

#### 4.02 Job Evaluation within the NICS

This policy covers the use of job evaluation in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). The policy applies to industrial and non-industrial staff in the NICS, including members of the Senior Civil Service (SCS).

**The following terms used within this policy are defined below:**

- Job evaluation in this context refers to the grading of roles, using the following analytical tools:
  - **Grading Guidance** - sets out the characteristics and standards for each grade;
  - **JEGS** – Job Evaluation and Grading Support: the job evaluation methodology applied to all non-industrial grades up to G6 and analogous;
  - **IJEGS** – Industrial Job Evaluation and Grading Support: the job evaluation methodology applied to all industrial grades in the NICS. All reference to JEGS in this policy should be read as including IJEGS;
  - **JESP** – Job Evaluation for Senior Posts: the job evaluation methodology applied to all Senior Civil Service staff at G5 and above and analogous; and
  - **JES - Job Evaluation Scheme: the job evaluation methodology applied to uniform grades in the Northern Ireland Prison Service**
- **NICS HR Grading Unit** – Northern Ireland Civil Service centralised grading function.
- **Job Evaluation Manager (JEM)** – Head of the NICS HR Grading Unit with responsibility for oversight and assurance of the effective and efficient use of job evaluation tools and techniques.
- **Job Analyst** – someone who has been fully trained to undertake grading activities whether using Grading Guidance, JEGS, IJEGS, or JESP and is employed by the NICS to undertake these activities.
- **Role-holder** – refers to a member of staff who holds a role in the NICS. Other terms used include: job-holder, post-holder, member of staff and employee.
- **Line Manager** – person with line management responsibility for the role-holder with an understanding of the responsibilities of the role.
- **SCS** – Senior Civil Service.
- **Decision Review Panel** – panel of Civil Servants convened to re-examine a job evaluation decision where a Decision Review request has been accepted by a Job Evaluation Manager within the NICS HR Grading Unit.
- **TUS** – Trade Union Side – Trade Unions recognised by NICS.
- **New Roles** – there is a distinction between new roles which require grading and/or have never previously been graded and those additional new roles which increase the complement of previously graded roles. For example:-
  - a. If the role is completely new in that the work has never been carried out before or graded.
  - b. New work has significantly changed the current role and the business area is unsure of the impact on the grade level carrying out that work.

In those instances a job description template (JD) needs to be completed and sent to the central GU mailbox to confirm the grade.

- c. If the additional new role is a workload issue whereby the role is carrying out the same work undertaken by existing grades and the grade is not in doubt. In that instance it is a case of increasing the staff complement/head count at that grade. The request does not need to come to GU to re confirm the grade.

**You may also be interested in the following policies:**

- 1.04 Vacancy Management
- 6.05 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- 6.09 Dignity at Work

This policy is version 3.0 Northern Ireland Civil Service HR Policy  
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## **4.02 JOB EVALUATION WITHIN THE NICS**

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## 4.02 JOB EVALUATION IN THE NICS

**This chapter is effective from 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and replaces all previous guidance and agreements, both corporate and departmental, central and local.**

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Handbook chapter sets out the principles and practices that must be used in relation to grading arrangements, maintenance and job evaluation in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

*What is job evaluation?*

- 1.2 In this policy, the term job evaluation is used in a grading context which is undertaken by the NICS HR Grading Unit. Job evaluation determines the relative quality of jobs within an organisation and provides a rational basis for the design and maintenance of an equitable and defensible grading structure. The NICS operates a hierarchal grading system based on staff being assigned to a specific grade. The analytical tools of Grading Guidance, JEGS, IJEGS, JESP and JES will determine the relativities between one role and another. Other business review and support services such as organisation review, loading of roles, process mapping etc. can be undertaken by Business Consultancy Service, Department of Finance.
- 1.3 Job evaluation is not concerned with how busy a role is or how heavily it is loaded i.e. how much work there is to do. The evaluation focuses on the nature of the tasks which need to be performed in the role and the type of responsibilities associated with the role.
- 1.4 Job evaluation assesses the complexity of a role. Individual contribution to a role is covered by mechanisms such as the NICS Competency Framework which is designed to help develop the right mix of skills and experience to do the job well. Performance management systems are designed to consider personal performance and contribution to organisational goals and targets. Job evaluation is separate from individual contribution in that it measures the challenges of a role and does not assess the performance or contribution of the role-holder.

