

Post-92 guidance on using the library of academic role profiles

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Related documents

- The JNCHES library of academic role profiles
- JNCHES technical group guidance on using the library of profiles

Description of the library of academic role profiles

The key issue for every Branch will be to obtain the agreement of their employer to use the national library of profiles and associated guidance to inform grading decisions for academic staff. The national library of academic role profiles is enclosed as an annex to this section. The profiles were developed jointly by UCU (NATFHE and AUT), EIS and UCEA. The profiles are designed to work with both the HERA and HAY job evaluation schemes. The library is intended to cover the vast majority of academic roles within higher education.

The purpose of the library of profiles

The profiles provide national reference points or benchmarks for the grading of academic staff. Each of the library profiles is linked to one of the grades within the model pay structure in the Framework. There are three profile families:

- teaching and scholarship,
- teaching and research and
- research only.

The three profile families are designed to provide equal pay between academics engaged primarily in teaching and scholarship with academics engaged in a mixed teaching and research roles and also with staff engaged solely in research activity. The profiles have been tested to ensure that they have roughly equal job weight across each grade.

It is important to note that staff will not be restricted in their job development simply because their role has been matched to a teaching and scholarship profile. If in future, jobs develop and include a research element, staff will be assigned to a teaching and research profile.

The principles of using the profiles

Grading decisions made with reference to the library of profiles depend on a comparison of the average local benchmark roles with the profiles in the library. The guidance accompanying the profiles is enclosed below along with a step-by-step guide. The process within each HE Institution will commence with a small representative sample of academic jobs being evaluated using either HERA or in some cases HAY. This sample must be agreed with UCU locally and must contain typical (or average) jobs at each grade from a wide range of departments. This local benchmarking exercise produces a local benchmark profile based on the job evaluation of the sample group of between 5 - 10% of academic jobs, including part time and hourly paid jobs.

The local profiles for those jobs are then matched with profiles within the library on the basis of 'best fit' or roughly a three quarters match between the local benchmark profiles and one of the library profiles. This means that the average job at any grade in your institution must be a three quarters match with one of the library profiles to achieve grading at that level.

In order to achieve best fit it is also necessary to adequately cover the key elements relating to teaching or research as appropriate.

Once the local benchmark profiles have been matched to library profiles, staff are assigned to a profile and transfer to new grades. As the transfer will be based on benchmarking, using small sample groups, some staff will wish to appeal against their grading, and may wish to make a case for grading at a higher level.

There will be three stages of appeal and review. Firstly an informal review where staff can make a case for re-grading to their manager with help from UCU, secondly a formal review before a joint matching panel to ascertain which profile matches the job, and finally access to a full job evaluation exercise as the final appeal. This is discussed in more detail below.

Variation – amending the library of profiles to fit local circumstances

It will be necessary to amend some of the terminology within the library of profiles to reflect local practice; ie change the word 'module' to a local definition, but crucially, amendments should not change the overall level of demand or make it more difficult for staff to achieve a match with a library profile. All variations must be agreed by UCU.

Smaller institutions may, with the agreement of UCU, use the job evaluation scores for the profiles as the reference point for grading if the content of the profiles does not represent the actual demands of role holders in that institution. This avoids the problem of trying to match local benchmarks to national profiles when the job content differs to a great extent, however the overall level of demand expected from local roles will be the same as the overall level of demand contained within the library of profiles as grade boundaries are set using the job evaluation score for the national library of profiles.

Grading outcomes and transfer to the new pay spine

Outcomes

There are 3 possible outcomes to the job evaluation and matching process:

Confirmation in grade

Appendix F of the Agreement states that 'Where current pay matches pay for grade:

- The individual will be paid at the point on the new spine equal to or immediately above their current pay; and
- The individual's grade will be confirmed forthwith.'

This means that staff who are matched to a benchmark profile for an equivalent grade, transfer to the next highest pay point on the spine i.e. senior lecturers transfer to grade Ac3.

The benefits of transfer are set out in the salary scales in section 3 of the handbook. The new pay spine can be found in section 9 in Appendix B of the Framework Agreement.

Red circling

Appendix F of the Agreement states that 'Where current pay is higher than pay for grade:

- By agreement between the individual and management, the responsibilities of the post will be increased such that (following re-evaluation of the post) the grading of the post is increased; or
- By agreement between the individual and management, the individual moves to a post at a higher grade if an appropriate one becomes available, and in the interim is offered a range of training and development opportunities to maximise his/her chances of an agreed move to a post at a higher grade, or
- The individual continues at their current pay level, on a protected basis, for a period of up to four years; 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 job evaluation.'

