

HERA Regrading Policy

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This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with changes in employment law and equality and diversity legislation. In the event that this policy or procedure is not so compliant, the relevant legislation shall prevail.

Changes to this policy will be subject to consultation with the University's recognised Trade Unions before implementation

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The following supplementary guidance and documentation is available on IntraBrunel:

1. INTRODUCTION

Brunel University London is committed to the principles of equal pay for work of equal value. The grading system is therefore based upon the evaluation of the duties and responsibilities attached to a post, using directly or indirectly the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) scheme, and not upon the personal merits of individual post-holders. The grading of posts will be undertaken by trained Role Analysts in conjunction with our Union colleagues.

The University recognises that roles will continue to develop and grow in line with operational requirements and/or that restructuring of roles may be necessary from time to time. The re-grading and appeals mechanisms set out in this policy aim to provide a consistent, transparent and equitable procedure for assessing permanent and substantial changes to existing roles using the HERA system.

2. SCOPE

All roles within the University have been evaluated using the HERA job evaluation scheme process or benchmarked against other evaluated roles within the University with matching duties and responsibilities.

This procedure applies to all members of non-academic and technical staffing role profiles. Academic roles cannot be regraded, through HERA as academic employees have an opportunity to apply for promotion through the annual Promotions exercise.

Research roles are also not part of the HERA evaluation process as these are role specific and as per academic employees; higher levels can be achieved through the promotion process.

The University recognises that employees are highly committed to their roles and make a significant contribution every year. However, the process outlined in this procedure is designed to review the grade and level of responsibility and accountability of roles which employees are undertaking and not their level of contribution within the role. Where appropriate, individuals who have made a significant contribution in their role over the course of the year should be considered in relation to other methods of individual recognition, such as proposal for the Awards or additional support for development, rather than applying for a review of their grade under this procedure.

Requests for regrading will only be invited for consideration twice per year, based on the timetable below unless there is a requirement for roles to be evaluated as part of any approved reorganisation project:

Requests submitted	Regrading Panel	Outcome	Effective date
March	April/May	June	August
September	October/November	December	January

Please note:

- A re-grading review request must be based on significant and permanent changes to the role. For temporary changes to roles e.g. to cover maternity leave, long-term sickness etc. please contact Human Resources for advice.
- A request for a re-grading review should not be based on how the responsibilities or activities might or will change in the future, the activities must be current, and evidence of these provided in the application.
- New appointees and employees who undertake a new role (e.g. transfer) should usually have been in post for at least 12 months prior to seeking a review of their grading.
- Changes to roles that demonstrate significant and permanent changes, must be agreed by the line manager, and evidenced through discussion, such as within the PDR process.
- Roles will only be reviewed once in any 2-year period unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- An increase in volume of work is unlikely to result in a change to the grade of the role as an increased volume of duties at the same level, does not change the level of responsibility / accountability. Evidence would need to be provided that this increase in volume has resulted in a significant increase in the individual's level of responsibility/accountability.
- Where operational changes/restructuring could result in a role being downgraded, appropriate consultation would be expected to take place, and advice sought from Human Resources, before any changes are implemented and the grading review process is initiated.
- If a re-grading review request has been unsuccessful, any subsequent review requests must be based on new role information.
- Roles will only be considered for re-evaluation/re-grade where the line manager and Head of Department/Directorate is in full support that there is a requirement for a different role i.e. taking on additional responsibility for personal development does not mean there is a requirement for a higher level role in the department.

3. MAKING AN APPLICATION

Where an employee and/or their line manager, believes that there have been permanent and substantial changes to a role, discussions may be initiated around whether a re-grading request may be submitted. This is likely to take place through the PDR meetings.

The opportunity to submit a re-grading application applies to individual roles and also cases where one or more individuals are in a role that has been evaluated or matched/benchmarked by use of a group or generic job description, but their own role has changed such that it is appropriate that they be disassociated from the generic role and re-evaluated in their own right. Roles will be re-graded as generic only where the changes to the role apply to all role holders.

Applications for re-grading a particular role may be made by either the appropriate line manager or the role holder. Where a case is submitted by the role holder, the line manager, and the Director / Dean of the area will be required to verify the factual accuracy of the submission and outline whether s/he supports the re-grading application by completing and signing the cover sheet of the Re-grading Application Form.

Where the line manager is not the budget holder/head of department; the application will need to be approved by the head of department to ensure that the change is approved and supported by the establishment of the department.

Employees will be required to provide evidence in their application that the scope (duties and

responsibilities) of their job has substantially increased since it was graded and give demonstrable examples of their activity at this level. As a result, this process focuses on the work that employees are already undertaking. Employees who would like to be considered for more senior roles and/or career progression will need to apply for these jobs when they are advertised.

Employees are required to submit their re-grading application in writing using the form.

All applications for regrading should be discussed with the relevant Human Resources Business Partner in advance of submission. Any queries can be addressed to the Business Partners for further guidance.

4. TIMETABLE FOR APPLICATIONS FOR REGRADING

Applications are submitted to job.evaluation@brunel.ac.uk if significant and permanent qualitative changes have taken place that are sufficient to justify consideration for re-grading.

Applications can only be submitted twice a year, in March and September. The deadline for submission will usually be the last working day of the month

An analysis of the role will then be carried out using the HERA scheme, which will involve the completion of a Job Evaluation Questionnaire structured according to the 14 factors of HERA, by an appropriately constituted panel.

The effective date of any change in grade will be the first working day of the January or August following the Panel taking place.

In the event that an employee is unsuccessful in his/her re-grading application and any subsequent appeal, a further application for re-grading will not be accepted until a 6 month period has elapsed from the date of the outcome, and therefore, not in the following round.

