



Human Resources Organizational Development and Design

Position Evaluation: A guide to the UCT system and process



Issue 9: January 2018

A. What is Position Evaluation?

Position evaluation is the rating of Positions according to a specifically planned procedure in order to determine the relative size and worth of each Position. It examines the contents and requirements of Positions and measures these against a standard scale. This results in Position grades, scores, levels or ratings whereby Positions can be compared with other Positions to determine their relative worth.

At UCT, Position evaluation is used to evaluate and grade all PASS (Professional, Administrative and Support) Positions.

B. Why do we evaluate Positions?

We evaluate Positions to determine their “intrinsic” worth. We systematically assess the degree of complexity of the Position content, discretion and requirements, independent of any pre-conceived standards of remuneration and without regard to the qualities and performance of the Position-holder performing the Position. This results in a rational rank order of Positions, and Position structure based on a system that is readily understood, fair and defensible, for all stakeholders (e.g. management, Position-holders and Human Resources).

Position evaluation provides UCT with a rational basis for establishing competitive salary ranges that take internal equity and market forces into account. Position evaluation is just one factor in determining pay, the others including market surveys, skill and performance.

The process and results of Position evaluation also provide assistance with:

- Position and organisational design
- Performance management
- Recruitment and selection
- Training and development
- Career planning and pathing
- Succession planning

C. When do we evaluate Positions?

We evaluate Positions when:

- a Position is new, before recruitment.
- a Position is new, 6 months to 1 year after the Position is filled.
- substantive functions are added or removed from a Position.
- substantive functions are added or removed from a Position during an ERMC approved restructuring process.

It is good practice to revisit the grade of a Position every four years, if capacity allows.

Position evaluation is never used to promote or reward people.

A Position will not ordinarily be re-evaluated within one year after its last evaluation.

When one Position in a unit is re-evaluated, it makes sense to re-evaluate all Positions in the unit together.

It is not necessary to re-evaluate a Position before recruitment, if:

- the Position has been properly and recently evaluated (in the last two to three years); and
- the requirements of the Position have not changed since the evaluation; and
- the post being advertised is the same Position as that which was evaluated.

D. Can we evaluate Positions during times of change?

Evaluating or measuring a Position is much like taking a photograph. If the subject of the photograph is moving, the photograph will be blurry. If a Position is undergoing change, the measurement is likely to be inaccurate.

In order to get an accurate measurement:

- The Position needs to have been relatively stable for around 6 months.
- The Position needs to be clearly defined and described in a Position description.
- The Position is measured as it is on the day it is presented for Position evaluation. No future changes are taken into account.
- The design and content of Position needs to be agreed to by the relevant delegated authorities.

Given the above, it is not advisable to evaluate Positions **during** times of restructure, recalibration, redesign, reorganisation or direction-change. In these cases, Position evaluation should only be done once the new structure or new Position-design has been agreed/approved, and preferably already implemented.

Additionally, it is not advisable to evaluate Positions **before anticipated** times of restructure, recalibration, redesign, reorganisation or direction-change. Again, in these cases, Position evaluation should only be done once the new structure or new Position-design has been agreed/approved, and preferably already implemented. Position evaluation is an emotive issue, and a re-evaluation process pre and post such changes would create unnecessary work and distress, and quite possibly differing outcomes.

Where the line manager is unsure on whether to embark on a Position evaluation process, s/he should seek advice from his/her HR Practitioner, and if needs be, the Position Evaluation Committee itself.

E. What do we need in order for Position evaluation to work?

For a Position evaluation system to be successful, UCT needs the following:

- Management and employee support and transparency during the process
- Clear procedure and policy
- Clear definitions
- Written records
- Ownership by line manager
- Clear explanation of the links between the Position description, the grade and the applicable remuneration
- Restricting the number of re-evaluations – clear procedures and reasons for doing so
- Following the rules of the system
- Stakeholder involvement

F. What are the 'Ground Rules' or principles of Position Evaluation?

A number of ground rules or principles exist to ensure and protect the integrity, validity and reliability of an evaluation system:

