



CLASSIFICATION REVIEW GUIDELINE FOR STAFF AND SUPERVISORS

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1.0 Context

Each position will be classified using the University of Newcastle Classification Descriptors (Schedule 3 of the General Staff Enterprise Agreement 2010 [“the Agreement”]) at a level which most accurately reflects the value of the work required to be performed and the duties and responsibilities of the position.

The Classification Review process supports the University’s capacity to continually adapt to meet its strategic direction, providing the capacity to recognise the change in work value of positions and business requirements and goals. Organisations undergo continuous change, causing business requirements and goals to evolve over time. In the event of change, new needs may arise which result in significant and substantial variations to duties and responsibilities.

The Classification Review framework is described in the Agreement (Clause 9) and maintains position classifications and determines the relative work value of General Staff Positions (HEW Levels 1 to 10) within the University. In addition, Classification Review assists the University to maintain internal relativities between positions, ensuring fair and equitable classification.

So as to meet the above objectives, new positions and vacant positions are assessed by Human Resource Services to ensure appropriate classification. Occupied positions are reviewed annually as part of the Performance Development Framework process between the staff member and their supervisor, as well as through discussion with the appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor. When the Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor considers a position to have undergone significant and substantial change, or in a situation where a position is considered to be incorrectly classified, a referral will be made to Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, to assess that position.

2.0 General Principles

Classification Review:

- is a process for assessing the requirements of a position;
- is used to ensure positions meet needs and business requirements;
- recognises ongoing, significant and substantial changes to a position;
- is conducted on an annual basis;
- is linked to the Performance Development Framework process;
- is applied to assure equity and consistency between similar positions;
- is related to the needs of the position and does not relate to performance, length of service, market forces or retention;
- operates within the organisational structure of the University; and

- takes into account that work value relates to the nature of the work, skill and responsibility required.

3.0 Timeline and Action

Date	Action
During November and December	The Performance Development Framework process will generate discussion about the previous twelve months in addition to the coming year. The staff member's position description will be reviewed during this process.
During January and February	Identified changes in work value during the Performance Development Framework process will be reported to the appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor.
By month end, February	Recommended Classification Review proposals to be referred to the Associate Director, Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, by the Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor.
During March and April	The Associate Director, Employee Relations (or nominee), will examine each proposal and where necessary seek further details so that a recommendation addressing the merits of the case will be provided to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) for a decision.
In a timely manner - generally within 10 working days of receipt	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) will approve or not approve recommendations made by the Associate Director, Employee Relations (or nominee).
In a timely manner - generally within 10 working days of receipt	The Associate Director, Employee Relations will notify the staff member (through their supervisor) of the determination.

Please refer to Attachment One – Classification Review Timeline and Flow Chart.

In circumstances where a staff member or supervisor do not comply with the timelines indicated, the Associate Director, Employee Relations will determine the actions to be taken. These actions will be communicated promptly to the appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor, supervisor and staff member.

4.0 Self Guided Formats

Self guided formats have been designed to assist staff members and their supervisors to provide appropriate information to facilitate informed decision making. Staff members and their supervisors are encouraged to utilize these formats to ensure appropriate and equitable outcomes in a timely manner.

Formats are available at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/employee-relations/general-staff-classification-review.html> with links to:

- [Performance Development Framework cycle](#);
- [The Classification Review form](#); and
- [Associated processes](#).

If assistance is required regarding formats or elements of the process, assistance can be sought from Human Resource Services.

4.1 Training

A range of training, in the form of three (3) modules, will be provided to supervisors and managers to assist them in participating in this process. These modules consist of:

- Classification Review (including interpretation of the HEW Descriptors);
- Writing Position Descriptions; and
- Performance Development Framework.

5.0 Alignment with other processes

The Performance Development Framework (Clause 7 of the Agreement) is aligned with the Classification Review Process. During the annual Performance Development Framework discussion, staff members and their supervisors are encouraged to discuss all aspects of the staff member's position.

5.1 Having the Discussion

Supervisors will work through a prescribed structure for the [Performance Development Framework](#) discussion. The staff member and their supervisor will review the position description during the discussion, to ensure details are relevant and up to date.

When discussing the possible reclassification of the position due to changes in work value, supervisors should ensure the following details are addressed:

- does the current position description accurately reflect the needs and priorities of the position?
- have changes in the role over the previous twelve months occurred?
- list any changes to duties and responsibilities set out in the current position description and provide a revision of the current position description;
- are these identified changes significant and substantial?
- are identified changes ongoing requirements of the position?

- do the staff member and supervisor agree on the changes to the position description?

- can any additional duties and/or responsibilities be carried out by other staff member(s), or are other alternatives available?

When discussing changes in the role, it is important to distinguish between ongoing work value changes and temporary changes, as well as duties that are not resulting in the role increasing in inherent work value. If a change in a position is temporary, a higher duties allowance (HDA) may be a more suitable option.

Once the staff member and their supervisor have discussed changes to the position, the supervisor shall then determine whether:

- a) no further action is to be taken; or

- b) a request for Classification Review is to be initiated.

The supervisor shall inform the staff member of the determination.