5. GRADING PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Consideration of all re-grading applications will be by means of review by an appropriately constituted panel. Panel members will be trained in using HERA, and may include members from across the University including Union Representatives.

The panel will include at least two trained Role Analysts, one of whom will chair the panel. The line manager may be invited to the panel to provide supporting information relevant to the changes in a role should the panel consider this necessary.

Training for both new analysts and refresher training for existing analysts will be provided on a regular basis. People wishing to undertake this training should contact the Reward Team to register their interest.

6. NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME

The outcome of the re-grading, together with the new grade and salary, will be provided to employee in writing by the Human Resources Department and sent via the appropriate line manager. This will provide the employee and manager with an opportunity to discuss and understand the results. This letter will also outline the route of appeal, which is further detailed

below.

Possible outcomes and effective date of regrading

The outcome of the grading review request may lead to:

- **The role achieving a higher grade.** In such circumstances the salary for the role will be uplifted to the first pay point of the new grade assigned via the grading review process, (unless this point is lower, or equal to the role-holders current grade). The effective date of the salary uplift will be from the first working day of the effective month as per the timetable above.
- **The role being 'red-circled'** i.e. the current grade for the role is too high. In these minority of cases red-circle salary protection will be applied. Where the red-circle policy is implemented it will be done so with effect from the day following the applicable submission deadline.
- This red-circle salary protection only applies to employees who have completed two years continuous service. Where this occurs, the salary will be protected for a period of two years. During this time the role holder will receive cost of living increases plus any incremental progression to which they are entitled. At the end of this two-year period the salary will reduce to the top point (excluding discretionary points) of the grade of the role.
- Employees on a red circle salary protection are encouraged to actively seek to secure employment at their previous grade. Furthermore, they will be supported in further development as discussed through the PDR process.
- **The role being evaluated at the same grade.** In such circumstances there will be no change to the grade/salary of the role.

Where the grading of a role has changed as a result of this process, due consideration will be given to the grading of any identical roles elsewhere in the University to ensure consistency.

7. GRADING OF NEW POSTS

New posts may be generated as a result of reorganisation/restructure activities, in which case, where a post is created which bears no resemblance or relation to an existing post, the timetable for re-grading will not apply, as it is recognised that there may be justification to grade the role in order to fill the post without delay.

It would be good practice that during the planning stages of restructuring, allocation of time is given to roles being reviewed in order to allow time for an appropriately constituted panel – which will include a minimum of one Role Analyst and one Union Representative.

New roles determined through the annual planning process, and review of the establishment for a department, will likewise be reviewed within the regrading timetable, and considered by the same panel, therefore twice a year.

8. APPEALS

In some instances, an employee may not be satisfied with the outcome of the re-grading. In such cases, following full discussion, and with the full support of their line manager, s/he may wish to submit an appeal.

An employee can only appeal against the grading decision pertaining to the role that s/he

occupies. An appeal cannot be made under this procedure about salary placing within a grade. Before submitting an appeal, the member of staff may also seek advice from his/her line manager, Role Analyst, HR Business Partner and/or their trade union representative.

Valid grounds for appeal include:

- There was a procedural error which had a detrimental effect on the grading decision.
- There has been a failure to consider all relevant evidence.
- The appellant disagrees with scoring on particular factors.

An appeal will be deemed to be inadmissible when it is made on the grounds of exceptional contribution or where market pay comparisons apply.

Some appeals may arise where employee(s) have been re-graded by use of a group or generic role profile. An appeal against the grade of a generic role will only be considered where at least 80% of existing role holders have signed the appeal submission. Appeals should be submitted in writing to Human Resources at job.evaluation@brunel.ac.uk no later than 10 working days after notification of the re-grading decision. The appellant should include a statement detailing the specific grounds for appeal and provide evidence where appropriate.

The first stage of the process, the informal stage, will involve a meeting between the appellant, the line manager, the Chair of the original Grading Panel and the Business Partner for the area. A Trade Union representative trained in HERA would also be welcome to attend this meeting. The meeting should focus on the factor(s) giving cause for concern. Scores determined by the original panel will not be changed at this stage.

If the view expressed at the informal stage is that the original decision meets any of the valid grounds for appeal, an Appeal Panel will be constituted. This panel must include at least one member of the original panel, at least one new member, and will be chaired by a member of the Human Resources Senior Management Team.

The application form cannot be amended for consideration by the Appeal Panel, only clarity of any evidence within the original form can be provided within the statement of appeal provided.

The results of the Appeal Panel, together with the new grade and salary (where appropriate), will be confirmed in writing to the employee by the Human Resources Department and sent via the appropriate line manager.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

HERA RE-GRADING APPLICATION FORM

Name of current role holder / Applicant:	
Department:	
Current Role Title:	
Current grade:	
Date of last review (if applicable)	
Effective date of any change in grade: (this will be either the January or August following the regrade panel)	January / August
Line Manager Declaration:	This is to confirm that I support this application for regrading Name: Position: Date:
Line Manager comments: (These comments should indicate the changes in the position, the associated impact on the department/rest of the team and any other considerations that Line Manager feels are appropriate for the Regrade Panel to take into consideration)	
Date of submission:	
Head of Department (Budget holder) Declaration	This is to confirm that I support this application for regrading Name: Position: Date:
Head of Department comments	
This form, together with an up-to-date role description which tracks the proposed changes should be forwarded electronically to the HR Reward Team at job.evaluation@brunel.ac.uk by no later than the last working day of the month of submission per the policy	

HERA Re-grade Process Flow Chart