1. Examine the Position and not the person in it.
2. Don't grade deputising or acting tasks unless performed regularly.
3. Assume competent and proper performance by the person doing it.
4. Evaluate the Position 'as it is' and not how you imagine it could or should be.
5. Look for and examine 'typical incidents' (examples of activities or circumstances that actually occur), activities or circumstances that actually occur.
6. Reject any Position description that is:
 - Unclear; or
 - Unlikely (unlikely events in the normal performance of the Position must be disregarded); or
 - Unsatisfactory; or
 - Not on HR191; or
 - Not agreed prior to Position evaluation (clear agreement must be reached on the content of the Position by the Position-holder(s), immediate supervisor and line management). The Position description must be signed and dated.
(Should an incumbent not agree to or sign the Position description, the HRP will facilitate a discussion around the content, with the aim of getting to agreement. If the description remains unsigned, the Position Analyst will be guided by the HR Practitioner and Employee Relations representatives as to whether to proceed or not).
7. Evaluate by consensus of opinion of the Position evaluation panel.
8. Include at least one Position incumbent on the Position evaluation panel, who can fully represent the Position.

G. What system do we use?

UCT uses the Peromnes Position evaluation and grading system. Peromnes was originally devised in the mid 1960's by prominent South African Human Resources practitioners and has since then been refined and developed to become one of the most widely used evaluation systems in Southern Africa. Peromnes is also the most widely used tool by Tertiary Institutions in South Africa, with more than half of the Institutions using this system.

Peromnes is a registered trade mark belonging to Deloitte (Pty) Ltd and only licensed users may make use of the product and related works and systems. The University of Cape Town is authorised to use the systems and uses this system for all Position evaluations, except Academic Positions.

Peromnes is:

- Credible (a large number and variety of organisations use it successfully, where it is acceptable to all stakeholders)
- Applicable (to all types of Positions (excluding academic Positions), all levels of Positions and any kind of organisation)

- Simple (the manual system requires only a rating scale, a score sheet, a pen or pencil, there are no complex calculations and no complicated definitions or complex terminology)
- Consistent (procedures are standardised, terminology is clearly defined and thus different evaluators achieve same/similar results)
- Comparable (grades can be compared with other higher education and other organisations, Peromnes remuneration surveys are published twice yearly (by Deloitte).)
- Flexible (results can be applied to an organisation's specific needs.)

H. How does Peromnes work?

Peromnes grades show the rank order of Positions within an organisation and allow Positions to be compared by grade with other Positions both inside and outside the organisation.

Peromnes evaluates and scores Positions in terms of eight factors. These factors are intrinsic to Positions, do not measure aspects outside the Position and are applicable to all Positions in terms of function and level in organisation. The first six evaluate tasks, skills, responsibilities and relationships (Position content), and the last two evaluate education and further training and experience (Position requirements):

Factor 1: Problem Solving:	Evaluates the nature and complexity of the decisions, judgements and recommendations made in the Position.
Factor 2: Consequence of Judgements:	Evaluates the impact or results of accountable decisions, judgements and recommendations on organisational levels, inside and outside the organisation.
Factor 3: Pressure of Work:	Evaluates the amount of pressure in a Position in terms of the variety and type of work done and the time available to do it.
Factor 4: Knowledge:	Evaluates the level of knowledge required to perform the Position competently.
Factor 5: Position Impact:	Evaluates the influence or impact that the Position has on the activities of parts of the organisation or outside the organisation.
Factor 6: Comprehension:	Evaluates the requirement of the Position to understand written and spoken communications.
Factor 7: Educational Qualifications:	Evaluates the essential minimum educational qualifications required to do the Position.
Factor 8: Further Training/Experience:	Evaluates the typical period of further appropriate training and experience required to become competent in the Position after obtaining the essential minimum educational qualifications.

It is important to note that certain aspects of Positions do not necessarily contribute to the intrinsic complexity of Positions, for example:

- The size of applicable budget

- The volume of business/work
- The value of equipment used
- Working (environmental) conditions

Each factor is scored using a standardised rating scale of 35 points. The sum of the scores for each of the factors gives a total score which is converted into a Peromnes grade by using the conversion table. The Peromnes grades are then converted to UCT grades using a UCT grade correlation table.

There are 21 grades in the Peromnes system, 1++ being the highest grade and 19 being the lowest grade. UCT only uses Peromnes Grade 19 – 1 and does not use 1+ and 1++.

