily the one that requires the most time.

Begin with action verbs and follow up, where possible, with the desired results of the action. See examples below:

1. Maintains inventory by projecting needs, _____ analyzing discounts and tracking results.
2. Resolves discrepancies and questionable charges by corresponding with and telephoning vendors.

Qualifications:

Education:

Experience:

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

An * indicates essential function as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Please refer to the attached information on ADA identification of responsibilities.

Date Revised

Initials of incumbent

Initials of Supervisor

V. The ADA and Essential Functions

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), an individual with a disability may be considered qualified if he/she can perform the essential functions of a job with or without reasonable accommodations. The ADA provides no guidance on what constitutes essential functions except to say that essential means job tasks that are fundamental and not marginal.

The ADA does not require that an employer maintain job descriptions. Rather, they can be developed at the employer's discretion. Written job descriptions are, however, relevant evidence as to those duties that are essential to an employees' job. Since we do maintain job descriptions, here at the university for all professional and administrative positions, it is vital that we identify essential components for each position within these classifications.

Essential functions may be termed essential because:

- the reason the position exists is to perform them
- there are limited employees available among whom that function can be distributed
- the function is so highly specialized that the incumbent is hired for his/her specific experience or ability

Other questions to consider are:

- Would removing this function from the job description fundamentally alter the position?
- Does the incumbent spend a significant portion of his or her workday or work week performing this function?
- Would failure to perform this function bear significant consequences?

If the answer to these questions is yes, the duty is an essential function. Generally if an individual "contributes" or "assists" in a particular area, chances are that function is non-essential since these terms suggest that someone other than this person is responsible for that particular function.

Please review your job description and place an * before each duty that you feel meets the essential function definition described above.