

Professional Position Descriptors - Guidelines

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of these guidelines is to outline how professional positions (formerly known as Administrative, Professional and Technical "APT" positions) will be classified.

2. Scope and application

2.1 These guidelines apply to professional positions and do not apply to senior positions, and within the salary schedules set out in Schedule 1 of the University of the Sunshine Coast Enterprise Agreement.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to its effectiveness:

Classification is the designated level on the University of the Sunshine Coast Classification Structure of a position which is based on a formal evaluation of that position.

Typical activities are activities typically undertaken by staff members in different occupations at each of the proposed classification levels.

4. General position descriptors

In making the formal evaluation of the position, the classification is determined against three broad criteria:

- qualifications (refer to 4.1)
- supervision (refer to 4.2)
- other classification dimensions (refer to 4.3)
- training level
- occupational equivalent
- task level
- organisational knowledge
- judgement, independence and problem solving

4.1 Qualifications

These definitions also include equivalent recognised overseas qualifications.

- Year 12: completion of Year 12 of secondary school.
- trade certificate: completion of an apprenticeship, normally of four years duration, or equivalent recognition.
- post-trade certificate: a course of study over and above a trade certificate and less than an advanced certificate.
- advanced certificate: a two year part-time post-Year 12 or post-trade certificate course, or a four year part-time course for those who have completed Year 10 only of secondary school.
- certificate: a two year full-time or four year part-time without a Year 12 prerequisite.
- associate diploma: a two year full-time or four-year part-time course with a Year 12 prerequisite.
- degree: a recognised degree from a tertiary institution, often completed in three or four years, and sometimes combined with a one year diploma.
- postgraduate degree: a recognised postgraduate degree, over and above a degree as defined above.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice-Chancellor and President

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Vice-Chancellor and President

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Director, People and Culture

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STATUS

Active

4.2 Supervision

- close supervision: clear and detailed instructions are provided. Tasks are covered by standard procedures. Deviation from procedures or unfamiliar situations are referred to higher levels. Work is regularly checked.
- routine supervision: direction is provided on the tasks to be undertaken with some latitude to rearrange sequences and discriminate between established methods. Guidance on the approach to standard circumstances is provided in procedures, guidance on the approach to non standard circumstances is provided by a supervisor. Checking is elective rather than constant.
- general direction: direction is provided on the assignments to be undertaken, with the occupant determining the appropriate use of established methods, tasks and sequences. There is some scope to determine an approach in the absence of established procedures or detailed instructions, but guidance is readily available. Performance is checked by assignment completion.
- broad direction: direction is provided in terms of objectives which may require the planning of staff members, time and material resources for their completion. Limited detailed guidance will be available and the development or modification of procedures by the staff member may be required. Performance will be measured against objectives.

4.3 Other classification dimensions

- training level: the type and duration of training which the duties of the classification level typically require for effective performance. Training is the process of acquiring skills and knowledge through formal education, on the job instruction, or exposure to procedures.
- occupational equivalent: occupations typically falling within each proposed classification level.
- task level: the type, complexity, and responsibility of tasks typically performed by staff members within each proposed classification level.
- organisational knowledge: the level of knowledge and awareness of the organisation, its structure and functions that would be required of staff members at each proposed classification level, and the purposes to which that organisational knowledge may be utilised.
- judgement, independence and problem solving: judgement is the ability to make sound decisions, recognising the consequences of decisions taken or actions performed. Independence is the extent to which an staff member is able (or allowed) to work effectively without supervision or direction. Problem solving is the process of defining or selecting the appropriate course of action where alternative courses of action are available. This dimension looks at how much of each of these three qualities applies at each proposed classification level.

5. Level one

5.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at the base of level one would not be required to have formal qualifications or work experience upon engagement. Staff members engaged at the base of this level will be provided with structured on the job training in addition to 38 hours of induction to the higher education industry which will provide information on available and consequent career path opportunities, physical layout of the institution / work areas, introduction to fellow workers and supervisors, work and documentation procedures, occupational health and safety, equal employment opportunity practices and extended basic literacy and numeracy skills training where required/necessary to enable career path progression.

