



# **HERA**

# **at Aston**

  

## **Guidance**

## **On the**

# **HERA Process**

For Role Holders and Managers  
Of all Support Posts other than  
Teaching and Research.

Higher Education Role Analysis

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## **1 WHAT IS HERA?**

- 1.1.1 HERA is a job evaluation tool used to analyse roles found in Higher Education. It is used to assess the relative value of roles by scoring them against 14 key criteria in a consistent and equitable manner. This total score produced determines the grade of the role in Aston's salary structure.
- 1.1.2 The HERA scheme was specifically designed for Higher Education by an employer-led consortium of universities and colleges. During its development, the HERA scheme was piloted and then trialled in partnership with the trade unions and employers. As a result it was deemed to be an appropriate tool for allocating roles against pay and grading structures and for ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.
- 1.1.3 The purpose of this document is to outline the HERA process for Managers and individuals and to provide guidance on completing the Job Description and Record of Evidence (JDRE). The JDRE should be used for all grading requests which include new and vacant posts and instances where an individual (referred to as a role holder) in an existing role believes the role has changed. It may also be used to evaluate grades of roles following restructures of departments.

### **1.2 How does HERA work?**

- 1.2.1 HERA is made up of 14 elements. Each element is assessed by asking questions of role holders and managers which draw out evidence of what is required by a role holder. Completing the JDRE will answer the questions. Responses should cover those activities performed in typical circumstances and situations; not rare or extreme cases or those undertaken through personal interest. The evidence given by the role holder or manager need not cover every single activity or task undertaken but should provide *typical* and *significant* examples that represent the role. *Not relevant* or *not required* are legitimate responses, if they reflect the true situation.
- 1.2.2 The evidence provided by the role holder or manager needs to be verified by someone who knows the role well and is authorised to verify it. The verifier should confirm that the evidence given is representative and accurate. Further details of the verification process are contained within this document.
- 1.2.3 Role holders will be made aware, at their briefing sessions, that their evidence will require verification.
- 1.2.4 Once the evidence has been verified, trained role analysts will assess the role in accordance with the HERA methodology. HERA scores will be notified to both role holders, line managers and their Executive Dean/Head of Department (or their nominees). The scores will be used to determine the grade and the appropriate pay range for the post.

## **2 THE PROCESS**

- 2.1.1 Before attempting to complete the JDRE you should discuss it with your HR Advisor who will guide you through the process and explain how to complete each section. You should also read through this document in full.
- 2.1.2 Once the JDRE is completed and verified please return to it your HR Advisor in an electronic format if this is possible, but if this causes difficulties please contact your HR Advisor.
- 2.1.3 The relevant forms and guidance notes are all available to download from the HR HERA website <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/hera/> Paper copies of the forms and guidance notes can be obtained from HR Reception.
- 2.1.4 It is important to remember that roles are evaluated on the basis of role requirements and not the individual performance of role holders.
- 2.1.5 The process of evaluating roles is anonymous and names of role holders will not be disclosed to any evaluation panel.

### **2.2 New and Vacant Roles**

- 2.2.1 Managers should complete the form after discussion with the relevant HR Advisor. It is recognised that for new roles it is not always possible to predict the role requirements in detail. However, it is important that the main requirements of the role are included in the JDRE.
- 2.2.2 This process is designed to assist managers in developing and creating roles and should act as the start of any recruitment process. The information contained in the JDRE will feed in to the creation of the job description and person specification. It can also be used to assist performance development and management.
- 2.2.3 Wherever possible the JDRE should be verified for new posts.
- 2.2.4 All new or vacant roles are evaluated by trained members of Human Resources within five working days of receiving the completed JDRE. The results will be communicated to the relevant manager.

### **2.3 Role Holder Re-grading Requests**

- 2.3.1 Individual role holders should complete the JDRE, in conjunction with their line manager, following a briefing with the relevant HR Advisor. The details of the role should be agreed by the role holder, the line manager and the verifier (if this is not the line manager) before it is submitted for evaluation.
- 2.3.2 In cases where more than one individual is in a role, all role holders should agree the content of the JDRE. In some cases it may be helpful to appoint one or two individuals from the group to complete the form for others to sign at the end, but there should always be agreement from all parties before the role is submitted for evaluation.
- 2.3.3 All JDREs must be verified and wherever possible submitted in electronic format to the relevant HR Advisor. Once the form has been received by HR you will be sent an acknowledgement email.