If the supervisor determines that action is to be taken, a draft position description and current position description are to be submitted by the supervisor with a Classification Review Form to the appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor.

If a staff member feels that their position is incorrectly classified, but their supervisor does not support the request for a Classification Review, the staff member may seek advice from Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, for assistance in obtaining a review of the position in accordance with Clause 9 of the Agreement.

If a staff member feels this action has not resolved the issue and the position remains incorrectly classified, the staff member may request the matter be referred to an Inquiry Officer, as explained in Section 9 of this Guideline.

Human Resource Services will seek advice from the supervisor and appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor as to the reasons why the review was not supported. Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, may assist in resolving this issue.

6.0 Invest the Time

6.1 For the Staff Member

In preparation for the Performance Development Framework meeting:

- collect information about the job and how your position has changed, prior to the Performance Development Framework meeting;
- openly discuss details with your supervisor;
- have evidence available if necessary;
- prepare by considering the Classification Descriptors;

- work towards agreement in the meeting;
- include relevant details about the position; and
- have a copy of the current position description.

6.2 For the Supervisor

In preparation for the Performance Development Framework:

- prepare in advance for Performance Development Framework;
- have copies of the University Strategic Plan, Faculty/Division Strategic Plans, Objectives or Business/Management Plans, Budget and Profile information and Organisation Charts and position descriptions and any other relevant information available at the meeting;
- consider position's roles within the immediate or similar cohorts, where you are familiar with those roles (seek advice from your Human Resource Officer if necessary);
- consider whether position requirements have changed or are inappropriate;
- openly discuss changes which have occurred or potential change;
- consult the Classification Descriptors;
- advise the staff member on whether there will be no further action or a request for Classification Review, following the Performance Development Framework discussion;
- assess and verify the nature of the changes to the position.

When preparing the documentation to submit a request for Classification Review, ensure that all requirements of the request have been completed prior to submission, including the following:

- [Classification Review Form](#);
- current position description;
- drafted position description;
- all required signatures/authorisation; and
- a current organisational chart/staffing profile.

6.3 Classification Review Form

The Classification Review Form provides the detail to support the Classification Review submission. Where a position has changed, supervisors are encouraged to cite relevant and descriptive examples of variations to positions including:

- justification of substantial and significant change in work value;

- examples of change;
- rationale for change; and
- nature of changes – whether they are ongoing or temporary.

6.4 Position Descriptions

Please identify the new duties of the position in an updated position description. When creating the draft position description, please endeavour to:

- logically organise all duties and responsibilities, with the most important first;
- be clear and concise;
- use the approved format;
- be careful not to make personal references; and
- address all relevant criteria.

It is also important to submit a copy of the current position description for comparative purposes.

6.5 Role of the Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor

When considering applications for Classification Review, the Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor will include the following considerations:

- University (Faculty/Divisions) strategic plans and goals;
- Staffing profile;
- whether position changes are substantial and significant;
- the nature of changes – whether they are ongoing or temporary;
- whether reassignment of duties is appropriate; and
- whether the payment of a higher duties allowance (HDA) for a defined period is appropriate.

7.0 Evaluation Points

The Associate Director, Employee Relations (or nominee) will consider the following points when assessing position classification levels:

- organisational context of the Classification Review;
- scope of Classification Review recommendations;
- nature or type of work performed in the position;

- level of responsibility in the position;
- supervision received by the occupant of the position;
- supervision exercised by the occupant of the position;
- knowledge and skills required to perform the duties of the position;
- whether the University Classification Descriptors have been accurately applied to the position?
- is the proposed classification level consistent with that of similar positions in other comparable sections within the University?
- alignment with the Staffing profile.

Further information will be sought as required to assist the appropriate assessment of positions.

8.0 Quality Considerations And Outcomes

In making any determination, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) will take into account any comments from the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor or Director.

Where the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) is considering not approving the position for reclassification, this will be discussed with the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor or Director prior to the decision being finalised.

8.1 Reclassification Of Positions

Positions will be reclassified following the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services). When a position is reclassified the supervisor and the staff member will be informed in writing by the Associate Director, Employee Relations, Human Resource Services. Details will include:

- the new Classification level of the position;
- the date of effect of reclassification;
- the new increment date for the position occupant; and
- an updated position description.

8.2 Date Of Effect Of Reclassification

The date of effect of each reclassification will generally take into account:

- the date of submission of the application;
- the recommended date by the appropriate Director or Pro Vice-Chancellor;
- and

- the recommended date by the Associate Director, Employee Relations (or nominee); and
- the date of approval.

8.3 Positions Not Approved For Reclassification

The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, will then advise the staff member, in writing through their supervisor, of the following details:

- the reason for the position not being reclassified; and
- the process for appeal of the decision (Request for Review of Outcome).

9.0 Staff Member Request For Review of Outcome

A staff member may make an application to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) for a review;

1. That the process was not followed; or
2. That the position is not, or will not be, appropriately classified in accordance with Clause 9.1 of the Agreement;

in the following circumstances:

- a) Within ten (10) working days of the date of issue of the Classification Outcome notification letter; or
- b) During the period March to April on the basis that a Classification Review had not occurred in the preceding 12 months.