*When should job evaluation be used?*

- 1.5 Grading / job evaluation in the NICS is used in a number of ways:
- a) to contribute towards an assurance to the Accounting Officer of Departmental compliance with grading standards;
  - b) to ensure new roles are correctly graded – all new roles must be graded by a trained Job Analyst before any attempt to fill the role is made (see Vacancy Management policy 1.04 in the HR Handbook);
  - c) to grade single roles or a small group of roles within a Department where these need to be graded for any reason e.g. where there is doubt about the grade of a role or where the duties have changed significantly since the role was last graded;
  - d) to support any review of grades across different Departments or in support of any efficiency review; or

Where role-holders or Trade Union Side are concerned about the grading of a particular role or roles, then they should make evidence-based representation to the relevant management group. Management will take all relevant factors into consideration and will contact the JEM within the Grading Unit for advice. Management will provide a written response to TUS within a reasonable timescale.

*Who is involved in job evaluation?*

1.6 The main roles in job evaluation are as follows:

**Departmental Accounting Officers (DAO):** DAOs are ultimately responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources, including ensuring that roles in the Department for which they are responsible are correctly graded (and are filled at the correct grade) to meet business objectives. DAOs must assure themselves at regular intervals that their roles and grading structures are correct. Mechanisms should be put in place by which the DAO can demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this policy. Advice and assistance in designing departmental specific mechanisms can be provided by NICS HR Grading Unit.

**Role-holder and Line Manager:** Both the role-holder and the role-holder's line manager have key parts to play in job evaluation by providing factual evidence about the full scope and responsibilities of the role and signing off the information on which the job evaluation is based. The quality of the output from grading is reliant on the quality of the input. Since the characteristics of roles may change over a period of time, managers have responsibility for monitoring such changes in roles for which they are responsible and initiating action where they suspect a change of grade may have occurred. All managers have an ongoing responsibility to ensure that the roles they are responsible for are correctly graded. In circumstances where the role-holder and line manager cannot reach agreement on the final content of the factual evidence provided for an evaluation, the Countersigning Officer will have final sign off on the details of the role to be evaluated.

**Job Analysts:** Job evaluation must only be undertaken by trained Job Analysts within NICS HR Grading Unit which has been established to do this work or a licensed private sector provider.

**Senior Civil Service:** Senior Civil Servants who are asked to assist in JESP panels must be trained in the use of JESP. This requirement is to ensure and maintain the integrity of the evaluation methodologies.

**TUS:** Consultation with Trade Union Side (TUS) is an important feature of job evaluation arrangements. Effective consultation plays a key role in good employee relations. Consultation must be initiated early and should be genuine and meaningful, with those involved committed to a fair and transparent process. Agreed arrangements for effective consultation are set out in the policy below.

**NICS HR Business Partners:** Business Partners are responsible for encouraging senior managers and line managers to adhere to policies set out in the NICS Handbook and to promote the need for the grading of roles and compliance with grading guidance.

**JEM: Head** of the NICS HR Grading Unit hold responsibility for the oversight and assurance provided by the effective and efficient use of Job Evaluation Tools and Technique.

**Job Evaluation for Senior Posts Panel:** JESP panels are responsible for scoring and agreeing full JESP evaluations and may also be used for scoring paper-based evaluations.

## 2. Job evaluation tools in use in the NICS

- 2.1 There are four ways in which roles are evaluated in the NICS, depending on the grade/discipline of the roles in question. These are:
- a) using NICS Grading Guidance for non-industrial staff at AA-Grade 6 inclusive and analogous staff<sup>1</sup>;
  - b) using the Job Evaluation and Grading Support (JEGS) system, including industrial JEGS (IJECS), for all disciplines below Senior Civil Service level;
  - c) using the Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP) system for Senior Civil Service (SCS) roles; or
  - d) using the Job Evaluation system (JES) for grading uniform roles in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.
- 2.2 During the evaluation process, the Grading Unit will record and retain information on the activities of evaluated roles. All information held in relation to roles will fully comply with Data Protection requirements.