- 2.3.4 All requests for a re-grade are evaluated by a Maintenance Panel, which consists of a minimum of three trained HERA Analysts who do not work in the area of the role holder. The panels are scheduled every 2-3 weeks and roles are sent for evaluation to the first suitable panel. The results will be communicated in writing to both the line manager and role holder.
- 2.3.5 Where evaluation results in a change in grade for the role holder, the date the change is effective from will be confirmed by the line manager. In most circumstances this will be from the first day of the month following receipt of the completed JDRE. Full details of this can be found in the Pay Arrangements and Protection policy which is contained within this document.
- 2.3.6 There is a right of appeal against the result of the Maintenance Panel grading, details of which can be found under the Appeals section of this document.
- 2.3.7 Roles that have been evaluated may not be considered for further evaluation for a minimum of 12 months. The only exceptions to this are cases where there have been significant changes to the role which must be outlined by the Manager as supporting evidence in addition to a newly completed JDRE.

### **3 VERIFICATION**

#### **3.1 Why it is important to verify the evidence?**

- Responsibilities can be exaggerated, misrepresented or over or under estimated.
- It helps to clarify who is responsible for what.

#### **3.2 Who should verify the evidence?**

3.2.1 The Executive Dean/Head of Department or his/her nominee(s). Schools and departments should make their own arrangements for the verification process.

It is important that the verifier fully understands the responsibilities of the role.

#### **3.3 The verification process**

Verifiers should:

- Consider the evidence in the JDRE provided by the role holder.
- Establish that the evidence is a correct representation of the role.
- Sign the JDRE and forward it electronically to the relevant HR Advisor.

3.3.1 On receipt of the verified JDRE, the HR Advisor will consider the evidence given. If additional information is required, the HR Advisor will give guidance and support on providing suitable information.

#### **3.4 Difference of view**

3.4.1 If the verifier does not agree with the evidence provided, it is important that differences are reconciled before the role is evaluated. The verifier should discuss any differences with the role holder and seek to clarify them. If the difference of view is not reconciled the role holder and/or the verifier should seek guidance from the relevant HR Advisor.

#### **3.5 Appeals**

3.5.1 Research shows that if role holders feel that they have been treated fairly and have been given a full opportunity to state their view early in the process, the chances of them feeling aggrieved are reduced. To this end, verifiers are encouraged to take the time to deal properly and fully with any disagreement when they are first asked to verify the evidence.

3.5.2 Individuals will be able to appeal against the decision of the Maintenance Panel. Details of the appeals mechanism are contained within this document..

## 4 COMPLETING THE JOB DESCRIPTION & RECORD OF EVIDENCE (JDRE)

- 4.1.1 The following pages contain descriptions of the HERA elements and an explanation of the questions.
- 4.1.2 The JDRE is broken down into 14 elements. For each element questions are asked which are designed to draw out evidence of what is required of the role holder. Remember that the JDRE has been designed to cover all roles within the University so some questions may not be relevant to you. You will not need to answer every question. The following guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the JDRE.
- 4.1.3 Remember the main *requirements* of the role will be analysed, not activities or responsibilities individuals may have acquired for personal interest. You should try to think of activities and responsibilities that are typical of the role, not just the most recent, rare or extreme ones. You should try to use different examples for each element but, if you cannot think of another example, your manager may be able to help.
- 4.1.4 You may also wish to discuss what you have written with your manager or another person to make sure that the examples you have noted best reflect the role. You may find it helpful to discuss the JDRE with your colleagues or, if you are a member of a Trade Union, a union representative.
- 4.1.5 As part of the JDRE you will need to outline the purpose and key accountabilities or duties of the role, and give a simple diagram showing the position of the role in the immediate structure. This will help the role analysts understand the role and how it fits with others.
- 4.1.6 For each element you need to provide evidence of the skills used/required, the activities engaged in, the responsibilities held by the role and, if appropriate, the frequency of an activity.
- 4.1.7 You should explain acronyms and avoid the use individual names, referring to role titles only.
- 4.1.8 Once you have completed the JDRE, the evidence you give needs to be verified. The verifier will either be your Executive Dean/Head of Department or his or her nominee.
- 4.1.9 An example of a completed JDRE can be found at <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/hera/>

## **4.2 Main Purpose & Key Accountabilities**

- 4.2.1 Where you are asked to state the main purpose of the role, you should give a brief summary of the main reason for the roles existence. You should describe this as concisely as possible in no more than 2 or 3 sentences. The description should enable the role to be differentiated from other roles, and its' contribution made to the School/Department's objectives identified.
- 4.2.2 The key accountabilities or duties should be a series of brief numbered phrases in order of importance to the School/Department/University.
- 4.2.3 Both the Main Purpose and the Key Accountabilities will form the main part of the job description which will be used for recruitment purposes.

