

HERA Guidance for Role Holders preparing for an Appeal hearing

Introduction

HERA guidance for role holders was prepared some time ago to help role holders prepare for a meeting during which their role would be analysed by a role analyst. Those interviews took place during the benchmarking and piloting exercises undertaken at Cambridge in advance of implementing the HERA job evaluation scheme. The role descriptions drawn up following these interviews informed the implementation of HERA at Cambridge.

The guidance for role holders is similar in content to that provided to help staff produce a role description (PD33), setting out the main duties and responsibilities of their role. This PD33 was then used in the assimilation exercise. The outcome from the appeal hearing is the final stage of the assimilation process and will replace any outcome determined at an earlier stage of the assimilation process. The content of the PD33, the role holder's appeal submission, and responses to questions at the appeal hearing will form the evidence used to HERA score the role.

Preparing for the appeal hearing

Appellants should expect to be asked questions about their role by members of the appeal panel and other participants at the appeal hearing. You may wish to discuss your preparation with your line manager, other work colleagues or trades union representative in advance of the appeal hearing. This will help ensure that you are able to give the best possible reflection of your role during the hearing.

This guidance covers the 14 elements that make up the HERA job evaluation scheme. An explanation of each element is provided and a number of questions are then posed in relation to each element. Some of these questions may seem rather obvious but the intention is to help you identify the activities and responsibilities that are typical of your role (not just the most recent, rare or extreme ones). The main *requirements of your role* will be analysed, not activities or responsibilities you have become involved in for personal interest.

You may wish to make some notes of examples of what you do and how you do it. You may be asked to confirm the link between any examples and the evidence already contained within the PD33.

The 14 elements have been designed to cover the broad range of roles found in higher education; you may not have work examples for all of the elements.

1 Communication

This element covers communication – oral, written, electronic or visual means - in both informal and formal situations. Signing, using hand signals, or using other means of communication with people with disabilities are also included. Communication includes the need to convey basic factual information clearly and accurately, conveying information in the most appropriate format, and explaining complex or detailed specialist information.

Oral Communication:

This first part is about oral communication and includes situations in which you may need to give or receive information by speaking and listening.

Examples might include giving directions to students to help them find their way around the institution, answering telephone enquiries, giving presentations, attending or chairing meetings or engaging in negotiations.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Who do you talk to as part of your role?
- What type of information you exchange, i.e. what do you talk about?
- Why do you need to exchange this information?
- How do you decide what to say and when to say it?

Written Communication:

The second part covers the need to communicate in writing including through electronic media such as e-mail, or through visual media such as film or slides. Examples might include responding to requests for information from the public, drafting internal letters about meetings, or contributing to a paper or policy publication.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Who do you write to?
- What do you write about?
- Why do you need to send this information?
- How do you decide what to write?
- How do you structure the information?

2 Teamwork and Motivation:

This element is about team work and team leadership. A team is defined as a number of people who work together to achieve a common purpose. This could include internal or external teams, teams which are fixed, or those that change.

Examples might include departmental, research, course development or project teams, teams involving students or people outside the institution (but not networks).

The role you hold in the team may include contributing as an active member, motivating others in the team, or providing leadership and direction for the team.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- In which teams are you mainly involved?
- What is the function of these teams and what are they working to achieve?
- Who is in the team and what is your main role?
- Who identified the need for the team and set it up?

- Who is responsible for setting the direction of the work of the team?
- How are team members encouraged and motivated?

3 Liaison and Networking:

This element covers occasions when you are required to liaise with others both within and outside the institution and create networks of useful contacts. The reasons for doing this may include passing on information promptly to colleagues, ensuring mutual exchange of information, influencing developments through one's contacts, or building an external reputation.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Who do you liaise with and why?
- Why is it important and how often does it happen?
- What information are you typically passing on or receiving?
- What networks (if any) do you belong to and why?
- What is the purpose of the network and what is your role in the network?
- What networks have you initiated and / or developed (if any)?

4 Service Delivery:

This element covers the help, assistance and services you are required to give to students, visitors, members of staff, and other users of the institution. This may include reacting to requests for information or advice, actively offering or promoting the services of the institution to others, and setting the overall standards of service offered.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- What service do you provide and to whom?
- Do you usually actively offer the service or do your customers come to you?
- Is there a standard service which is the same for all customers?
- How do you find out what the customer wants?
- Who sets the overall standards and decides which services will be offered?

5 Decision Making Processes and Outcomes:

This element covers the decisions which you make and their impact on your work, your team and the institution. You should consider independent and collaborative decisions and situations where you provide recommendations or advice to assist others in making a decision. You must also consider the impact of the decision on your work, team, department or institution. Note that it is assumed that you make the best decision in the circumstances, rather than considering what might happen if you made the wrong or poor decision.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- How are decisions made and who makes them?
- What authority do you have to make decisions without the agreement of others?
- What typical decisions do you make and what are the results of making them?
- Who else is involved in making your decisions and what is their contribution?
- How regularly do you make these types of decisions?
- On who or what do they impact and over what timescale?

