

**HIGHER EDUCATION ROLE
ASSESSMENT (HERA) AND GRADING
REVIEW ASSESSMENT PANELS (GRAP)**

HIGHER EDUCATION ROLE ASSESSMENT and GRADING ASSESSMENT PANELS

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Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA)

What is HERA?

HERA is a tool used to analyse roles in Higher Education. At the University of Greenwich HERA is used to assess the accuracy and validity of role descriptions and profiles in order to:

- evaluate new Professional Services roles
- re-evaluate existing Professional Services roles where duties and responsibilities have changed.

HERA is used to produce a total points' score in order to assess the relative value of roles, in a consistent and equitable manner. This score can be used to assign roles to appropriate grades or bands in a salary structure.

HERA was developed and trialled in partnership with employers and trade unions and is widely used in the HE sector. As such it has been deemed to be an appropriate tool for use in allocating roles against pay and grading structures and for ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.

How does HERA work?

Evidence is recorded using a questionnaire approach. The information is analysed by trained analysts to produce a points' score.

All current University roles have been HERA assessed and examples of typical roles profiles are shown on the People Directorate pages of the website.

The questionnaire is based around the 14 [elements](#) used in HERA evaluation.

HERA Questionnaire and required evidence

The HERA questionnaire is made up of 50 questions which seek evidence of activities and responsibilities required of the post. Using information provided by the existing role-holder and/or Faculty/ Executive Directorate, the specific requirements of the post are evaluated, taking into account the level and range of duties. The activities and responsibilities must be performed in typical circumstances and situations, not rare or extreme cases. The activities and responsibilities are those which are **required** of the role-holder and not those undertaken from personal interest. It is the post and not the person that is evaluated.

Some of the elements do make allowance for **occasional** requirements where activities and responsibilities required only at specific times of the year are covered. However, "one-offs" carried out historically must not be included unless it is certain that the role-holder will be required to repeat the activity on a regular basis in the future.

Some role-holders may have duties **additional** to the requirements of the role, and they may or may not receive additional payment for this, for example as a First Aider. Usually this is agreed on a personal basis and is over and above the normal role requirements. Activities of this kind must be **excluded**.

A small number of staff may hold **multiple** roles. If the activities carried out in both roles are part of the overall requirement of the role-holder and are performed on a regular on-going basis, the analysis should be based on all aspects of the role.

Verification

Evidence submitted for assessment through HERA must be verified. In addition, a role analyst will discuss the role with the line manager and employee to verify information provided.

This is an important part of the process for a number of reasons. Information provided for assessment may:

- Omit a critical aspect of the role
- Diminish or exaggerate the role-holder's responsibilities
- Include responsibilities for activities the role-holder does not undertake
- Fail to accurately explain the significance of a task

Role analysts may:

- Misunderstand what has been stated
- Fail to appreciate the significance of examples provided

Bias:

There is the potential for unjustifiable bias. This can be due to the way in which the role-holder views their position and status in the institution. For example roles most frequently occupied by women and members of minority ethnic groups may be valued less than those typically by white males. Examples of this can include:

- A technician refusing to accept their contribution to student learning even though the activities fall within the definition of teaching and learning support
- A resident night porter not recognising the important contribution they make to student wellbeing
- A manager claiming sole responsibility for their team's decision-making.

Employees in post play a key role in verification of evidence presented by line managers who request a HERA review of the employee's current role (GRAP) by checking for potential areas of bias.

The line manager and the employee should expect to be contacted by the analyst or evaluation panel to clarify/further explore information provided as part of the evaluation process.

HERA Evaluation of New Roles

If a new role is introduced, for example because of new business requirements, this is checked against existing role profiles in case there is a close match already in existence which indicates the appropriate grade that should be assigned to the new role.

If no similar role exists, a Role Analysis Form and job description must be submitted to allow a full HERA assessment to be made. The form should be completed by the recruiting manager and countersigned by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Executive Director to confirm that the duties and responsibilities described are consistent with the role that the Faculty/Directorate require to be carried out. Advice about completion of the form is available from the People Directorate by emailing rewardandbenefits@greenwich.ac.uk.