## **4.3 Structure Chart**

- 4.3.1 Please provide a simple diagram showing the position of the role in the immediate structure. Use role titles only and do not include names of role holders to ensure the process remains anonymous.

## **4.4 Communication:**

- 4.4.1 This is the first element of the JDRE and covers communication - be it through oral, written, electronic or visual means - in both informal and formal situations. Signing, using hand signals or using other means of communication with people with disabilities is also included. Communication includes the need to convey basic factual information clearly and accurately, conveying information in the most appropriate format and explaining complex or detailed specialist information.
- 4.4.2 The questions are designed to ascertain the level and frequency of communication being carried out both orally and in writing.
- 4.4.3 You need to provide details of who you are communicating with, how often you carry out this type of communication e.g. daily weekly, monthly, occasionally and how essential it is to your role and how complex the information being communicated is.
- 4.4.4 Examples of oral communication might include giving directions to students to help them find their way around the University, answering telephone enquiries, explaining procedures/regulations, giving presentations, attending or chairing meetings or engaging in negotiations.
- 4.4.5 Examples of the types of written communication might include responding to requests for information, completing forms, drafting letters, writing brochures or advertising material, writing instructions/training manual, writing minutes of meetings or writing complex reports of a sensitive nature.

## 4.5 Teamwork and Motivation:

- 4.5.1 This set of questions is about team work and team leadership when working in both internal and external teams. This may include the need to contribute as an active member of the team; motivating others in the team; and providing leadership and direction for the team or several teams.
- 4.5.2 A **team** is defined as a number of people who work together to achieve a common purpose. This could include internal or external teams, teams which are fixed or those that change (e.g. departmental, research, course development or project teams or those involving students or people from outside the institution.)
- 4.5.3 You will need to identify the main team(s) in which the role is required to work in, and the role played within that team, for example the role holder may be a team leader of a small section within a department, or the Head of a Department responsible for several teams. The team described should be easily identified by the structure chart.
- 4.5.4 Examples of team work might include being part of a team, contributing as an active member, motivating others in the team or providing leadership and direction for the team.
- 4.5.5 You may find it useful to consider the following questions in thinking about the teams the role is involved in:
- In which teams is the role holder mainly involved?
  - What is the function of these teams and what are they working to achieve?
  - Who is in the team and what is the role holder's main role in it?
  - Who identified the need for the team and set it up?
  - Who is responsible for setting the direction of the work of the team?
  - How are team members encouraged and motivated?

## 4.6 Liaison and Networking:

- 4.6.1 These questions cover occasions when the role holder is required to liaise with others both within and outside the University and create networks of useful contacts. This may include passing on information promptly to colleagues; ensuring mutual exchange of information; influencing developments through one's contacts; and building an external reputation.
- 4.6.2 **Liaison** here is defined as making one-off contacts for a work related reason.
- 4.6.3 A **network** is defined as an interconnecting group of people, possibly from different work teams or organisations, who exchange information, contacts and experience on a recurrent basis for professional purposes connected with the role.

- 4.6.4 You need to give information about the type of liaison or network and its purpose. It is essential that you only include those networks that are required for your role.
- 4.6.5 Examples here might include liaising with other departments of the University to pass information on or being a member of a working group or committee to exchange information and build relationships, chairing a committee or initiating and building a working group.
- 4.6.6 You may find it useful to consider the following questions in thinking about networks and liaisons the role is involved in:
- What information is the role holder typically passing on or receiving?
  - What networks/groups/committees/forums (if any) does the role holder belong to and why?
  - What is the purpose of the network and what is the role holder's part in it?
  - What would happen if the role holder were not part of this network?