### *NICS Grading Guidance (AA – Grade 6 roles)*

- 2.3 Grading Guidance is a tool designed to assist NICS HR Grading Unit Job Analysts to grade new and existing roles. In the NICS it is used for non-industrial roles graded from Administrative Assistant up to and including Grade 6 and analogous<sup>1</sup>. Grading Guidance can be used for all non-industrial disciplines within the NICS. It provides an analytical assessment of roles and is less resource intensive than evaluation using JEGS.
- 2.4 Where Grading Guidance is used to grade new roles, these roles should be evaluated using JEGS 12-18 months after they become operational to ensure the initial grading is correct.

Grading guidance:

- sets out the characteristics and standards for each grade;
  - shows the key differences between the grades above and below; and
  - shows the typical demands and common work areas for each grade.
- 2.5 It can also be used as complementary material for Job Analysts when designing and grading new and/or restructured roles using JEGS. Grading Guidance may also be used as outline guidance to assist in confirming the potential grade of roles.

<sup>1</sup>While NICS Grading Guidance exists for EOII and EOI grades, this aspect of the Grading Guidance has not been agreed

- 2.6 The Grading Guidance sets out some broad areas of work on which NICS grades (AA-G6 inclusive and analogous) are commonly engaged and it describes the characteristic demands of each grade level against factors which have been identified as those which differentiate civil service jobs in qualitative terms.
- 2.7 The Grading Guidance for non-industrial staff outlines the common and predominant challenges and responsibilities appropriate to each individual grade within the NICS. The Grading Guidance does not describe the full range of duties which might be encountered. Grading Guidance illustrates the general level of work required within each grade sufficiently to enable meaningful grading assessments to be made in relation to most roles encountered.
- 2.8 Applying Grading Guidance is less resource-intensive than the JEGS process and can provide sufficient assurance of the grade of the role. If the role is not part of a cross-departmental review, or is not a disputed or borderline role, i.e. bordering on the boundary of another grade, Grading Guidance will often be the most appropriate way of evaluating the role. If the role is disputed, border-line or part of a major review, JEGS should be used.

### *Job Evaluation and Grading Support (JEGS) Methodology*

- 2.9 JEGS is a software supported, analytical job evaluation methodology, which was developed for use within the Civil Service. The JEGS Handbook and computer programme are the intellectual property of Towers Watson and are provided only for the use of trained and licensed Job Analysts.
- 2.10 JEGS uses a number of factors to capture the main aspects of all roles in the non-industrial NICS. These are:
- Knowledge and skills;
  - Contacts and communications;
  - Problem solving;
  - Decision making;
  - Autonomy;
  - Management of resources; and
  - Impact.
- 2.11 Industrial JEGS (IJECS) is only used for industrial roles. Industrial JEGS has two additional factors which measure other typical characteristics associated with industrial roles:
- Physical effort/dexterity; and
  - Working conditions.
- 2.12 JEGS and IJECS Job Evaluations must be carried out by Job Analysts (see section 1.5 for further definition) in the following circumstances when a role cannot be satisfactorily graded using Grading Guidance:-
- a new role is created and the grade is not clear;
  - when significant and permanent changes have been made to the duties and responsibilities of an existing job;
  - where grade drift is suspected;
  - to assist with the resolution of equal pay or fair employment issues;
  - when there is a dispute over the grading of a role;
  - roles appear to be on the boundary of different grades; and/or

- roles are subject to a cross-departmental review.