The following must be submitted to the People Directorate by emailing rewardandbenefits@greenwich.ac.uk:

- Role Analysis Form
- Job description and person specification
- Current and proposed organisation charts
- Recruitment approval (this should be done on-line using the e-recruitment system)

Assessment of new roles is conducted by individuals trained in HERA analysis and is carried out on-line against the 14 [HERA elements](#).

Assessments are then checked by alternative trained assessors. Any areas of disagreement will be discussed with the recruiting line manager.

HERA Review of Existing Vacant Posts

The current grade will normally be used for recruitment to posts which are direct replacements of existing roles.

If the demands of an existing, vacant role have significantly changed the recruiting manager should discuss this with the People Directorate. Where there is a limited match between the current and new requirements, the procedures for [Evaluation of New Roles](#) will apply.

HERA Evaluation of Roles in proposed restructure exercises

Restructures potentially involve new roles as well as changes to existing roles. For this reason, it is normally necessary to submit Role Analysis Forms and job descriptions for **all** roles in the proposed restructure to allow a HERA analysis of the roles to take place. This ensures no responsibilities are missed or “double-counted” in a different role. This must be done early on in the planning stages of the proposals to establish likely grades of roles in the new structure. This will allow costings to be estimated for the proposed new organisation structure. These costings form part of the Business Case submitted to the Vice Chancellor for the restructure proposals.

The following documents must be submitted to the People Directorate by email to rewardandbenefits@greenwich.ac.uk :

- Role Analysis Form
- Job description including person specification

2022-23 GRADING ASSESSMENT REVIEW PANEL (GRAP) ARRANGEMENTS (HERA Review of Existing Occupied Posts)

Line managers play a key role in the verification of applications for re-assessment of roles within their team. Evidence submitted for assessment through HERA must be verified by the line manager.

Changes to the job description must be significant and relate to the continuing demands of the role itself and not the role-holder’s ability or preferences.

The analysis is of the *role requirements*, not an individual’s performance. Performance by a role-holder below or above the level required, is outside the scope of role analysis. Re-assessment of roles must not be carried out in order to secure personal promotion (and associated higher salary) for a high-performing existing role-holder who has extended their activities and responsibilities beyond the intended requirements of the post.

The line manager must:

- a) Fully discuss the role with the employee. The line manager is advised to discuss the proposal with their counter-signing manager and/or escalate as appropriate. This is to ensure that any other [workforce planning](#) issues are fully considered. This is particularly important where broader restructure exercises may be being considered.

- b) Check the new job description against the existing job description and job descriptions for any other comparative roles in the Faculty/ Directorate.

When a single job is submitted for re-evaluation the line manager must, as part of their verification process, review associated job descriptions within the department/school to check the validity and accuracy before supporting submission of a role for HERA assessment under the GRAP process.

Ensure there is a full discussion early on in the process about the duties and responsibilities described in the revised job description. Discussion should take place between the line manager and the existing role-holder as well as any key stakeholders.

Reconcile any differences between the information provided by the existing role-holder and the line manager's own assessment. Requests for re-assessment of roles through the GRAP process must not be submitted until any differences between the line manager's/ stakeholders' views and the existing role-holder's views have been reconciled. The existing role-holder and the line manager must confirm the evidence being submitted for evaluation is complete.

Any changes to the evidence provided by the existing post-holder should be noted, i.e.:

- areas of difference which were subsequently agreed
- areas where it has not been possible to reconcile differences
- the parties to the discussion.

- c) Ensure the proposals are discussed with the Finance Directorate to check whether the budget would be authorised **if** the evaluation outcome is that the role should be of a higher grade.

Confirmation that this has been discussed with Finance before the post is submitted for evaluation by a panel must be evidenced if requested. Where budget will not be available, the Faculty/Directorate will need to consider what options may be appropriate, in discussion with their Senior Business People Partner. In some cases, this will mean that the post should not be submitted for evaluation.

- d) Arrange for the verified application to be countersigned by their PVC/Executive Director.
- e) Submit the completed application and send any queries regarding the application prior to submission to rewardandbenefits@gre.ac.uk by the advertised closing date.