## **4.7 Service Delivery:**

- 4.7.1 These questions cover the help, assistance and services role holders are required to give to students, visitors, members of staff, and other users of the University. This may include reacting to requests for information or advice; actively offering or promoting the services of the University to others; and setting the overall standards of service offered.
- 4.7.2 The term **customer** is used in its broadest sense to include anyone who consumes or benefits from the services provided by role holders and includes other members of staff as well as students, visitors and clients.
- 4.7.3 Examples here may include responding to requests for information, contacting potential customers to let them know of new services, monitoring levels of usage and identifying what actions should be taken to achieve service targets.
- 4.7.4 You may find it useful to consider the following questions in thinking about the service the role provides:
- Does the role holder actively offer the service or does the customer go to them?
  - Is there a standard service which is the same for all customers?
  - How does the role holder find out what the customer wants?

## **4.8 Decision Making Processes and Outcomes:**

- 4.8.1 This set of questions covers the impact of decision within the institution and externally. This may include decisions which impact on the role holder's work or team; decisions which impact across the University; and decisions which

may have significant impact in the longer term within or outside the University.

- 4.8.2 Decisions include those made by the role holder alone, in collaboration with others and the provision of advice to others to aid their decision making.
- 4.8.3 It is assumed that the role holder makes the best decision in the circumstances, rather than considering what might happen if the wrong or a poor decision is made. Decisions relating to planning and prioritising work should be given under Planning and Organising Resources.
- 4.8.4 It is essential that you include information relating to the **impact** any decisions made will have on your School/Department and the University as a whole.
- 4.8.5 Examples may include deciding when to hold a meeting, buying non-routine stock, deciding the structure of a course or programme of study or deciding the future of major research contracts.
- 4.8.6 You may find it useful to consider the following questions in thinking about the different decisions and their impact:
- How are decisions made and who makes them?
  - What authority does the role holder have to make decision without the agreement of others?
  - How does the role holder take typical decisions and what are the results of making them?
  - Who else is involved in making the role holder's decisions and how does the role holder contribute?
  - How regularly does the role holder make these types of decisions?
  - Who or what do they impact and over what timescale?

## **4.9 Planning and Organising Resources:**

- 4.9.1 These questions are about organising, prioritising and planning time and resources, be they human, physical or financial. This may include planning and organising own work; planning work of others on day to day tasks or on projects; carrying out operational planning; and strategic planning for coming years.
- 4.9.2 The size or value of the resources should not over-ride the importance of the skills required for planning and organising their effective use.
- 4.9.3 Examples may include working to a set pattern each day, deciding when and how to respond to requests for information or assistance, managing and being accountable for the resources for a sub-section of a department, or setting the budget and contributing to the strategic plans for significant parts of the University.
- 4.9.4 You may find it useful to consider the following questions in thinking about the different decisions and their impact:
- What does the role holder plan and organise?
  - What resources are involved (e.g. people, equipment, money, etc)?
  - Who else is involved in creating or working on the plan?
  - What is the time scale?
  - How does the role holder prioritise?
  - What may impact on the plan and what else does the role holder have to take into account?
  - How is progress monitored?

## **4.10 Initiative and Problem Solving:**

- 4.10.1 This set of questions is about identifying or developing options and selecting solutions to problems that typically occur in the role. This may include the role holder using initiative to select from available options; resolving problems where an immediate solution may not be apparent; dealing with complex problems; and anticipating problems which could have major repercussions.
- 4.10.2 Activities that are concerned with analytical or theoretical research should not be included here, but under Analysis and Research.
- 4.10.3 Examples may include maintaining equipment or machinery, handling grievances or disciplinary issues, developing new guidelines or procedures or changing the way resources are deployed across the institution.
- 4.10.4 You may find it useful to consider what options does the role holder consider and how does the role holder select the best course of action.