2.13 The decision about a grade must be appropriate within the wider context of the whole organisation. Accordingly, groups of a similar nature within organisational structures should normally be treated as the same grade. It may therefore be necessary to reorganise work to fit roles better to the allocated grade, remembering that it is generally better to have good quality roles at one grade than poor quality roles at the next grade. This may also be required where roles fall on the border between grades. Where roles are reorganised, the reorganised role should be re-scored to come to a final grading decision.

#### *Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP)*

2.14 JESP is the analytical job evaluation methodology for Senior Civil Service roles within the NICS. JESP compares roles against factors which have been identified as key to all types of SCS work, although the nature and duties of the roles compared may be very different. JESP requires analysis of the fundamental characteristics of different types of SCS work and the demands placed on role-holders. The JESP factors are:

- Managing People
- Accountability
- Judgement
- Influencing
- Professional Competence

2.15 JESP must be used by Job Analysts with the assistance of a panel of trained members of the SCS as appropriate, in the following circumstances:

- when a new role is created;
- when significant and permanent changes have been made to the duties and responsibilities of an existing role;
- where grade drift is suspected;
- to assist with the resolution of equal pay or fair employment issues;
- when there is a dispute over the grading of a role;
- as part of an organisational review, including an efficiency review, whether cross-departmental or internal to a department, or other structural changes; and
- as part of a rolling review of all SCS roles under the JESP methodology.

2.16 Where there is doubt about whether a role falls within the SCS, the role should be evaluated first using JEGS.

#### **Consultation with TUS**

2.17 TUS consultation is required when considering new and restructured roles regardless of grade (see procedures for TUS consultation **Annex A**).



### 3. The Job Evaluation Process

- 3.1 When a role is to be evaluated, the role-holder will be fully informed of the processes that will be used. The role-holder and line manager are crucial to the process, particularly in agreeing the job description, which is the information on which the Job Analyst bases the grading decision. It may sometimes be appropriate for the Job Analyst to observe the role-holder when carrying out his/her duties. All role-holders, line managers and counter-signing officers are expected to co-operate with reasonable management requests in relation to evaluating roles.
- 3.2 Where a role-holder is not available for a role to be reviewed within a reasonable period of time, for example if the role-holder is absent for a long period for any reason, and it is not possible to identify an alternative role doing the same or very similar work, the role will be evaluated from information provided by line management. The Countersigning Officer will have final sign off on the details of the role to be evaluated.
- 3.3 While the process will differ according to the evaluation method applied, the broad process will include:
- consideration of what information needs to be communicated to those involved at the start of the process;
  - consideration of consultation requirements with TUS;
  - completion of a Job Description template for roles AA to Grade 6 and a Job Questionnaire template for SCS roles;
  - as required, discuss further with the role holder and/or line manager and where necessary, undertake an interview;
  - the Job Analyst obtaining an agreed job description from the role-holder and their line manager (or counter-signing officer where there is no role-holder in place or the role-holder and line manager are unable to reach agreement);
  - scoring the role when JEGS, IJEGS or JESP is used; and
  - communication of the results of the grading decision as appropriate.

### 4. Consistency Review

- 4.1 Where JEGS or JESP are used in a wider review of grading that examines the grading of a significant number of roles, then the scores will be subject to quality assurance/moderation to ensure the wider consistency of evaluations and to help to maintain the integrity of the methodologies.

### 5. Trade Union Consultation

- 5.1 The responsibility for TUS consultation rests with the business areas. In respect of large scale grading reviews across more than one Department, NICS HR will be responsible for consulting with TUS. TUS consultation must be initiated early and should be genuine and meaningful. See **Annex A** for full details on TUS consultation.

## 6. Outcome of Job Evaluation

6.1 The result of the job evaluation will be reported to the relevant manager(s). The decision may be made on the basis of Grading Guidance or on the basis of JEGS or JESP. The decision may also include advice from the Job Analyst and/or Job Evaluation Manager in relation to other factors such as:

- whether the grade indicated fits sensibly with other roles in the organisation;
- comparison with other recently evaluated roles and scores, if applicable, within the same organisation and across the NICS;
- the challenges of the work that the role will have to carry out in the future;
- how the work could be organised or role designed differently; and
- wider organisational considerations.

