

# POSITION CLASSIFICATION AT UWS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Position classification is the process used to determine the appropriate classification level of General Staff positions at HEW Level 1 to 9 within the University. The process of position classification (and re-classification) is covered by Clause 15 of the [University of Western Sydney General Staff Agreement 2009-2012](#) [the **Agreement**].

The University is committed to openness and transparency and seeks equitable and consistent classification outcomes from the process of establishing the work value of a position. It is essential that sound job design principles are applied when creating a new position or re-classifying an existing position. This includes reviewing the key functions/responsibilities/duties required of the position, as well as the interaction and relationship of the position with other positions within the organisational work unit and its long term goals.

This paper provides supporting information to assist with the application of the position classification process and must be read in conjunction with the Agreement.

## 2. POSITION CLASSIFICATION METHODOLOGY

The principles of the position classification methodology are outlined in Clause 15 (1) to (7) of the Agreement. Position classification establishes the work value of a position and sets the applicable salary range following an assessment of the Position Description against the Position Descriptors detailed in Schedule 4 of the Agreement. It is not a reflection of the personal contribution of the incumbent.

Positions are classified using a number of job dimensions:

- Training level or Qualification;
- Occupational equivalent;
- Level of supervision;
- Task level;
- Organisational knowledge;
- Judgement, independence and problem solving; and
- Typical activities.

## 3. POSITION DESCRIPTION

Every position at Salary Levels 1 – 9 will have a position description developed within the context of the work unit. The classification of a position will be based on the information provided in the [Position Description](#). Line managers should have a clear understanding of the core duties of the position, the task level, challenges/problem solving, level of supervision/independence, the level of organisational knowledge and decision making capacity/judgement and its place within the organisational structure of the work unit must be clearly described to allow a proper consideration of the position. [see attached [template](#)].

The Position Description does not reflect the personal qualities of the individual employee occupying the position e.g., an employee may have a formal qualification; however, the position requirements should only indicate the need for a formal qualification where it is essential for the proper functioning of the position.

## 4. INITIATING THE POSITION CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

### 4.1 Application for Position Classification / Re-classification

The classification process for General Staff positions applies to

- A newly created position requiring classification; or
- An existing vacant position requiring review as an outcome of significant change; or
- An existing position where an employee and their line manager have had discussions regarding the currency of the employee's position statement and classification level.

Requests for the classification/re-classification of a General Staff position are to be submitted to the Office of People and Culture to initiate the classification process. Requests must be accompanied by a completed *Application for Position Classification/Re-classification* form (refer [Attachment](#)), a Position Description, and an organisation chart showing the organisational relationship of the position.

Where the position is an existing position and re-classification is being sought, a copy of the original Position Description is to be attached to the application form.

If an existing position being reclassified is one of a group of like positions across an organisational work unit, then any changes to that Position Description will be considered in the context of the whole group. The fact that a position is one of a group of like positions does not prevent that position from being considered for classification as a separate position.

### 4.2 Classification of a newly created position

A new position may be created as an outcome of an organisational change process (refer Clause 49 of the Agreement) or as an outcome of an identified organisational work unit need. When a new General Staff position is created, the relevant line manager must complete an *Application for Position Classification /Re-classification* form and submit the documentation for classification prior to the commencement of recruitment action.

In classifying a new position, consideration will be given to identifying a comparable existing position and its Position Description will be used as a base. If the Position Description for a new position specifies duties, scope and skills base criteria that are exactly the same as an existing position, it will be classified at the same level as the position(s) it replicates.

### 4.3 Re-classification of an existing vacant position

When an existing position becomes vacant, the relevant line manager must assess whether any aspect of the current Position Description for the position has changed. The line manager may consult with staff in the work area to inform the process, and allow for proper consideration. Where it is determined that a significant change has occurred, a new Position Description will be prepared and submitted with accompanying documentation to the Office of People and Culture, for an assessment of the classification level.

