

Grading Policy

1. Introduction

This policy explains how posts within the County Council are graded. It covers all staff employed on the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book) conditions, excluding Corporate Directors.

2. Principles

2.1 The County Council is committed to ensuring that the grading of posts is undertaken to ensure consistency, fairness, openness and equality of treatment. In pursuit of this the following principles will be upheld:

- 2.1.1 All posts will be evaluated and graded using either the National Joint Council (NJC) Job Evaluation Scheme or the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme according to the criteria set out in 3.1, and no other method.
- 2.1.2 Performance related pay will not be a feature.
- 2.1.3 The grade will relate to the post and not the employee.
- 2.1.4 There will be equal pay for work of equal value.
- 2.1.5 All considerations which may discriminate unfairly will be eliminated.
- 2.1.6 Grades need to accurately reflect the duties and responsibilities of the post,

3. Determining the correct evaluation scheme

3.1 The following criteria will be applied to determine the most appropriate job evaluation scheme under which to evaluate a job. Jobs will be evaluated first under the Hay job evaluation scheme if:

- 3.1.1 The job requires a full professional qualification or an equivalent level of organisational policy and procedural knowledge (i.e., would score level 6

or higher for Knowledge in the NJC scheme or level E for Technical Know-how in the Hay scheme), OR

3.1.2 The post holder manages a discrete function or activity, OR

3.1.3 The post holder is the Authority's corporate expert on a specialised technical subject

3.2 If the job scores less than 175 points (Band A) under the Hay scheme, the job will then be evaluated under the NJC scheme, and that score will determine the grade.

3.3 All other jobs will be evaluated first under the NJC scheme. If the job scores in excess of 600 points, it will be evaluated under the Hay scheme and that score will determine the grade.

4. Process

4.1 The grading of posts is a management led process.

4.2 The evaluation process will be the same regardless of the job evaluation scheme used.

4.3 Posts will need to be evaluated.

- when they are established
- where there have been changes in the duties and responsibilities
- where there have been changes to line management which impacts on the hierarchy of the post in a structure
- when it becomes apparent that a post has not previously been evaluated, or evaluated in a different context/team
- at the request of the manager or employee (where they can demonstrate that there has been a significant change to the role)

- when a restructure impacts or changes the posts responsibilities and duties, including where additional posts are inserted into a structure and/or where posts are removed from the structure.

4.4 Where employees wish to have their posts re-evaluated, they must first discuss their concerns with their line manager. If the job holder and the line manager disagree about the need for a re-evaluation this should be resolved using normal Council procedures.

4.5 Where managers wish to put the post through a new evaluation, they must first inform the affected employees of their intention and consult on any proposed changes, taking employee comments on board in the job design.

4.6 Having established the posts to be evaluated the manager will then notify the Job Evaluation Team to register the posts. However, it is important to note that where duties have been removed and/or reallocated all affected posts must be registered. HR advice should be sought at this stage to clarify any posts that may be affected, prior to evaluations taking place.

4.7 Where changes to jobs have been submitted a Business Partner, JE will review these in line with the existing job description and determine if they are significant enough to warrant evaluation.

4.8 The process to determine the grading of posts will require the submission of the following job-related information.

- Structure chart of the service, detailing the reporting arrangements above the post to be evaluated up to at least Service Director level, as well as posts line managed. All posts in the structure should be shown, including any temporary posts.
- All job descriptions in the service structure, including those that are perceived to be unchanged if applicable in a new structure.

- A brief description of the context/organisation of the service (max 2 sides of A4). This will provide the Business Partner, JE with a clear understanding of the circumstances and environment surrounding the post. This may include the following headings.
 - Operating Context – What is the nature of the job or service that is provided, and how does it fit with the wider department and the County Council as a whole?
 - Environmental Context – In what environment does the post operate, e.g., if it is a customer service job, who are the customers? Are services subject to any trading arrangements?

4.9 The Business Partner, JE will review the information submitted. If any of the information is unclear, or further details are required they will contact the manager to seek clarification.

4.10 The Business Partner, JE will then evaluate the job using the appropriate job evaluation scheme.

4.11 For new posts, vacancies or posts impacted by restructuring, the Business Partner, JE will provide an indicative grade where requested by the manager. This allows a quicker outcome than that for a full evaluation and will allow for recruitment/enabling to proceed. This would be followed by a formal evaluation outcome at a later date, and any recruitment/enabling must reference the fact that the grading is indicative and subject to full formal evaluation.

4.12 The manager, and employee where appropriate, will be notified of the outcome in writing and with a rationale based on the applicable scheme's factor levels.

4.13 Where the outcome results in an existing postholders grade reducing, pay protection in line with the Council's Pay Protection Policy will apply,

normally on the first day of the month after the indicative or formal grade was provided (whichever was provided first).

4.14 The effective date of the evaluation shall be

- when the new role was established
- where an existing posts duties or responsibilities change, and these changes become effective
- the implementation date of a new structure where the restructuring exercise has created new roles and/or changed the duties and responsibilities of existing roles.

4.15 Where there are no identifiable points of change the effective date will normally be the first day of the month after the indicative or formal grade was provided (whichever was provided first).

5. Appeals

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 For newly created posts and/or posts where there is no postholder there is no right for managers to appeal the outcome. Discussions will have taken place throughout the evaluation process, outlined in paragraphs 4.8 and 4.9, that will have enabled all relevant information to be made available prior to the evaluation process.