Management will then notify the relevant role-holder(s) and TUS of the grading outcome.

6.2 Once job evaluation is completed, there are two possible outcomes for existing roles:

- the role is appropriately graded; or
- an alternative outcome.

6.3 When the outcome of a job evaluation is that a role is different to the current grade, what happens next will depend on the individual circumstances of the case. Line management and NICS HR Business Partners will consider the options in accordance with NICS policies including TUS consultation.

## 7. Requests to review a grading decision

7.1 The job evaluation process allows for requests to be made for the review of evaluation decisions in certain circumstances. See **Annex B** for full details for the Job Evaluation Decision Review process.

## 8. Further information

8.1 For further information please contact the NICS HR Grading Unit at [NICSHRGradingUnit@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:NICSHRGradingUnit@finance-ni.gov.uk).

## **ANNEX A**

### **CONSULTATION WITH TRADE UNION SIDE**

1. This Annex sets out arrangements for consultation with Trade Union Side (TUS) on grading/job evaluation. The responsibility for TUS consultation rests with the business areas. In respect of large scale grading reviews across more than one Department, NICS HR will be responsible for consulting with TUS. TUS consultation must be initiated early and should be genuine and meaningful and undertaken in a timely manner.
2. The period of time given to consultation with TUS should be proportionate to the size of the grading exercise. It should be recognised that TUS may not always have the resources to respond to every notification that job evaluation is to be carried out.
3. The aim of the consultation is to reach a decision which, as far as possible, is mutually agreeable to both management and TUS. It is of course recognised that the process of consultation may sometimes fail to achieve a mutually agreeable outcome. Where a mutually agreeable outcome has not been possible within a reasonable timeframe, this should not prevent work moving forward.
4. The integrity of the grading system and the methodologies used should be protected at all times. While grading results are not negotiable, the restructuring of duties or re-design of a role may sometimes be possible and appropriate. When restructuring of duties or re-design of a role is appropriate, TUS views will be considered by management.
5. Consultation should take place at the appropriate level. For example, a line manager would be responsible for leading consultation with TUS about issues for which they are responsible in order to ensure the effectiveness of consultation.

#### *Grading single roles, new roles or groups of roles*

6. Where a business area is commissioning the grading of a new role or roles, single roles or a small group of roles, the business area will consult with local or Departmental TUS (non-industrial or industrial or both as the case may be) as appropriate. Where the business area consults with TUS on a single role or a small group of roles, a formal Terms of Reference is not necessary. In a larger scale exercise, a formal Terms of Reference will be developed to include information on the process which will be followed.

#### *Cross-departmental reviews*

7. Where NICS HR or other corporate body is organising a cross-departmental review of grading, it will consult with central TUS (CTUS) (either non-industrial or industrial or both, as the case may be), and CTUS will keep DTUS informed.

### *Supporting Trade Union members*

8. It is always open for an existing role-holder to ask for TUS support at any point during the job evaluation process, including during a Decision Review (**see Annex B**). In particular, management should make arrangements to allow TUS the opportunity to provide advice to their members prior to completion of Job Analysis Questionnaires.

### *TUS involvement in carrying out grading work*

9. Where TUS representatives have received JEGS or JESP training from an NICS HR approved trainer, then they may be involved in the grading process either during the initial grading process, during the quality assurance/moderation process, or during any decision review process.

## ANNEX B

### FULL JOB EVALUATION DECISION REVIEW PROCESS

1. Where a role-holder, TUS or the management side client believes that the role has been incorrectly graded, they have a right to request a review of the grading decision. Such concerns raised by the role-holder or TUS should be considered and discussed with management side in the first instance. Following this consultation and where there is evidence to support such a concern, the right to request a review of the grading decision is subject only to the following substantive grounds:
  - there has been a failure of process, for example, the relevant guidance has not been properly followed;
  - significant new information or significant aspects of the role have not been taken into account when arriving at the evaluation outcome; or
  - illegal discrimination (unfair, biased or inconsistent treatment) has occurred in the way the evaluation was carried out.