I. What do we use to evaluate Positions?

We evaluate Positions from accurate, current, written, signed Position descriptions, supplemented by Position analysis interviews with Position-holders and their line managers.

While Peromnes does not require a Position description in specific format (it just requires a statement of what is done, how it is done and why it is done), for internal consistency, we require that all Positions are submitted on the Position Description (HR191) HR form, accompanied by the completed Position Evaluation Application (HR192) HR form.

The Position description contains:

- Position title (a Position title is not an indication of the complexity of a specific Position, it is only a basic indication of its functional classification)
- Organogram
- Position purpose
- Position content (the different tasks that are performed in the Position or the expectations that the organisation has of the Position-holder regarding the achievement of organisational objectives.)
- Competencies (minimum requirements needed to competently perform the Position activities)
- Qualifications and experience
- Agreement by line manager and Position holder (where there is one)

A Position Description (HR191) HR form is also used as the basis for recruitment and selection and performance management.

J. How do I apply to have a Position evaluated?

A Position Evaluation Application (HR192) HR form is completed and forwarded to the HR Practitioner. This application must be supported by the line manager and the relevant Dean or ED.

The Position Evaluation Application (HR192) HR form is accompanied by:

- An organogram
- The new Position description for the Position to be graded (or descriptions where more than one Position is affected)
- The old Position description for the Position to be graded (or descriptions where more than one Position is affected)
- Any other documentation which assists the Position Analyst in understanding the Position

K. How is a Position evaluated and graded?

Once a completed Position Evaluation Application (HR192) HR form (with supporting documentation) is received, the HR Practitioner consults with the applicant and reviews and interrogates the application. If there is good cause for evaluation or re-evaluation, s/he then either benchmarks the Position or forwards the Position for Formal Position evaluation to the Position Analyst.

The Position evaluation and grading process happens in two stages:

Stage one: Position evaluation

Formal Position evaluation

If a Position is submitted for formal evaluation, the Position Analyst from the Organisational Design unit will set up a Position evaluation session.

A number of people will be invited to join a Position evaluation panel including the line manager, the Position-holder, the HR Practitioner and any other subject or technical experts that can add value to the process. For particular Position families (such as finance or information technology Positions) a member of the relevant department (such as finance or ICTS) will be invited to be a part of the panel. If requested, the Dean or ED may also be present. If requested, the incumbent's representative may also be present (a fellow University employee or a member of a University recognised employee representative body). The Position evaluation panel will be asked to take note of and adhere to the 'ground rules'.

The Position Analyst will lead a Position analysis discussion, asking pointed questions about the Position. The panel will be asked to focus on the more complex aspects of the Position, and be asked to give factual answers, examples and critical incidents, that will allow the Position Analyst to evaluate the Position.

If clear benchmarks exist, the Position Analyst may benchmark the post (see below). Alternatively the Position will then be scored by the Position Analyst on the 8 Peromnes factors, according to the grading rules of the Peromnes system.

In the case of a top management Position (where the outcome is likely to be PC13(3), PC13(2) or PC13(1), an external consultant from Deloittes will be invited to formally evaluate the Position.

Based on the result of the Position evaluation, the Position will then be placed at the relevant Position grade. There are three possible outcomes:

- Upgrade
- Downgrade
- No change

The Position evaluation panel will not be informed of the Position grade.

An audit trail will be kept.

Borderline scores, inconsistent scores and anomalies will be re-examined by the Position Analyst. The Senior Manager: Organisation Development or the Senior Remuneration and HR Policy Specialist may also be approached to give input. If a grade remains borderline, the relevant Dean or ED will be consulted on which grade they expect the Position to operate at and the level at which they will manage the post.

Benchmark Position evaluation

If a Position is submitted after benchmarking, then the Position Analyst will evaluate the Position and review and verify the benchmark. If the Position Analyst is not satisfied with the benchmarking in anyway, s/he may request that the Position is formally graded (see above).

Stage two: Position grade ratification

The Position grade is then considered and ratified by the Position Evaluation Committee to ensure accuracy and consistency.