## **4.11 Analysis and Research:**

- 4.11.1 These questions cover the occasions when the role holder is required to investigate issues, analyse information and carry out research. These may include following standard procedures to gather and analyse data; identifying and designing appropriate methods of research; collating and analysing a range of data from different sources; and establishing new methods or models for research, or setting the context for research.
- 4.11.2 These questions are applicable to most roles and not just those involved in academic research.
- 4.11.3 The skills involved may include carrying out routine tasks; gathering and manipulating routine data so it can be interpreted by others; deciding how to conduct the investigation as well as analyse and interpret the results; investigating complex matters and issues; or initiating major research activities or leading investigations into significant matters.
- 4.11.4 Examples may include checking stock levels against an inventory, providing statistics using standard techniques (using a spreadsheet), investigating the implication of changes to funding, creating new experiments and determining the overall direction of major research projects.
- 4.11.5 You may find it helpful to consider the following questions in thinking about the different the types of analysis and research activities:
- Who else is involved in the analysis and research?
  - What data does the role holder have available or need to obtain?
  - How does the role holder obtain this data?
  - How does the role holder chose which method or approach to use?
  - Who decides that the investigation or research is needed or would be beneficial?

## **4.12 Sensory and Physical Demands:**

- 4.12.1 This set of questions covers the sensory and physical aspects of the role required to complete tasks. These may include physical effort, co-ordination and dexterity, using aural evidence to assess next actions, applying skilled techniques and co-ordinating sensory information and using high levels of dexterity where precision or accuracy is essential.
- 4.12.2 Some roles, such as Leisure Assistants and Fitness instructors will require high levels of physical demands. Others, such as Plant Operators, Electricians and some Technicians will require the mastery and use of specialist tools and pieces of equipment. Most roles however will only require light physical effort and the use of standard office equipment.
- 4.12.3 Examples may include using a keyboard to input data, routinely lifting or carrying heavy objects, working in a confined space, operating machinery, using scientific instruments or handling animals or people.

4.12.4 You may find it helpful to consider the following questions in thinking about the sensory and physical demands of the role:

- Is any assistance given by others or in the form of special equipment?
- Does the role holder work in cramped, confined or difficult spaces or awkward positions?
- How long did it take to learn or develop the skills and how were they acquired?

### **4.13 Work Environment**

4.13.1 These questions explore the impact the working environment has on the role holder and their ability to respond to and control that environment safely. This may include such things as the temperature, noise or fumes, the work position and working in an outdoor environment.

4.13.2 Most role holders will be working in a relatively stable working environment such as an office or lecture room and will have no responsibility for the health and safety of others beyond due care and diligence. However, some role holders may be responsible for managing the impact of the environment on the work or safety of other people, or may be required to assess the potential degree of risk in a situation and take action.

4.13.3 In assessing the work environment you may find it helpful to consider the following questions:

- Does the role holder have to take any special measures to reduce the risk or control the environment before or while working there?
- Who is responsible for controlling the environment and making sure that others working there are not at risk?
- Who is responsible for the health and safety of people working there and decides that it is safe to work?
- How are these assessments made?

### **4.14 Pastoral Care and Welfare:**

4.14.1 This set of questions is about the role holder's responsibilities for the welfare and well being of students and staff within the University, in both informal and formal situations. Role holders may need to be aware of the support services available, give supportive advice and guidance, refer others to someone better able to help them or counsel others on specific issues.

4.14.2 It is important to remember that only the role requirements are described here and not activities the role holder has become involved in out of choice. Sometimes students or staff may approach a particular role holder due to their interpersonal skills and general approachability. These instances should only be included if it is a requirement of the role.

4.14.3 Examples here may include helping others to deal with stress or other emotional demands that affect their work or study.

4.14.4 You may find it helpful to consider the following questions:

- Is the role holder approached by others for help?
- What are the typical issues or problems?
- What does the role holder do and how does the role holder decide to do it?
- Is the role holder able to refer the other person to anyone else for help?
- Did the role holder have any training in this aspect of the role?
- Is there any guidance material to help?

#### **4.15 Team Development:**

4.15.1 This set of questions covers the development of the skills and knowledge of others in the role holder's work team. This may include the induction of new colleagues; coaching and appraising any individuals who are supervised, mentored or managed by the role holder; and giving guidance or advice to peers or supervisor on specific aspects of work.

4.15.2 The activities are required to be carried out by the role holder within the team identified within Teamwork and Motivation

4.15.3 Examples may include inducting a new member of staff, showing a colleague in your team how to use a computer based application or conducting regular staff appraisals.

4.15.4 You may find it helpful to consider the following questions:

- What does the role holder instruct, coach or guide others to do?
- How does the role holder do this?
- Are there any materials to help?
- Has the role holder been trained in this aspect of the role?
- Who identifies the learning needs of the team members and decides whether any one individual should receive training or development?
- How does the role holder assess whether learning has occurred?

