

**PERSONNEL SERVICES**

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD  
 Director of Human Resources



To: Departmental Administrators, Departmental HR staff, Divisional Secretaries

Ref. EMS/6,  
 EMS/33

cc. Mrs Zaccheo, Ms Mitchell, HR Business Partners

16 February 2017

**New Grading Arrangements**

*Following feedback from the 2016 HR Audit and Uniform, the Reward team conducted a review of grading procedures with a view to reducing the time taken to process staff requests. As a result of this review, effective from 1 March 2017:*

- 1. Standard Research roles in grades 6 - 10 (both internally and externally funded) will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst.*
- 2. Roles in grades 1 - 3 will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst.*
- 3. Roles in grades 4 and 5, which are covered by a generic job description, will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst.*

**1. Action required of departments**

Departments are asked to:

- (a) Note the information contained in this circular on the upcoming changes to the grading process.
- (b) Make use of generic jobs descriptions and generic grade and category descriptions to ensure that roles are still appropriately graded. Refer to the updated staff request and contract decisions matrix to ensure that the correct position codes are used when submitting staff requests in Core HR.

**2. Background**

At present all staff requests for new jobs are processed by a HERA role analyst, and the job descriptions are evaluated. This process can take up to 10 working days. Jobs that do not require evaluation are processed separately by an administrative assistant. In order to reduce the time taken to process staff requests, with effect from 1 March 2017:

- Standard Research roles in grades 6 -10 (both internally and externally funded) will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst;
- Roles in grades 1 - 3 will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst; and,



- Roles in grades 4 and 5, which are covered by a generic job description, will no longer be evaluated by a HERA role analyst.

These changes are possible because of the development of a number of generic job descriptions, which underpin these roles. Generic job descriptions underpin all standard research roles in grades 6 - 10 and a number of roles in grades 4 and 5. Generic job descriptions have also been developed to underpin the majority of roles in grades 1 - 3. It is expected that where a role in grades 1 - 3 is not covered by a generic, the [generic grade and category descriptions](#) will be used by departments to match job descriptions to an appropriate grade.

These roles will now be processed by an administrative assistant, and it is expected that HERA role analysts will see a reduction of around 35 roles per month, allowing them to focus on evaluating roles which are less straightforward.

There are no changes to the regrading process.

### **3. Revised process and support arrangements**

It is expected that departments will use or adapt the relevant generic job description whenever possible. A number of new generics have been developed and the [website](#) has been updated.

Departments should select the appropriate position code when raising a staff request to indicate whether a generic has been used. The Reward team will continue to fully evaluate new roles in grades 4 - 10, any roles by request, and to carry out spot checks on staff requests as necessary.

The staff request position types have been reviewed to reflect the new procedures and the [staff request and contract decision matrix](#) will be updated and published on 1 March 2017.

[Training sessions](#) on HERA and job descriptions, which covers the use of generic job descriptions, will continue to run over the course of 2017.

### **4. Seeking further advice**

If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Oldershaw ([jessica.oldershaw@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jessica.oldershaw@admin.ox.ac.uk))

Mr Julian Duxfield

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