L. When do we use benchmark Position evaluation?

It is not always necessarily to evaluate every Position. In the case where other similar Positions exist, that have already been evaluated, the HR Practitioner will benchmark the Position against these Positions and forward the Position descriptions, findings and grade recommendations to the Position Analyst for quality assurance and verification. The Position Analyst may also benchmark Positions.

Positions can be benchmarked when they are clearly and easily defined and when benchmark Positions exist that:

- are very similar to the Position in question; and
- are common in the university; and
- are not too specific, narrow in scope, or specialised; and
- have a standard and consistent set of responsibilities; and
- are similar in nature from one organisation to another; and
- would be found in published salary surveys.

Positions used to benchmark must:

- have clear and accurate Position descriptions written in the HR191 format; and
- have been formally and accurately graded in the last two to three years.

It is good practice to benchmark a Position against more than one other Position, preferably three.

The Position Analyst will maintain a database of suitable Positions against which the HR Practitioner can benchmark.

M. Who approves the Position evaluation grading outcomes?

A Position Evaluation Committee considers and ratifies the grading outcomes of all evaluations to ensure consistency and accuracy.

The Position Evaluation Committee consists of:

- OPSMAG nominee: DVC for Human Resources (Chair)
- The Executive Director: Human Resources
- Director: Organisational Development
- The Position Analyst (Organisational Design Specialist, or nominee)
- Director: HR Client Services
- Director: Compensation & Benefits
- Compensation & Benefits Specialist

- Two Deans' nominee
- Nominee of the EDs of PASS departments

The committee will only consider re-evaluations quarterly, in March, June, September and December, the deadlines for submission being the middle of February, May, August and November respectively. Grading results will be communicated at the end of March, June, September and December respectively.

Evaluations of new Positions and Positions affected by ERM restructures will be done on a monthly basis so as not to delay the recruitment and restructure processes. The timing of these evaluations will coincide with the OPSMAG meeting calendar.

The committee undergoes Peromnes Evaluation training. The Position Evaluation Committee sets its own terms of reference. All members have voting rights.

Positions graded at PC13 (4), PC13 (5) (Peromnes 4 and 5), have one further level of approval, being the Vice Chancellor.

Positions graded at PC13 (1), PC13 (2) and PC13 (3), (Peromnes 1++ – 3), have one further level of approval, being Council Remuneration Committee.

N. How is the grading outcome communicated?

Once ratified the grade is then communicated to the relevant Dean or ED and/or line manager through the HR Practitioner.

Positions graded at PC13(4) and PC13(5) are sent to OPSMAG and the Council Remuneration Committee for noting. Positions graded at PC13(1), PC13(2) and PC13(3) are sent to Council for noting.

At this point, the Position evaluation process ends. The HR Practitioner will advise line management on the options regarding the implementation of the outcome.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to communicate the outcome to the staff member.

O. What if I am unhappy about the outcome of the Position evaluation?

A review process encourages transparency and provides a mechanism for stakeholders to formally object to a Position evaluation.

The following may be grounds for review:

- An inaccurate Position description
- A disputed Position description (the Position-holder has not agreed to the Position description presented)
- Procedural irregularity
- Evidence of discrimination and/or bias
- Inconsistent results in comparison with similar Positions in the organisation

The following are not grounds for review:

- The Position-holder's performance, skills, knowledge or any other personal attribute
- Budget or affordability

A review may be requested by either the Dean/ED, Line Manager or the Position holder. The request for a review must be submitted in writing to the Position Analyst, via the HR Practitioner, within one month of the communication of the outcome of the grade, clearly outlining the reasons for the request. The request must have the support of the HR Practitioner, line manager and relevant Dean/ED.

The Position Analyst will communicate the request with supporting documentation and the audit trail, as well as a recommendation as to a way forward, to the Chair of the Position Evaluation Committee. The Chair will review the request and supporting documentation and decide whether to grant a review. S/he may refer the matter to the full Position Evaluation Committee for a decision. If a review is granted, the Chair (or the Position Evaluation Committee) will decide on the method thereof.

The review method may include:

- Reconstituting the original Position evaluation panel
- Reconstituting the original Position evaluation panel, and inviting additional subject matter experts (specified or unspecified)
- Referral to an external Position evaluation consultant (and where the fee should be paid from)
- Further benchmarking

Once the review has concluded, the outcome of the review will be communicated to the Dean/ED, line manager, incumbent and/or complainant, through the HR Practitioner.