Occupational equivalent: cleaner, labourer, trainee for Level 2 duties

5.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: close supervision or, in the case of more experienced staff members working alone, routine supervision.

Supervisory role: nil

5.3 Task level

Straight forward manual duties, or elements of Level 2 duties under close supervision and structured on-the-job training. Some knowledge of materials e.g. cleaning chemicals and hand tools, may be required. Established procedures exist.

5.4 Organisational knowledge

May provide straightforward information to others on building or service locations.

5.5 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Resolve problems where alternatives for the job holder are limited and the required action is clear or can be readily referred to higher levels.

5.6 Typical activities

Perform a range of industrial cleaning tasks, move furniture, assist trades personnel with manual duties.

6. Level two

6.1 Training level or qualifications

Persons employed at level 2 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge, training or experience relevant to the duties to be performed, or completion of Year 12 without work experience or an equivalent combination of experience and training.

Occupational equivalent: clerk, security patrol officer.

6.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: routine supervision of straightforward tasks; close supervision of more complex tasks (refer below).

6.3 Task level

Straight forward manual duties, or elements of Level 2 duties under close supervision and structured on-the-job training. Some knowledge of materials, eg, cleaning chemicals and hand tools, may be required. Established procedures exist.

6.4 Organisational knowledge

Following training, may provide general information/advice and assistance to members of the public, students and other staff members which is based on a broad knowledge of the staff member's work area/ responsibility, including knowledge of the functions carried out and the location and availability of particular personnel and services.

6.5 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Solve relatively simple problems with reference to established techniques and practices. Will sometimes choose between a range of straightforward alternatives. A staff member at this level will be expected to perform a combination of various routine tasks where the daily work routine will allow the latitude or rearrange some work sequences, provided the rearranged work priorities are achieved.

6.6 Typical activities

Clerical positions at this level may include duties involving the inward and outward movement of mail, keeping, copying, maintaining and retrieving records, straightforward data entry and retrieval.

Security officers may be involved in a range of patrol duties, including responding to alarms, following emergency procedures and preparing incident reports.

7. Level three

7.1 Training level or qualifications

Persons employed at level 3 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training in clerical / administrative, trades or technical functions equivalent to:

- completion of a trades certificate, or
- completion of Year 12, with relevant work experience, or
- equivalent relevant experience or combination of relevant experience and education /training

Persons advancing through this level may typically perform duties which require further on the job training or knowledge and training equivalent to progress toward completion of an advanced certificate or associate diploma.

Occupational equivalent: tradesperson, technical assistant/technical trainee, clerical/ secretarial.

7.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: In technical positions, routine supervision, moving to general direction with experience, in other positions general direction.

Supervisory role: this is the first level where supervision of other staff members may be required.

7.3 Task level

Some complexity. Apply body of knowledge equivalent to trade certificate, including diagnostic skills and assessment of the best approach to a given task.

7.4 Organisational knowledge

Perform tasks / assignments which require knowledge of the work area processes and an understanding of how these interact with other related areas and processes.

7.5 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Exercise judgement on work methods and task sequence within specified time-lines and standard practices and procedures.

7.6 Typical activities

In trade positions, apply the skills taught in a trade certificate, including performance of a range of construction, maintenance and repair tasks, using precision hand and power tools and equipment. In some cases this will involve familiarity with the work of other trades or require further training.

In technical assistant positions:

- assist a technical officer in operating a laboratory, including the ordering of supplies
- assist in setting up routine experiments
- monitor experiments for report to a technical officer
- assist with the preparation of specimens
- assist with the feeding and care of animals

Staff members would be expected to perform a greater range and complexity of tasks as they progress through the level and obtain further training.