6. Planning and Organising Resources:

This element is about organising, prioritising and planning time and resources - human, physical or financial. This may include planning and organising your own work or that of others, on day to day tasks or in project working. The element explores operational planning and planning for coming years, i.e. strategic planning

You may find it helpful to consider:

- What do you plan or organise?
- What resources are involved (e.g. people, equipment, money etc)?
- Who else is involved in creating or working on the plan?
- What is the time scale?
- How do you prioritise?
- What else do you have to take into account?
- How is progress monitored?
- Do you receive information from and provide information to others to complete your planning?

7 Initiative and Problem Solving:

This element is about identifying or developing options and selecting solutions to problems that typically occur in your role. This may include using your initiative to select from available options, resolving problems where an immediate solution may not be apparent, dealing with complex problems, and anticipating problems which could have major repercussions.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Examples of typical problems
- How often does this type of problem occur?
- What do you do about it?
- What options do you consider and how do you select the best course of action?
- Do you have to generate new or creative approaches to these types of problems?

8 Analysis and Research:

This element covers the occasions when you are required to investigate issues, analyse information and carry out research. These may include following standard procedures to gather and analyse data, identifying and designing appropriate methods of research, collating and analysing a range of data from different sources, establishing new methods or models for research, or setting the context for research.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- What are you investigating or researching? Why?
- What data do you have available or need to obtain?
- How do you obtain this data?
- How do you choose which method or approach to use?
- Who decides that the investigation or research is needed or would be beneficial?

9 Sensory and Physical Demands:

This element covers the sensory and physical aspects of your role. These may include physical effort, co-ordination and dexterity, using aural examples to assess next actions, applying skilled techniques and co-ordinating sensory information and using high levels of dexterity where precision or accuracy is essential.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Do you routinely use any tools or equipment?
- Are you required to lift, carry or handle large or heavy objects routinely?
- Is any assistance given by others or in the form of special equipment?
- Do you work in cramped, confined or difficult spaces or awkward positions?
- How long did it take you to learn or develop the skills needed to carry out your role?
- How did you learn or develop these skills?
- How long would it take to train someone else to do these aspects of the job if they did not have any experience?

10 Work Environment:

This element explores the impact the working environment has on you in your role and your ability to respond to and control that environment safely. This may include such things as temperature, noise or fumes, the work position and working in an outdoor environment.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Where do you work (e.g. office, lab, outdoors etc.)?
- What is the environment like?
- What type of work are you required to do there?
- Do you have to take any special measures to reduce the risk or control the environment before or while working there?
- Do you make use of any safety equipment, special clothing?
- Who is responsible for controlling the environment and making sure that others working there are not at risk?
- Who is responsible for the health and safety of people working there and decides that it is safe to work?
- How are these assessments made?

11 Pastoral Care and Welfare:

This element is about your responsibilities for the welfare and well being of students and staff within the institution, in both informal and formal situations. You may be required to give supportive advice and guidance or need to be aware of the support services that are available.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- Did the other person come to you for help?
- What are the typical issues or problems?
- What did you do and how did you decide to do it?
- Have you had any training in this aspect of your role?
- Is there any guidance material to help you?

- Are you able to refer the other person to anyone else for help?

12 Team Development:

This element covers the development of the skills and knowledge of others in your work team. This may include the induction of new colleagues, coaching and appraising other team members whom you supervise, mentor or manage, and giving guidance or advice to your peers or supervisor on specific aspects of work.

You may find it helpful to consider:

- What are you instructing, coaching or guiding others to do?
- How do you do this?
- Who identifies the learning needs of the team members and decides whether any one individual should receive training or development?
- How do you assess whether learning has occurred?

13 Teaching Training and Learning Support:

This element is about what you are required to do to teach, train or provide learning support to students and others *who are not part of the work team*. This may include providing instruction to those who are using a particular service or working in a particular area for the first time. You may be required to carry out standard training, create development opportunities or be involved in the assessment and teaching of students.

If you do not have responsibilities in these areas, please move onto the final element. If you do carry out teaching, training or provide learning support, you may find it helpful to consider:

- What is your subject area or specialism?
- Who do you teach, develop or provide with learning support?
- Is anyone else involved in providing teaching, development or learning support in this subject area?
- Who decides on the content of the activity?
- Who designs and develops the course content?
- Who decides how the content is to be delivered?
- Who else within the institution is involved in teaching, training or learning support in the area?
- How do you assess the effectiveness of your teaching, training or learning support?

14 Knowledge and Experience:

The final element explores the relevant knowledge and experience you are required to have to carry out your role. This may be about having sufficient experience to carry out your basic day-to-day responsibilities, acting as a leading authority, or having a breadth or depth of experience to act as a point of reference for others.

When considering the requirements of your role (as against your own personal knowledge and experience) You may find it helpful to consider:

- What knowledge and experience, do you *need* to carry out your basic day to day responsibilities?
- How did you gain this knowledge and experience?

- How do you apply the knowledge and experience?
- How long it takes to obtain your knowledge and experience?
- How do you develop your knowledge and experience?
- How often do you need to up-date your knowledge and experience?
- Who routinely comes to you for advice or guidance?
- What level of knowledge and experience would be required of your replacement, were you to leave your role?