The matter will then be referred to Inquiry Officer – Clause 71 of the Agreement.

9.1 Process of Staff Member Request For Review Of Outcome

A staff member may request a review of classification by completing a '[Request for Review of Outcome](#)' form and sending it to the Associate Director, Employee Relations, Human Resource Services.

The following process will then apply:

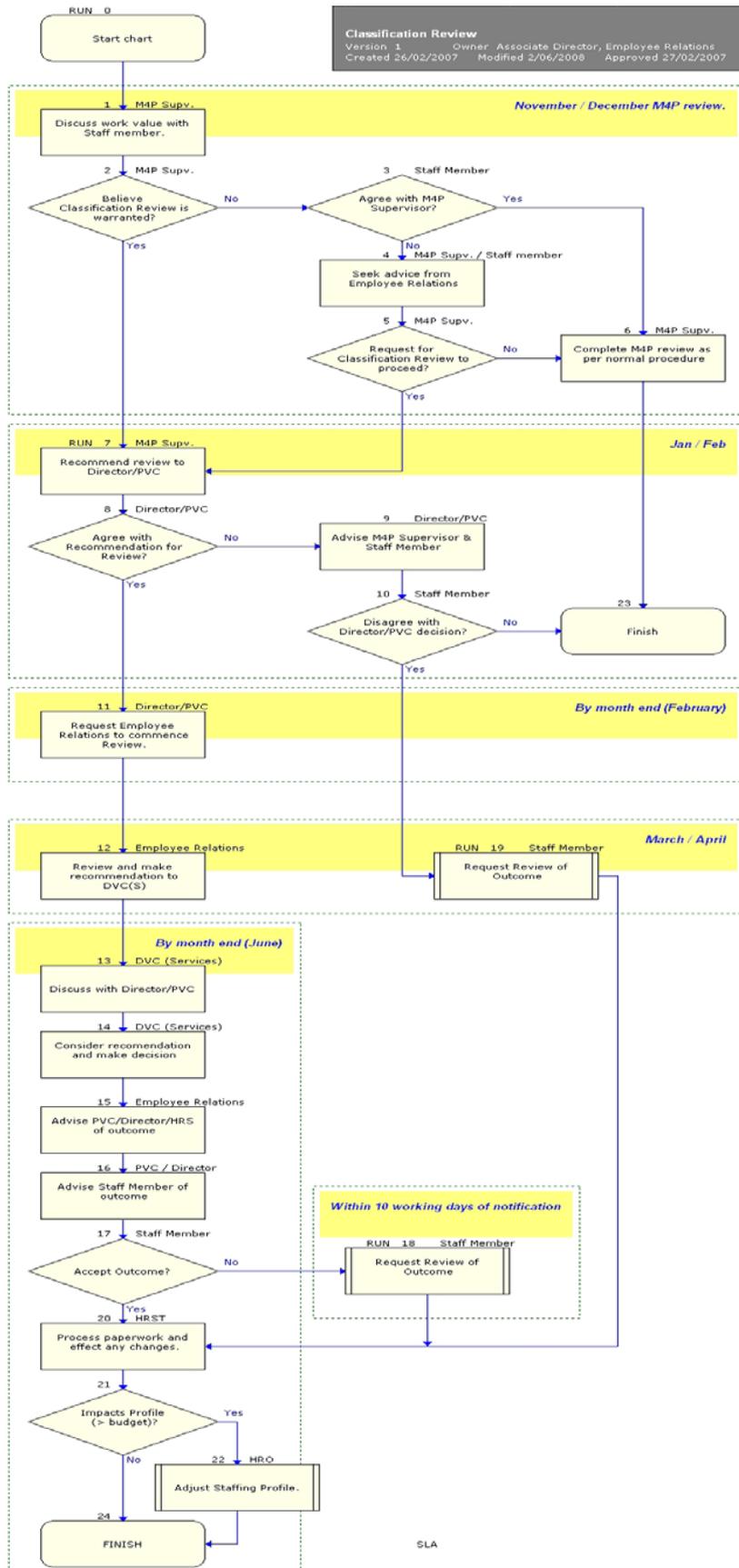
- Employee Relations will refer the application to an Inquiry Officer.
- The Inquiry Officer may be assisted by a staff member nominated by the applicant and a staff member nominated by the University.
- The Inquiry Officer and nominated staff members will conduct an Inquiry.
- The Inquiry Officer will make a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services).

- The applicant will be provided with a copy of the Inquiry Officer's report and will have five (5) working days to respond in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services).
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) will approve or not approve the recommendations made by the Inquiry Officer.
- The Associate Director, Employee Relations, Human Resource Services, will notify the supervisor and applicant of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) decision.

The review process and recommendation of the Inquiry Officer will be completed within thirty (30) days of the application being received, wherever practicable.

Please refer to Attachment Two – Request for Review of Outcome Timeline and Flow Chart.

Attachment One – Classification Review Timeline and Flow Chart



Attachment Two – Request for Review of Outcome Timeline and Flow Chart