In clerical positions, perform a range of clerical support tasks including:

- standard use of a word processing package (including store and retrieve documents, key and lay out correspondence and reports, merge, move and copy, use of columns, tables and basic graphics) or an established spreadsheet or database application
- provide general clerical support to staff members, including word processing, setting up meetings, answering straightforward inquiries and directing others to the appropriate personnel
- process accounts for payment

8. Level four

8.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at level 4 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- completion of an associate diploma level qualification with relevant work related experience or a certificate level qualification with post certificate relevant work experience, or
- completion of a post trades certificate or advanced certificate and extensive relevant experience and on the job training, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and education/training.

Occupational equivalent: technical officer or technician, clerical / secretarial above Level 3, advanced tradesperson.

8.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: in technical positions, routine supervision to. general direction depending on experience and the complexity of the tasks. In other positions, general direction.

Supervisory role: may supervise or co-ordinate others to achieve objectives, including liaison with staff members at higher levels. May undertake stand alone work.

8.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

In trades positions, extensive diagnostic skills. In technical positions, apply theoretical knowledge and techniques to a range of procedures and tasks. In clerical/secretarial positions, provide factual advice which requires proficiency in the work area's rules and regulations, procedures requiring expertise in a specialist area or broad knowledge of a range of personnel and functions.

8.4 Organisational knowledge

Perform tasks/assignments which require proficiency in the work area's rules, regulations, processes and techniques, and how they interact with other related functions.

8.5 Task level

May undertake limited creative, planning or design functions; apply skills to a varied range of different tasks.

8.6 Typical activities

In trades positions:

- work on complex engineering or interconnected electrical circuits
- exercise high precision trades skills using various materials and/or specialised techniques

In technical positions:

- develop new equipment to criteria developed and specified by others
- under routine direction, assist in the conduct of major experiments and research programs and/or in setting up complex or unusual equipment for a range of experiments and demonstrations
- demonstrate the use of equipment and prepare reports of a technical nature as directed

In library technician positions:

- undertake copy cataloguing
- use a range of bibliographic databases
- undertake acquisitions
- respond to reference inquiries

In clerical/secretarial positions:

- may undertake a full range of word processing functions, including mathematical formulae and symbols, manipulation of text and layout in desktop publishing software and use of a range of word processing packages if required
- be responsible for providing a full range of secretarial services
- plan and set up spreadsheets or data base applications
- provide advice to students on enrolment procedures and requirements
- administer enrolment and course progression records

9. Level five

9.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at level 5 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- completion of a degree without subsequent relevant work experience, or
- completion of an associate diploma and at least two (2) years subsequent relevant work experience, or
- completion of a post trades certificate or advanced certificate and extensive relevant experience as a technician, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and / or education / training

Occupational equivalent: graduate (i.e. degree) or professional, without subsequent work experience on entry (including inexperienced computer systems officers); administrator with responsibility for advice and determinations; experienced technical officer.

9.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: in professional positions, routine supervision to general direction, depending on tasks involved and experience and in technical positions general direction.

Supervisory role: may supervise other staff members.

9.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

In professional positions, solve problems through the standard application of theoretical principles and techniques at degree level.

In technical positions, apply standard technical training and experience to solve problems.

In administrative positions may apply expertise in a particular set of rules or regulations to make decisions, or be responsible for coordinating a team to provide an administrative service.

9.4 Organisational knowledge

Perform tasks/assignments which require proficiency in the work area's rules, regulation, processes and techniques and how they interact with other related functions.

9.5 Task level

Apply body of broad technical knowledge and experience at a more advanced level than level 4, including the development of areas of specialist expertise. In professional positions, apply theoretical knowledge, at degree level, in a straight forward way. In administrative positions, provide interpretation, advice and decisions on rules and entitlements.