#### **4.16 Teaching and Learning Support:**

4.16.1 These questions are about what the role holder is required to do to teach or provide learning support to students and others who are not part of the work team. This may include providing instruction to those who are using a particular service or working in a particular area for the first time. The role

holder may be required to carry out standard training, create development opportunities or be involved in the assessment and teaching of students.

4.16.2 Any activity aimed at supporting the learning of others outside the team identified above should be included here.

4.16.3 The questions and table is designed to find out how involved the role holder is in providing presentations, giving demonstrations and teaching students and or staff.

4.16.4 Examples may include explaining the use of the library to students, staff or visitors, running staff training courses, or delivering and assessing a course or module.

4.16.5 You may find it helpful to consider the following questions:

- What is the role holder's subject area or specialism?
- Who does the role holder teach, develop or provide with academic support?
- Who decides the activity's content?
- Is anyone else involved in providing teaching, development or learning support in this subject area?
- Who designs and develops course content?
- Who else is involved in teaching, training or learning support in the area?
- Who decides on how the content is to be delivered?
- How is the effectiveness of the teaching, training or support assessed?

## **4.17 Knowledge and Experience:**

4.17.1 The final set of questions explores the relevant knowledge and experience needed to carry out the role, however acquired, whether this is technical, professional or specialist. This may be having sufficient experience to carry out basic, day to day responsibilities; the need for a breadth or depth of experience to act as a point of reference for others; and the need to act as a leading authority in ones field of discipline.

4.17.2 For guidance, consider the minimum level of knowledge and experience required of a new person in the role.

4.17.3 Information provided here will contribute to the Person Specification used in recruitment and selection. Only knowledge and experience that is essential should be included.

4.17.4 Knowledge, qualification or skills acquired by the role holder that are not relevant or are not a requirement of the role should not be included.

4.17.5 Examples might include knowledge of word processing packages, basic management or supervisory skills, ability to interpret procedures and able to

provide advice to others, conducting a research project, leading a teaching discipline or significant area of research.

4.17.6 In answering the questions you may find it helpful to consider the following:

- How does the role holder apply the knowledge and experience?
- How long did it take to obtain the required knowledge and experience?
- How did/she develop that knowledge and experience?
- How often does the role holder need to update that knowledge and experience?
- Who routinely goes to him/her for advice or guidance routinely?
- What level of knowledge and experience would be required of the replacement, were the role holder to leave their role?

## 5 FEEDBACK

### 5.1 Points Scoring Ranges

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points range</b>
1	Up to 170
2	171 - 180
3	181 - 190
4	191 – 200
5	201 – 230
6	231 – 270
7	271 – 330
8	331 – 439
9	440 – 600
10	601 – 760
Professorial and Professorial equivalent	761 +

## **6 PAY ARRANGEMENTS & PROTECTION FOLLOWING ROLE ANALYSIS OR JOB MATCHING**

6.1.1 This policy sets out the pay arrangements that are to apply where, following role analysis, the outcome results in the post being assessed at either a higher or lower grade:

### **6.2 Where a post is assessed at a higher grade:**

6.2.1 The individual is promoted to the appropriate higher grade and is paid at the bottom of the pay range for that grade or higher point if it is necessary to prevent a reduction in pay. Except that, where the resulting increase in pay exceeds 10%, that increase may be phased over two years.

6.2.2 Where the role is analysed as part of the University's initial role analysis exercise any increase in pay should be backdated to 1 August 2006. In all other cases the increase will take effect from the first day of the month following the date that the role details are received by Human Resources.

6.2.3 By agreement between the individual and management, the responsibilities of the job may be reviewed to establish whether the responsibilities of the post may be reduced such that (following re-evaluation of that post) the grading of the post is reduced.

### **6.3 Where the post is evaluated at a lower grade:**

6.3.1 The individual continues at their current pay level, on a protected basis, for a period of four years (unless the post is changed and re-evaluated to a higher level or the individual moves to a higher graded post), after which his/her pay will be reduced to the highest point below the contribution threshold on the pay range appropriate for the post as graded following role analysis. During the period of protection the role holder will continue to receive increases resulting from National Pay Awards, but will not receive increased pay from incremental progression within their grade.

6.3.2 The period of pay protection will commence on the first day of the month following the date that the role holder is notified of the changing grade.