Red circling of jobs occurs when a job is evaluated and found to be graded at a higher level than is justified. The Framework states that in such instances pay protection will be provided for 4 years. If any job is red circled the employer has an obligation under the Agreement to increase the responsibilities of the post to maintain their existing grading.

After 4 years, if the job evaluation score remains unchanged, and the employee is still matched to a profile below the level of their current grade, the post would be graded at a lower level. The risk of red circling has been minimised by agreeing on the use of benchmarks and sample groups. The terms of Protection for the 4 year period should be negotiated locally. Branches should seek to agree protection which allows staff to progress to the maximum increment of their existing grade during the protection period whilst receiving annual cost of living pay awards.

As a minimum expectation, all members should receive 4 years protection on the basis of current salary plus the annual pay award for each of the 4 years.

During testing of the profiles, both employers and local UCU branches found that over 90% of local jobs would fit one of the profiles. However, even though this process does not involve the evaluation of every single academic, red circling can still occur as a result of the sampling and as a result of the linking to benchmark profiles.

Staff who are at risk of red circling have 3 stages of appeal and review. Branch officers must ensure that benchmark samples are comprised of typical jobs. Management should not be permitted to target staff who they believe are underperforming. Employers who believe that specific staff members are not fulfilling the full requirements of their post should use existing performance management procedures to deal with such issues. The job evaluation process

relates to the size and value of roles within an institution. It must not be used as a tool for dealing with performance issues relating to individual members of staff.

Green circling

Appendix F of the Agreement states that 'Where current pay is lower than pay for grade:

- The individual is promoted to the appropriate higher grade and is paid at the bottom of the pay range for that grade. Except that, where the resulting increase in pay exceeds 10%, that increase may be phased over two years; or
- By agreement between the individual and management, the responsibilities of the post will be reduced such that (following re-evaluation of the post) the grading of the post is reduced; or
- By agreement between the individual and management, the individual moves to a post at the lower grade.'

Green circling of jobs occurs when the job evaluation process shows that a job should be up-graded, this will occur when staff are linked to benchmark profiles which may be graded at a level higher than their existing grade, the process of appeal and review provides the opportunity for staff to seek re-grading on the basis of a match with a higher profile. If an academic is matched to a profile and transfer to that grade would increase basic salary by more than 10% the employer is entitled to phase the increase in salary over 2 years. This may occur if Research A staff are matched to the Grade Ac2 research profile or if staff on the lecturer pay scale are matched to the Ac4 (principal lecturer) profile.

Allocating job evaluation scores to the profiles

The grade 1 profile for teaching and scholarship

It must be noted that the Grade 1 profile for teaching and scholarship will not be used in the post-92 universities. This is emphasised by the wording at the top of the profile.

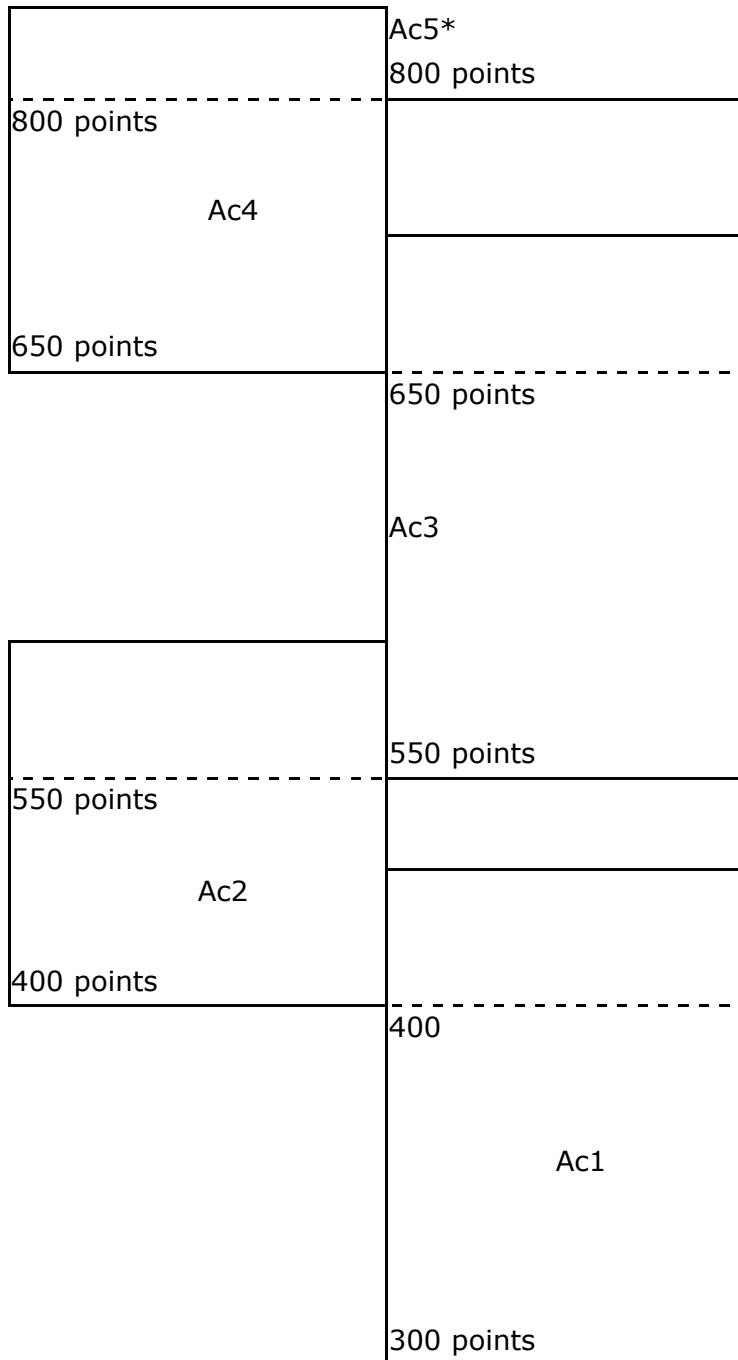
Lecturers should be matched to a profile at Grade 2 or above, the Grade 1 teaching and scholarship profile will only be used in the pre-92 sector to grade teaching assistants. Researchers in the post-92 universities can be matched to any of the 5 research profiles, including the Grade 1 research profile, which may be appropriate for some junior research staff.