Please note that for the application to be considered, the following must be adhered to:

- **The GRAP online application form together with all other required documentation, i.e. new job description, existing job description, and current organisation chart must be submitted by the advertised closing date**
- **The online application form must be completed correctly**
- **The online application form must contain sufficient information to enable the HERA assessment to be conducted. Please do not attach additional documents to support your application such as examples, spreadsheets etc.**
- **The online application must be fully endorsed by the Faculty/Directorate, with reasons**
- **The online application form must contain the required signatures**
- **The online application must confirm that potential budgetary implications have been alerted to the Finance Directorate.**

Advice about completion of the form is available from the People Directorate by emailing rewardandbenefits@greenwich.ac.uk .

Preparation for the evaluation process

The People Directorate will carry out the following checks:

- that the online application was submitted no later than the closing date
- that the online application contains the required signatures
- that the online application is fully endorsed by the Faculty/Directorate with reasons
- that the online application confirms the need for budget authorisation has been noted
- that the online application has been correctly completed
- that the online application form contains sufficient information to enable the HERA assessment to be conducted (no sundry additional documents will be accepted such as examples, spreadsheets etc.)

NB:

Where the above requirements are not met, the online application will not be accepted for evaluation during the current GRAP exercise and will need to be resubmitted to a subsequent GRAP panel.

Evaluation

Posts are evaluated via a two-stage process conducted by trained analysts. Following this the application will be considered by a panel.

Panels for roles up to SG8 will comprise:

- Executive Director/s
- Faculty Operating Officer/s
- A senior member of the People Directorate, normally Associate Director – People Operations
- HR note-taker

Where a panel fails to reach a united conclusion, the Associate Director – People Operations will be the final decision-maker.

Panels for roles for SG9 and above will comprise:

- appropriate senior managers
- Executive Director of People
- an independent adviser
- HR note-taker.

Successful applications

The People Directorate will advise the line manager of the outcome of the panel deliberation and confirm this in writing to the existing role-holder.

Where there are other broadly similar roles within the Faculty/ Directorate, the existing role-holder should note that where an evaluation outcome indicates the role should be at a higher grade, it should not be assumed that they will automatically be appointed to the new grade. In these circumstances the University reserves the right to advertise the post on a ring-fenced basis or more widely depending on the particular circumstances. The impact of this on the existing role-holder, should be fully discussed by line managers with the People Directorate in the first instance.

Effective date of upgrade – 2022-23 GRAP ARRANGEMENTS

In the 2022-23 exercise the effective date of upgrade of posts and salary change, following the panel held in October 2023 will be:

1 September 2023.

Unsuccessful applications

Where an employee's application for an upgrade is unsuccessful, they will not be permitted to resubmit a further application during that same academic year.

Appeals

The verification process should ensure full discussion of the duties and responsibilities and posts should not be submitted for evaluation until differences have been reconciled and the parties confirm the evidence provided is complete. Any changes to the evidence record should clearly record areas of difference/agreed. If there are any areas where it has not been possible to reconcile differences this should be recorded, noting the parties to the discussion.

Line managers/Faculties and Directorates should allow the employee to give their views early on in the process to provide a full and fair opportunity to state their views. This will normally minimise the necessity for an appeal. To this end, line managers must take the time needed to deal fully with any disagreements over verification of evidence. Line managers play a key role by making sure evidence is as complete and representative as possible at the outset.

Any differences which cannot be resolved should be noted in the application.

Where the employee considers the process was not adhered to, they may submit an appeal to the Executive Director of People. An appeal may be lodged on failure to adhere to the process, not the evaluation outcome.

The Appeal Stage exhausts the procedure and there is no further opportunity to appeal against the outcome. The exception to this would be where the individual believes they have been discriminated against because of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act or because treatment relates to bullying or harassment.

Disability

The HERA process assesses the requirements of the role and not the individual role-holder. However, in the event that a role has been adjusted (as a reasonable adjustment) for a disabled job holder, those involved in the verification process should seek advice from the People Directorate.

Further Information

Please contact the People Directorate if you have queries by emailing rewardandbenefits@greenwich.ac.uk .