#### 4.4 Re-classification of an existing occupied position

An employee, or their relevant line manager, may at any time initiate discussions regarding the currency of the individual employee's Position Description and classification level. Following such a discussion, the employee and their line manager may:

- Both agree that the existing Position Description needs to be updated and should be submitted for re-classification;
- Both agree that the existing Position Description does not need to be updated, and that there is no need to have it submitted for re-classification; or
- Both disagree about the currency and accuracy of the employee's Position Description, and/or the work is not required to be undertaken. Where there is no agreement, the process outlined in clause 15 (13) of the Agreement will be followed, and the employee may make a submission directly to their Dean /Director for adjudication [clause 15 (13)].

### 5. POSITION CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

On receipt of the *Application for Position Classification/Re-classification* and new Position Description (and original Position Description for a position being submitted for re-classification), the classification process will be undertaken by a person nominated by the Executive Director, People and Culture, utilising Position Descriptors detailed in Schedule 4 of the Agreement. Personal or gender identifying information on the position holder will not be available to, or used by, the person undertaking the classification process.

Positions being classified will be assessed against each of the seven job dimensions contained in the Position Descriptors and rated on a 'best-fit' basis for each of the dimensions. 'Best-fit' means that not only does the chosen level describe the position, but the descriptor for the level below is clearly too low and the descriptor for the level above is too high. The assessed classification level will be based on the 'best-fit' of a minimum of five out of the seven dimensions.

### 6. TRAINING PROGRAM

The use of Position Descriptors for a classification process relies on an objective assessment by the evaluator of the detail contained in the Position Description against seven separate dimensions, each dimension being assessed on a stand alone basis.

To assist in developing a trained core of personnel for this process, an internal training program in the use of the Position Descriptors will be provided for persons nominated by the Executive Director, People and Culture. The training program, which will include regular refresher training to maintain currency, will include the following key elements:

- Group discussion on understanding the Descriptors and 'best Fit' concept
- Individual review of previously classified positions against descriptors
- Group discussions on classification outcomes from individual reviews.

## POSITION DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

### POSITION DETAILS:

**Position Title**

**Establishment No:**

**School/Office:**

**College/Division:**

### CONTEXT:

Describes the hierarchical role of the organisational work unit, how it fits within the wider University, its strategic outcomes etc.

- University
- College/Division
- School/Office
- Organisational work unit

### PURPOSE/MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Summarises the overall objectives of the position.
- What are the major objectives of the position and what methods are used to achieve these objectives?
- With what frequency are these various major tasks undertaken?
- What is the position's overall importance to the University?
- Why does the position exist?
- What major work outcomes are expected?"

### REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

- This positions line manager
- Other positions reporting to this line manager
- Positions reporting to this position
- Number of positions under control of this position not reporting directly to it.

### SCOPE:

Describes the challenges, problem solving requirements and decision making capacity of the position, and may include:

- What are the major issues that the position must confront in achieving the specified work output (eg. need to prioritise, changing client demands, limited resources, need to devise new procedures or implement change)?
- What is the type and complexity of the problems that the position will typically face, how are these addressed, and the level of analytical capacity to address the situation(s)?
- What it is the variety of problems and what level of solutions already exist in the position or is creative thinking required to undertake responsibilities (eg. does the position have readily available assistance from a supervisor or other staff, documented procedures/guidelines, precedents, legislation etc.)?
- From where does the impetus for change originate in the position (eg. Legislation, technology, strategic/business plans, client expectations).
- Is there a need to continually keep up-to-date with knowledge and or skills?
- What level of supervision/autonomy does the position require.

- What recommendations for decisions or actions does the position make and to whom?
- What budget responsibility does the position have?
- To whom does the position give work directions, and what is the nature of this direction?
- What formal delegations does the position have?
- Who reviews/receives the positions work output and how often is the work reviewed?
- What constraints inhibit the resolution of typical problems (ie. what types of decisions can the incumbent make without reference to the position's line manager and what decisions have been referred?
- Is the position required to share information, to consult, to motivate, to counsel, to train/develop staff, to co-ordinate, to provide or seek advice, to provide support services etc.

#### **KEY FUNCTIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES/DUTIES:**

List in dot point form the specific functions/responsibilities/duties of the position.

#### **SELECTION CRITERIA:**

Lists the various essential requirements needed to undertake the effective performance of the position. These requirements will define the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to be applied when undertaking the position from an objective basis on which to assess and applicant's suitability and performance capability.

Selection criteria are to be defined, not only in terms of the competency itself, but also the specific level of competence required.