Once the review has concluded, no further appeal is available through the Position evaluation process.

Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of the review, then this should be addressed via the grievance or alternate dispute resolution procedures for PASS Staff.

P. How is the Position grade implemented?

Once the grade has been ratified by the Position Evaluation Committee, the grade is then communicated to the relevant Dean or ED and line manager through the HR Practitioner.

At this point, the Position evaluation process ends.

The HR Practitioner will advise line management on the options regarding the implementation of the outcome.

The outcome could include:

- A commensurate salary adjustment for the Position-holder in line with the new Position responsibilities and new grade.
- The reinstatement of the previous Position description at the old grade, with a commensurate adjustment in Position responsibilities and performance management indicators for the Position-holder.
- An adjustment of working hours in order to afford the commensurate salary range for the new Position at the new grade.

These outcomes are implemented according to relevant UCT policies and the HR Delegated Authorities.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to communicate the outcome and the implementation plan to the staff member.

Q. When is a change in Position grade implemented?

Once a grading outcome is approved per the HR Delegated Authorities, any change must be implemented in the next payroll month following the communication of the outcome, and the incumbent informed by the line manager within the same time frame.

If the outcome is to be contested through a request for a review, the implementation of the grading outcome is suspended until such a time that the outcome of the review is communicated. Once communicated, any change must be implemented in the next payroll month following the communication of the outcome and the incumbent informed by the line manager within the same time frame.

R. What is the effective date of a change in Position grade?

Typically, the effective date is the date on which the grading outcome is approved per the HR Delegated Authorities.

Individual cases may however merit the backdating or forward-dating of the effective date to a particular point in time, on the advice and recommendation of the HR Practitioner, within UCT policy and practice. Typically this would not extend beyond three months of the communication of the outcome.

S. What are the 2018 timelines?

Round	Date for approval by Position Evaluation Committee	Cutoff for submissions	Re-evaluations?
January	26 January 2018	29 December 2017	No
February	09 February 2018	19 January 2018	No
March	16 March 2018	16 February 2018	Yes
April	20 April 2018	30 March 2018	No
May	11 May 2018	20 April 2018	No
June	08 June 2018	11 May 2018	Yes
July	06 July 2018	15 June 2018	No
August	17 August 2018	27 July 2018	No
September	21 September 2018	24 August 2018	Yes
October	19 October 2018	28 September 2018	No
November	23 November 2018	02 November 2018	No
December	07 December 2018	09 November 2018	Yes

T. How long does the process take?

A Position can take anywhere from 2 months to 4 months to be graded, depending on the timetable above, committee meeting dates, and additional steps that may be required. If documentation is submitted incomplete or unsigned, this delays the process further.

The following is a rough guideline on how long a Position evaluation process can take:

Action	Person Responsible	Approximate Time Length	Running Total Length
Position analysis and design	Line management	Weeks	Month 1
Position description writing	Line management	Weeks	
Position description sign off	Line management	Weeks	

Action	Person Responsible	Approximate Time Length	Running Total Length
HR192 Application for JE completed and signed by ED/Dean	Line management	Weeks	
Submittal of HR191 and HR192 to HR Practitioner	Line management	Days	
Review of documentation, follow up and correction of omissions and errors	HR Practitioner	Days	Month 2
Submittal of HR191 and HR192 to Organisational Design Specialist	HR Practitioner	Days	
Review of documentation, follow up and correction of omissions and errors	Organisational Design	Days	Month 2 - 3
Setting up of grading session and preparation	Organisational Design	Weeks	
Grading session	Organisational Design	Days	
Audit trail and report	Organisational Design	Days	
JEC approval	Organisational Design	Days	
*External evaluation	Organisational Design	Months	Month 4
*JEC request for further information/evaluation	Organisational Design	Months	Month 4
* REMCOM/VC approval	Organisational Design	Months	Month 4
Communication of outcome to HR Practitioner	Organisational Design	Days	Month 2 - 4
Communication of outcome via internal faculty/department processes	HR Practitioner	Days	Month 2 - 4

** If required*