6.3.3 The Executive Dean/Head of Department, or his/her nominee will, as soon as possible after notification, review the expectations of the role and thereafter at least once a year, with a view to considering whether the role can, with the agreement of the role holder, be 'enlarged' and reassessed by role analysis; and

6.3.4 The Executive Dean/Head of Department or his/her nominee will discuss with the member of staff their skills and experience with a view to providing appropriate development to enable them to perform and secure work at a higher level within the University (subject to the University's recruitment procedures).

## **7 APPEALS PROCEDURE**

### **7.1 Appeal Mechanism**

- 7.1.1 This procedure describes the mechanism for dealing with appeals arising from any part of the role analysis process.
- 7.1.2 Following an assessment of roles using HERA, individuals are able to request feedback (informal review) and to appeal against the outcome. The informal review process does not impact on the appeal procedure in any way.
- 7.1.3 The appeals process has been developed locally, in accordance with HERA guidelines and in consultation with the Unions.
- 7.1.4 The Appeals mechanism should not be used for those roles where the requirements have significantly changed; in such cases a new JDRE should be completed and submitted to the Role Analysis team for evaluation.

### **7.2 Difference of View**

- 7.2.1 Verifier's can play a key role in reducing the need for appeals by making sure that the evidence is complete in coverage and as representative as possible from the outset.
- 7.2.2 If the verifier does not agree with the evidence provided, it is important that differences are reconciled, before the role is evaluated. The verifier should discuss any differences with the role holder and seek to clarify them. If the difference of view is not reconciled this should be formally recorded and the role holder and/or the verifier should seek guidance from the relevant HR Advisor. HERA provides for an analysis of role requirements; not an individual's performance. Performance either above or below the required level for a role is outside the scope of role analysis and should be considered separately.

### **7.3 Informal Review**

- 7.3.1 Role holders, verifiers and Executive Deans/Head of Department will be able to ask a University Role Analyst for an informal review of the result.
- 7.3.2 This informal review may be applied where a role holder, verifier or Executive Dean/Head of Department is either dissatisfied with, or wishes to query, any part of the process, or the scoring that has been applied or the consequent grading decision.
- 7.3.3 If any party remains dissatisfied the matter can be referred to an Appeals Panel.

### **7.4 Right to Appeal**

- 7.4.1 The following parties have the right of appeal against the outcome or any part of the role analysis process:
  - 7.4.1.1 An individual role holder
  - 7.4.1.2 The Executive Dean/Head of Department or their nominated verifier

- 7.4.1.3 An individual role holder and the Executive Dean/Head of Department /nominated verifier jointly

## **7.5 Grounds for Appeal**

7.5.1 An appeal can be made on the following grounds:

- 7.5.1.1 When due process for the role analysis process has not been followed
- 7.5.1.2 Where the role has been job matched or assessed on incomplete or incorrect data that is likely to effect the evaluation
- 7.5.1.3 When one of the parties believes a role has been assessed or matched unfavourably compared to other roles involving work of a similar value
- 7.5.1.4 When evidence is deemed by the individual or the School/Department to have been misinterpreted by the analyst
- 7.5.1.5 When one of the parties questions the generic role, benchmark role or role profile to which the role has been allocated

7.5.2 Notification of a party intending to appeal should be given to the Role Analysis team within one month of the assessment or within one month of when evidence of unfavourable comparison comes to light.

7.5.3 Appeal documents should be forwarded to the Role Analysis team within a further 4 weeks of this time.

### **7.5.4 Staff absence**

7.5.5 If staff are likely to be absent from the University for a long time (e.g. maternity leave, long-term sickness, sabbaticals etc) then the following procedures are to be adopted:

- 7.5.5.1 If the post is a generic one (i.e. more than one role holder holding a broadly similar role) and one of the role holders is not available their role will be analysed in their absence.
- 7.5.5.2 If the post is individual, the role analysis questionnaire will be drafted by the line manager/verifier, and, if appropriate, approved by the role holder, (guidance should be sought from Personnel Services before contacting role holders absent from the University).

7.5.6 If the role holder or line manager/verifier disagree with the outcome of any role description or job matching applied in their absence, they will have access to the appeals procedure on their return.