9.6 Typical activities

In technical positions:

- develop new equipment to general specifications
- under general direction, assist in the conduct of major experiments and research programs and / or in setting up complex unusual equipment for a range of experiments and demonstrations
- under broad direction, set up, monitor and demonstrate standard experiments and equipment use
- prepare reports of a technical nature

In library technician positions, perform at a higher level than level 4, including:

- assist with reader education programs and more complex bibliographic and acquisition services
- operate a discrete Unit within a library which may involve significant supervision of be the senior staff members member in outposted service

In administrative positions:

- responsible for the explanation and administration of an administrative function, e.g. HECS advice, records, determinations and payments, a centralised enrolment function, the organisation and administration of exams at a small campus

In professional positions and if under professional supervision:

- work as part of a research team in a support role
- provide a range of library services including bibliographic assistance, original cataloguing and reader education in library and reference services
- provide counselling services

10. Level six

10.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at level 6 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- degree with subsequent relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and specialist expertise or broad knowledge in technical or administrative fields, or
- equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training

Occupational equivalent: graduate or professional with subsequent relevant work experience (including a computer systems officer with some experience), line manager, experienced technical specialist and / or technical supervisor.

10.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: in professional positions, general direction, in other positions, broad direction.

Supervisory role: may have extensive supervisory and line management responsibility for technical, clerical, administrative and other non-professional staff members.

10.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Discretion to innovate within own function and take responsibility for outcomes; design, develop and, test complex equipment, systems and procedures; undertake planning involving resource use and develop proposals for resource allocation; exercise high level diagnostic skills on sophisticated equipment or systems; analyse and report on data and experiments.

10.4 Organisational knowledge

Perform task / assignments which require proficiency in the work area's existing rules, regulations, processes and techniques and how these interact with other related functions and to adapt those procedures and techniques as required to achieve objectives without impacting on other areas.

10.5 Task level

Perform work assignments guided by policy, precedent, professional standards and managerial or technical expertise. Staff members would have the latitude to develop or redefine procedures and interpret policy as long as other work areas are not affected.

In technical and administrative areas, have a depth or breadth of expertise developed through extensive relevant experience and application.

10.6 Typical activities

In technical positions:

- manage a teaching or research laboratory or a field station
- provide highly specialised technical services
- set up complex experiments
- design and construct complex or unusual equipment to general specifications
- assist honours and postgraduate students with their laboratory requirements
- install, repair, provide and demonstrate computer services in laboratories

In administrative positions:

- provide financial, policy and planning advice
- service a range of administrative and academic committees, including preparation of agendas, papers, minutes and correspondence
- monitor expenditure against budget.

In professional positions:

- work as part of a research team
- provide a range of library services, including bibliographic
- assistance, original cataloguing and reader education in library and reference services
- provide counselling services
- undertake a range of computer programming tasks
- provide documentation and assistance to computer users
- analyse less complex user and system requirements

11. Level seven

11.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed of level 7 will typically perform duties of a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- degree with at least 4 years subsequent relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and management expertise in technical or administrative fields, or
- equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training

Occupational equivalent: senior librarian, technical manager, senior professional or scientific officer, senior administrator in a small less complex environment.

11.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: broad direction.

Supervisory role: may manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff members.

11.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Independently relate existing policy to work assignments, rethink the way specific body of knowledge is applied in order to solve problems, adapt procedures to fit policy prescriptions or use theoretical principles in modifying and adapting techniques. This may involve stand alone work or the supervision of others in order to achieve objectives. It may also involve the interpretation of policy which has an impact beyond the immediate work area.

11.4 Organisational knowledge

Detailed knowledge of academic and administrative policies and the interrelationships between a range of policies and activities.

11.5 Task level

Independently relate existing policy to work assignments or rethink the way a specific body of knowledge is applied in order to solve problems. In professional or technical positions, may be a recognised authority in specialised area.

11.6 Typical activities

In a library, combine specialist expertise and responsibility for managing library function; in Student Life and Learning, the training and supervision of other professional staff members combined with policy development responsibilities which may include research and publication; in technical manager positions, the management of teaching and research facilities for department or school; in research positions, acknowledged expertise in specialised area or a combination of technical management and specialist research.