It may be possible to resolve some issues through informal discussion but where this does not resolve the situation, a more formal process may need to be followed. Where a job evaluation decision has been taken on a role by a job evaluation panel, it is unlikely that there will be a case for reviewing that decision.

2. There can be no request to review a decision solely against the numerical JEGS, IJEGS or JESP score, the request to review a decision will only be accepted against a grading decision.

#### *Non SCS roles*

3. The grounds for a request to review a decision should be submitted via the business area management in writing to the Job Evaluation Manager of the NICS HR Grading Unit within 20 working days of the role holder being notified of the grading decision.
4. If the request for a review is turned down by the Job Evaluation Manager, the appellant should receive a written reason for this.
5. If accepted, a reasonable timescale for the resolution of the request to review the decision should be agreed and communicated to the appellant.
6. If the role has not been evaluated using JEGS, then a JEGS evaluation should be carried out. The grading outcome should then be communicated to the role-holder by management.
7. If the role has already been evaluated using JEGS, then the request to review a decision should be referred to a JEGS Decision Review Panel. The Job Evaluation Manager should decide on the membership of the Decision Review Panel taking into account the circumstances of the case in question. The Decision Review Panel may, but need not, include the following:
  - the original Job Analyst(s) or members of the original panel;
  - new independent panel members;

- members of the occupational group being evaluated where appropriate and feasible;
- members of the line management chain; and
- TUS representatives.

Where Decision Review Panels include the original Job Analyst or members of the original Panel, this is usually in an advisory capacity.

8. A chairperson at a grade appropriate to the grade under review should be selected from the panel members. All Decision Review Panel members must be trained and experienced in the use of JEGS and aware of the possible areas of discrimination in job evaluation.

### *SCS roles*

9. The request to review a decision should be referred to a sub-group of the Permanent Secretaries' Group (PSG). This shall consist of a number of Permanent Secretaries and the Director of Pay & Reward (or suitable deputy), NICS HR, all of whom must be trained in JESP and will form the Decision Review Panel.
10. It may be possible to resolve some issues through informal discussion but where this does not resolve the situation, a more formal process will be followed: the appellant may request a decision review in writing through their Permanent Secretary within 20 working days of the role holder being notified of the grading decision, therefore:-

The Permanent Secretary considers the grounds for decision review and forwards the request to the Director of Pay & Reward (or suitable deputy) who will consider the need for a Decision Review Panel. TUS may participate in this Decision Review Panel.

If the request for a decision review is turned down by the Director of Pay & Reward (or suitable deputy), the appellant should receive a written reason for this. A reasonable timescale for the resolution of the request to review the decision should be agreed and communicated to the role-holder.

Should a request for a Decision Review be accepted, the Director or Pay & Reward (or suitable deputy) will constitute a Decision Review Panel.

The Decision Review Panel will be provided with a copy of the request, the Job Description and agreed scoring frame, alongside scores above and below the role being reviewed.

The role-holder will then be advised of the outcome of the Decision Review process via their Permanent Secretary, who will be notified by the Director of Pay & Reward (or suitable deputy).

### *All roles*

11. For all Decision Review requests, the appellant has the right to submit additional information in writing only to the Decision Review Panel. Any additional information provided by the appellant about the job must be verified by the role-holder's line manager or senior management. All fresh or new information about the role must be submitted in

writing in advance of the panel meeting. There will be no need for an appellant to “appear before” a Decision Review panel.

12. The Job Analyst(s) who evaluated the role will have the right to see any additional information submitted by the appellant and can submit comments to the Decision Review Panel if appropriate. However, if fresh information is submitted which was not held by the Job Analyst at the time of the evaluation, then a new evaluation may be appropriate instead of the Decision Review.
13. The role’s score may be revised as a result of the Decision Review: this may or may not result in a change in the grade as a result of the Decision Review process.
14. The decision of the Decision Review Panel is final. The final outcome should be communicated to the role-holder. There is no further right of “appeal” or request to review a decision, nor any right to submit further material or ask for further clarification of the decision.