The assimilation point for all hourly paid lecturers must be (at least at) the bottom increment of grade Ac2 as agreed and clearly stated within the JNCHES guidance on calculating hourly paid rates.

Following the benchmarking exercise using job evaluation, the profiles themselves are job evaluated to produce profile scores. These scores become the grade boundaries within each

institution. The job evaluation exercise may produce either a range of scores for each profile or a single score for the middle of the grade as follows:

Career pathway for
academic staff



Grade

Boundaries

The job evaluation scores are provided for illustration only and are not intended to suggest the likely scores in any institution.

Once the profiles have been job evaluated and provided with scores, the grade boundaries can be set in terms of job evaluation point scores for all staff.

Matching local profiles to profiles from the national library

At this stage 2 crucial steps have been taken:

- first - the job evaluation benchmarking has produced local benchmark role profiles which encapsulate the typical roles at each level throughout an institution and
- second - grade boundaries have been set by using the job evaluation scores derived from the national role profiles.

The matching process starts with a matching exercise that assigns a local benchmark profile to a library profile on the basis of best fit, or roughly three quarters of a match, with the crucial elements of one of the library profiles. This work must be undertaken by the job evaluation steering group. Agreement must be reached between UCU and the local employer on the correct match for each of the local benchmark profiles. The smaller the number of local benchmark profiles the simpler this task will be.

Transfer to new grades – key procedural issues

The enclosed JNCHES guidance on the use of the profiles describes the process of linking individual jobs to local JE benchmark profiles that have been graded by reference to the national library of profiles. The key procedural issues on linking to benchmarks and transferring to new grades are that:

- The process should not involve every individual being matched to the profile or being job evaluated
- The process should be light touch
- The process should allow for collective transfer to new grades
- The criteria for allocation to a benchmark profile and appropriate grade must be based on the demands of the relevant profile and the typical duties carried out by staff in each department
- If staff within the same department, who currently hold the same grade are assigned to different grades there must be objective justification for such a decision based on the demands of the relevant profile
- Allocation to grades is essentially a management decision, UCU and the employer must agree on the criteria and local Branch officers in each Department must be consulted on the process
- The requirement for all staff to complete questionnaires must be avoided. If the benchmarking exercise has been carried out properly the resulting benchmark profiles will encapsulate the typical features of roles at each grade level

Appealing against the grading decision

The JNCHES guidance on using the library of profiles specifies four levels of appeal:

- First an informal appeal to the line manager responsible for allocating staff to grades
- Second an appeal to a full joint matching panel
- Third a re-evaluation of the post by a trained role analyst using the JE scheme to establish a grading
- Finally if an employee is dissatisfied with the way an evaluation has been conducted they should use the existing grievance procedure to raise a complaint relating to abuse of procedure.