5.1.2 Where employees are dissatisfied with the evaluation of their post, they should in the first instance discuss this with their line manager. Where the line manager reports to a Team/Group manager they must then discuss with the manager with overall responsibility for the work of the role and team. If the manager(s) agree and providing there has been no previous appeal or concerns raised regarding either an indicative or evaluated grade for the post, they may proceed with registering an

appeal. Employees should normally appeal within 10 working days of written receipt of the outcome of the evaluation, although this may be extended if circumstances warrant it.

- 5.1.3 Job grades must be implemented by the manager as soon as they are known and will not be delayed by the registration of an appeal, consequently the period of pay protection (where applicable) will be implemented pending the appeal outcome.
- 5.1.4 The appeals process is the same regardless of the evaluation scheme used.
- 5.1.5 Appeals can result in job scores going up, staying the same or going down. Any change of grade that arises from the appeals process will be implemented with effect from the date of the implementation of the original evaluation in line with paragraphs 4.14 and 4.15. Where the grade of a post is reduced as a result of an appeal, the Council's agreed pay protection policy will apply.
- 5.1.6 The outcome of the appeal process will be final. There will be no further right of appeal, either within or outside the County Council. Nor will there be recourse to the Council's Employee Resolution Procedure where concerns are specifically related to the grading outcome.

5.2 Appeals Process

5.2.1 The grounds for appeal are that:

- the wrong job evaluation scheme has been applied; or
- the applicable scheme has been wrongly applied e.g., factor levels have been wrongly allocated; or
- there is new or better information available to support the evaluation.

5.2.2 Appeals must be registered by the job holder using the form issued when the job score is released and with the Team/Group manager's approval.

- 5.2.3 Following receipt of the completed appeal registration form, the Job Evaluation Team will issue a job appeal pro-forma, requesting that it be completed and returned within 28 days. Requests for extension to this timescale will be considered where there are mitigating circumstances.
- 5.2.4 The relevant factors on the job appeal pro-forma must be completed by the job holder and the form counter-signed by their Team/Group manager, who must agree its contents. If in exceptional circumstances the job holder and manager disagree about the accuracy of any of the information the job holder has provided, this should be resolved prior to submission of the form. If this is not possible, separate comments from the line manager, Team/Group manager and job holder should be submitted for consideration. The job holder may be assisted by their trade union representative, at their own discretion, and may seek advice from the Job Evaluation Team.
- 5.2.5 Where there is more than one job holder in a particular job, a workplace meeting of the whole group of job holders will be convened by the Team/Group manager. That meeting will decide whether an appeal should be pursued in respect of the job, on the basis of a simple majority of those present. If the meeting decides to pursue an appeal, members of the group will nominate a representative to complete the job appeal proforma on their behalf, but all members of the group will be given the opportunity to contribute and comment on the completed form.
- 5.2.6 Individuals or sub-groups who can demonstrate that their job is different from the rest of the group may be considered for a separate evaluation, once the differences have been reflected in a redrawn job description.
- 5.2.7 The completed job appeal pro-forma will be subject to an initial assessment by a Business Partner, JE who was not involved in the original evaluation process. If any of the information in the form is unclear, incomplete, or not relevant the Business Partner, JE will contact the

appropriate manager and/or the job holder to seek clarification. Any additional information gained will be shared with the job holder.

5.2.8 Appeals will then be considered by a joint Job Evaluation Review Panel.

The joint Review Panel will comprise three members trained in the use of the relevant evaluation scheme, two of whom will have had no previous involvement in the job evaluation process for the post, and chaired by a Business Partner, HR. A trade union representative will also sit on the review panel.

5.2.9 The Review Panel will consider the evidence that has been submitted against all relevant factors. The Business Partner, JE who completed the appeal assessment will be invited by the Review Panel to comment where appropriate. Where the panel considers that the evidence submitted impacts on factors other than those identified in the appeal, these will be considered by the Review Panel and the appellant will be notified accordingly.

5.2.10 Where the evidence submitted clearly supports the appellant's case, the Review Panel will uphold the appeal. The post holder and Team/Group manager will be informed in writing within 10 working days.

5.2.11 Where the evidence submitted does not support the appellant's case, the Review Panel will reject the appeal. The post holder and Team/Group manager will be informed in writing within 10 working days.

5.2.12 Where the evidence submitted is less clear cut, the meeting may be adjourned, and the Job Evaluation Team will write to the job holder and Team/Group manager setting out the Review Panel's concerns and a request for additional information. The Review Panel will subsequently be reconvened, and the additional information considered before reaching a final decision. The post holder and Team/Group manager will be informed in writing within 10 working days.

5.2.13 Where the job holder remains unhappy with the Review Panel outcome there will be the opportunity to attend a meeting with the panel to present and clarify information submitted as part of the appeal. The appeal outcome notification will set out how to proceed to this stage of the appeal process and the Team/Group manager, job holder and their representative, where requested, will be invited to attend a meeting with the Review Panel. Where the appeal is on behalf of a group of job holders, the group's nominated representative(s) will be invited to attend.

5.2.14 This second stage of the appeal process will provide the opportunity to highlight areas of concern and for the panel to ask questions of the job holder and Team/Group manager to clarify areas of difference, following which all parties will be asked to withdraw. The Business Partner, JE who completed the appeal assessment will again be invited by the Review Panel to comment where appropriate.

5.2.15 The panel will then determine the outcome of the appeal, taking account of any representations made. The outcome of the panel's decision will be notified within 10 working days.

6. On completion of the above process there will be no further right of appeal.

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