In administrative positions, provide less senior administrative support to relatively small and less complex faculties or equivalent.

12. Level eight

12.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at level 8 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge and training equivalent to:

- postgraduate qualifications or progress towards postgraduate qualifications with extensive relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and management expertise, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training

Occupational equivalent: researcher of national standing; senior school administrator.

12.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: broad direction.

Supervisory role: may manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff members.

12.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Responsible for program development and implementation. Provide strategic support and advice to schools or faculties requiring integration of a range of university policies and external requirements and an ability to achieve objectives operating within complex organisational structures.

12.4 Organisational knowledge

The staff member would be expected to make policy recommendations to others and to implement programs involving major change which may impact on other areas of the institution's operations.

12.5 Task level

Work at this level is likely to require the development of new ways of using a specific body of know which applies to work assignments or may involve the integration of other specific bodies of knowledge.

12.6 Typical activities

Assist in the management of a large functional unit with a diverse or complex set of functions and significant resources.

Manage a function or development and implementation of a policy requiring a high degree of knowledge and sensitivity. Manage a small or specialised unit where significant innovation, initiative and/or judgement are required.

Provide senior administrative support to schools of medium complexity, taking into account the size, budget, course structure, external activities and management practices.

13. Level nine

13.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at level 9 will typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- postgraduate qualifications and extensive relevant experience, or
- extensive management experience and proven management expertise, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training

Occupational equivalent: researcher of national or international standing; manager; senior school administrator.

13.2 Level of supervision

Supervision received: broad direction.

Supervisory role: will manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff members.

13.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Responsible for program development and implementation. Provide strategic support and advice to schools or faculties requiring integration of a range of internal and external policies and demands, and an ability to achieve objectives operating within complex organisational structures.

13.4 Organisational knowledge

Conceptualise, develop and review major policies, objectives and strategies involving high level liaison with internal and external client areas. Responsible for programs involving major change which may impact on other areas of the institution's operation.

13.5 Task level

Demonstrated capacity to conceptualise, develop and review major professional management or administrative policies at corporate level. Significant high level creative, planning, and management function. Responsibility for significant resources.

13.6 Typical activities

Assist in the management of a large functional unit with a diverse or complex set of functions and significant resources.

Manage a function or development and implementation of a policy requiring a high degree of knowledge and sensitivity and the integration of internal and external requirements.

Manage a small and specialised unit where significant innovation, initiative and/or judgement are required.

Provide senior administrative support to the more complex schools, taking into account the size, budget, course structure, external activities and management practices.

14. Level ten

14.1 Qualifications or training level

Persons employed at or above this level will typically, perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge and training equivalent to:

- proven expertise in the management of significant human and material resources; in addition to, in some areas
- postgraduate qualifications and extensive relevant experience

Occupational equivalent: senior program, research or administrative manager.

14.2 Level of supervision

Supervision given: broad direction.

Supervisory role: will manage other administrative, technical and/or professional staff members.

14.3 Judgement, independence and problem solving

Be fully responsible for the achievement of significant organisational objectives and programs.

14.4 Organisational knowledge

Bring multi-perspective understanding to the development, carriage, marketing and implementation of new policies; devise new ways of adapting the organisation's strategies to new, including externally generated, demands.

14.5 Task level

Complex, significant and high level creative planning, program and managerial functions with clear accountability for program performance. Comprehensive knowledge of related programs. Generate and use a high level of theoretical and applied knowledge.

1.6 Typical activities

Manage a large functional unit with a diverse or complex set of functions and significant resources. Manage a more complex function or unit where significant innovation, initiative and/or judgement are required.

Provide senior administrative support to the most complex schools in large institutions, involving complex course structures, significant staff members and financial resources, outside activities and extensive devolution of administrative, policy and financial management responsibilities to this position.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Job Evaluation of Professional Positions - Guidelines

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

- University of the Sunshine Coast Enterprise Agreement