Composition of appeal panels

At stage 2 UCU members have the right to appeal to a joint matching panel to establish a correct grading. It is anticipated that staff who are red circled will automatically appeal against the decision and we advise members to do so.

UCU members who have been allocated to equivalent grades in the new structure may also wish to appeal on the basis that they match the demands of the profile at the higher grade. In all cases it is essential that UCU branch officers serve on the joint appeal panel. Their role is to determine if the job occupied by the member matches a specific graded profile.

Branch officers are advised to note the following:

- The role of the union is to increase the prospects of members progressing to higher grades and to limit the prospects of members being demoted or red circled
- At the informal stage Branch officers should try and persuade managers to reconsider their decision if the member has clearly been assigned to the wrong grade, written reasons must be obtained and the decision must be solely based on the degree of match with a specific profile
- The role of the branch officer on an appeal panel is to objectively assess the case set out by the member and to ensure that all relevant information is considered
- The member will be represented by one branch officer who will argue the case, the second officer on the panel must use the arguments put before the panel on behalf of the member to maximise the prospects of the member succeeding in their appeal
- Branch officers should discuss the merits of an appeal with the member in advance of the appeal. Whilst all members who are red circled should appeal against the decision, members wishing to apply for green circling/allocation to a higher grade must be informed that their appeal will only succeed if the demands of their post match the demands of a higher graded profile. This means that inevitably there will be members whose appeals will certainly fail and the branch officers and members will need to discuss why such appeals are not worth making.
- At the third stage the branch officer should accompany the member to the JE interview and ensure they are fully briefed and fully prepared. In the event that an issue of

procedural deficiency should arise, Branch officers should use the grievance procedure to raise complaints on behalf of members, however in the event of wide scale abuse of procedures the disputes procedure should be used.

Assigning academic roles that do not match any of the profiles to a new grade

While it is anticipated that the library of profiles will encompass the majority of roles within each institution there will be a proportion of roles not covered by a profile. Staff employed in student support or learning support services who are engaged on the national contract and paid on academic scales may not match any of the profiles. Those roles must be allocated to grades using the JE scheme. Roles should be benchmarked in the same way as other academic roles, but instead of matching to a library profile, the local benchmark profile should be assigned to a grade in Appendix C on the basis of the benchmark JE score for that role.

Use of the profiles following implementation

Once the Agreement has been implemented, pay progression will be determined by reference to role development as assessed through matching to a profile and measurement of roles through job evaluation. JNCHES will be producing guidance on progression between grades at a later stage. UCU anticipates that progression will be dependant on a) the employee meeting the demands of the profile for a higher grade and b) the employer agreeing that this role development is required or is viewed as necessary by the institution.

Step-by-step guide to using the library of profiles

Step 1 - Collect local benchmark job evaluation data

Use a 5%-10% sample (5% in larger HEIs, 10% in small or specialist HEIs). Sample group must be agreed with unions.

Step 2 - Analyse data and produce benchmark role profiles for all common roles

HERA produces this information automatically as does HAY. Local profiles will cover the same issues and areas as the library of national profiles.

Step 3 - Assign individuals to a benchmark

This can be done through group interviews, or through managers and unions agreeing on transfer criteria (i.e. all SLs in a department go to one benchmark) or by some other criteria agreed with the union.

Step 4 - Job evaluate the national profiles to provide point scores for each grade

Each of the national profiles is evaluated, the resulting points score becomes the reference point for both academic and non-academic grading. Local terminology can be used to provide context and meaning to the summary statements in the library of profiles.

Step 5 - Compare the local benchmarks to the national profiles to obtain grading on the basis of 'best fit'

The locally produced benchmark profiles contains the summary of the typical local roles at each grade, there could be more than one local benchmark per grade i.e. teaching and research, teaching scholarship or research. Each local benchmark is assigned to a grade by a process of best fit. This involves establishing which of the library of national profiles most closely resembles each local benchmark on the basis of a three quarters fit between the demands of the national profile and the local benchmark.

Step 6 - Transfer to new grades

Staff assigned to each local benchmark graded with reference to the national library transfer to the appropriate grade. Once each of the local benchmark profiles has been graded on the basis of 'best fit' with one of the national profiles, staff transfer to new grades in accordance with the criteria in Step 3 above.

Step 7 - Appeals and reviews

Stage 1 - Informal review of a decision to assign to a specific benchmark

Stage 2 - Formal appeal to a joint 'job matching' panel.

Stage 3 - Final appeal – this takes the form of a full job evaluation exercise of the post.

Step 8 - Roles that do not match to any benchmark profile

There will be a small proportion of roles that are anomalous or atypical. Such roles must be job evaluated to establish a correct grading.