## **7.6 Composition of Appeals Panel**

7.6.1 The Appeal panel will consist of up to 4 trained Role Analysts and should comprise:

- 1 trained Trade Union Role Analyst
- 1 trained University Role Analyst

- In addition the panel should include two further Role Analysts neither of whom should participate in scoring or have voting rights except in the event of the two 'scoring' analysts not reaching agreement –see below. They should be a) a role analyst involved in the original decision and b) a role analyst to act as Chair. If a) is a University role analyst then b) should represent the Trade Unions and vice versa.

7.6.2 The decision of the Appeals Panel will be based on of the scores determined by those Role Analysts who were not involved in the original scoring of the role, except that the Chair will provide a casting vote in the event of the 'scoring' analysts being unable to reach agreement.

7.6.3 Each Appeals Panel will make its own arrangements for Chairing the meeting

7.6.4 The main role of the Chair will be to make every effort to ensure that the panel reaches a consensus. Only in the event of a panel failing to reach a consensus will the Chair be able to provide a casting vote.

## **7.7 The Appeals Process**

7.7.1 Where an Executive Dean/Head of Department, verifier or individual role holder wishes to appeal against the point score or grade awarded to the role, he/she should write to Human Resources stating the grounds on which the appeal is made and indicate which elements are being contested. Individuals can seek advice from their trade union representative. Both the Executive Dean/Head of Department and individual role holder will be informed when an appeal has been received.

7.7.2 Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay.

7.7.3 The Appeals Panel will invite the appellant to present the appeal in person:

7.7.3.1 Where the individual role holder and Executive Dean/Head of Department or verifier wish to present a joint appeal, both parties may appeal together in person. The individual may be accompanied by a member of Aston University staff or a trade union representative.

7.7.3.2 Where the individual role holder is the sole appellant he/she may be accompanied by a colleague, who should be a current member of Aston University staff or a trade union representative

7.7.3.3 Where the Executive Dean/Head of Department is the sole appellant he/she may be accompanied by a colleague who is a current member of Aston University staff. The role holder will, in this circumstance, also be invited to present information to the Appeals Panel and may be accompanied by a member of Aston University staff or a trade union representative

7.7.4 The Executive Dean/Head of Department and individual role holder will be notified by HR of the arrangements for the appeal.

- 7.7.5 At least 5 days working days prior to the appeal, HR will circulate to each panel member the following documents :
- A copy of the written notice of appeal from the appellant(s)
  - A copy of the original scoring grid or benchmark details
  - A copy of the HERA scoring guidelines
  - A copy of the agreed questionnaire and interview record (if applicable) that were originally analysed
- 7.7.6 In addition, the Appeals Panel may request from the Role Analysis team, copies of any additional role analysis documents which are relevant to the appeal. These may include questionnaires, interview records, role profiles.
- 7.7.7 If the appellant does not wish to be present the appeal in person and has confirmed this in writing, he/she may submit a written case for appeal. A copy of this will be sent to the other interested parties.
- 7.7.8 In the event of a personal appeal by a sole appellant, the Appeals Panel will first hear the appeal of the appellant. The other interested party, that is the Executive Dean/Head of Department or individual role holder, will then be invited to add any comments in the presence of all parties. The Appeals Panel will have the facility to ask questions. When the Appeals Panel is satisfied that it has sufficient information to consider the case, the appellant and other interested party will be asked to withdraw. The Appeals Panel will then consider the case in private.
- 7.7.9 The Appeals Panel will re-evaluate the role using the original agreed questionnaire/interview record and will reach a consensus on the scoring or benchmark position of the role. The panel may confirm the original analysis of the role or it may amend the scoring either up or down.
- 7.7.10 If new information is presented which significantly alters the role the Appeals Panel may ask for the questionnaire to be rewritten. The revised agreed document will then be re-assessed by a Role Analyst.

## **7.8 The Result**

- 7.8.1 The decision of the Appeals Panel will be confirmed, in writing, to the Executive Dean/Head of Department and the individual role holder by HR. If the Appeals Panel amends the scoring then the revised profile or job matching position will be issued to the Head of School/Department and the individual role holder.
- 7.8.2 The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

**If you require further assistance contact a your relevant HR Advisor, or the HR Helpline on 4500 or [hr\\_helpdesk@aston.ac.uk](mailto:hr_helpdesk@aston.ac.uk)**

**Additional information relating to HERA at Aston can be found at <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/hera/>**