Selection criteria should describe the requirements of the position itself and not the attributes of the current / recent occupant.

Selection criteria should be limited to a maximum of 8.

OH&S and EEO responsibilities need to be included in the selection criteria with the wording dependent upon the role of the position and HEW Level

**Date Position Description Last Reviewed:**

**Date Position Description Last Classified:**

**ATTACHMENT 2****REQUEST FOR CLASSIFICATION / RECLASSIFICATION OF A  
GENERAL STAFF POSITION****Documentation**

Requests for reclassification of a General Staff Position must be made on the Request for Reclassification of a General Staff Position form.

The staff member and nominated supervisor are required to sign the request form. The request form must be endorsed by the Dean or Director as an indication of her / his support for a review of the HEW level of the position.

**If an occupied position is reclassified to a higher level, the new salary will be effective from the date of submission to the Dean / Director or the date indicated on page 3 of this form, whichever is the earliest.**

**NOTE:**

Position classification establishes the work value of a position and sets the applicable salary range. It does not reflect the personal qualities or contribution of the individual employee occupying the position.

An increase in classification can be justified only if there has been a significant net addition to the value of the work required to be performed. and an assessment reveals that the work is unquestionably that of a higher classification level. A change in work or increased workload may not necessarily involve a change in the value of the work.

## REQUEST FOR CLASSIFICATION / RECLASSIFICATION OF A GENERAL STAFF POSITION

This form must be completed and forwarded to your Senior HR Partner through the Dean/Director to allow a reclassification request to be registered and proceed.

### Position Details

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Establishment No: \_\_\_\_\_  
[if 'new' position insert 'new'):

School/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

### POSITION CLASSIFICATION REQUEST FOR:

*(Tick as appropriate)*

- **New position requiring classification –**

This position has not existed before. Attach proposed Position Description and organisation chart.

- **Existing unoccupied established position requiring re-classification**

This position is an existing vacant position, and a significant change has been identified. Attach current and reviewed Position Description and organisation chart.

- **Existing occupied established position requiring re-classification –**

- This position is an existing position with a current occupant. The employee and their supervisor have agreed the current Position Description is inaccurate. Attach current and reviewed Position Descriptions and organisation chart.

**IF A NEW POSITION OR AN EXISTING VACANT POSITION, GO TO PAGE 4 FOR ENDORSEMENT OF DEAN / DIRECTOR.**

## 1. FOR RECLASSIFICATION REQUESTS ONLY

Broadly identify significant changes to the purpose, scope and function of the position since it was last classified. Add additional page [s] if necessary.

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## 2. Request for Reclassification

(To be completed by the occupant of the position)

- (i) I have discussed my position with my supervisor / line manager and we have agreed that the position is currently incorrectly classified and seek reclassification. Yes No  
(circle one)
- (ii) I confirm the accuracy of the above summary as a true reflection of the changes that have occurred to this position, and that the changes are now a requirement of the position as it currently exists Yes No  
(circle one)
- (iii) The attached revised Position Description reflects the above changes, and has been developed in consultation with my supervisor. Yes No  
(circle one)

**PLEASE ATTACH THE ORIGINAL AND REVISED POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND AN ORGANISATION CHART TO THIS FORM.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

[Occupant of the position]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Endorsement of Request for Reclassification

(To be completed by the relevant Manager/Supervisor)

- (i) I confirm that the incumbent of this position has discussed the need to update the Position Description for this position. Yes No  
(circle one)
- (ii) I confirm the changes that have occurred to this position, that these are ongoing and have been incorporated into the requirements of the position. Yes No  
(circle one)
- (iii) I confirm that the revised Position Description reflects the above Changes. Yes No  
(circle one)
- (iv) Please indicate the approximate date at which you believe the position requirements changed to those described in the summary \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Relevant Manager/Supervisor)

#### 4. [Tick appropriate box]

- a. I have discussed the reclassification request and revised Position Description with the Manager/Supervisor submitted under the terms of Clause 15 of the General Staff Agreement and endorse the request for reclassification;

**OR**

- b. This is a new position requiring classification;

**OR**

- c. This is an existing, vacant position and a significant change has been identified warranting a review of the classification level.

Dean / Director \_\_\_\_\_  
Print name Signature Date