



## **Guidelines for the payment of Responsibility Allowances for Support Staff Posts**

### **1. Applicability of these guidelines:**

- 1.1 Many departments/ Divisions have a temporary assistance budget which is included in the annual HR budget. This budget is used for typical temporary assistance needs that can be anticipated e.g. the Registrar's Division requiring assistance during Orientation week. These guidelines do not deal with such situations; and
- 1.2 Temporary assistance may also be required for unanticipated staffing situations such as a staff member resigning, being medically boarded, going on maternity leave, prolonged sick leave etc.
- 1.3 Alternatively, or in addition, a Head of Department/Division/Section /Unit (Hereafter referred to as the Head) may also ask that an individual be paid a responsibility allowance for assuming work at a higher grade. These guidelines are applicable to these situations.

A responsibility allowance is an allowance paid due to a higher level of responsibility or additional responsibility being assumed e.g. taking on a supervisory or managerial responsibilities, a kitchen attendant taking on the job of a cook until a vacancy is filled. In this instance, the person may not necessarily work additional hours as their own usual work may be allocated to other staff who in turn also receive a responsibility allowance or to a temporary member of staff.

Where an individual in a full-time post is working additional hours at the same or lower level in order to provide capacity in the event of a vacancy, or someone being ill or on maternity leave etc, this is not a responsibility allowance (as they are not assuming a different level of responsibility) and this is done over and above the usual work hours, this will constitute over-time and be paid at the over-time rate. Where an individual is in a part-time post and works additional hours, these additional hours shall only be considered over-time when they 40 hours per week. As such that individual will be paid at the normal hourly rate for that post and only at the over-time rate when said hours exceed 40 hours per week.

### **2. Principles:**

The University recognises:

- 2.1 The need to maintain service delivery standards and/or the work output of the department/section/unit/division (hereafter referred to as department);
- 2.2 That staffing needs may vary during particular processes or times of the year and that temporary assistance is required to cope with the additional work during these times. For this type of temporary assistance, the Head is expected to ensure that this is included in the temporary assistance budget;
- 2.3 That when a colleague resigns or is absent for a prolonged period, that this may place a burden on remaining staff who may not be able to assume additional responsibilities;
- 2.4 That while temporary assistance is a consideration, often this is problematic as these individuals do not know the work of the department. Furthermore, it may prove difficult to find suitable staff. Therefore, it may be desirable to ask current staff to take on additional work or additional responsibility. In addition, current staff may be willing to work additional hours (over and above their usual workload) to cope with any unanticipated, additional work. In making this arrangement however, consideration must be given to the ability of such staff to cope with this additional work;
- 2.5 The Basic Conditions of Employment Act states that overtime worked may not be more than 10 hours overtime a week over and above the 45 hour week and no more than 12 hours on any one day. Any arrangements must not fall foul of the requirements of this Act;

- 2.6 That requiring individuals to work overtime on a long-term basis is not desirable and that the filling of posts should be treated as a matter of priority. Most vacant support staff posts should be filled within a period of no more than 3 months (this requires the commitment of both managers and the HR Division);
- 2.7 That providing interim assistance to the Head must be attended to as soon as possible in order to assist the Head to maintain service delivery standards. Accordingly, the HR Division will usually respond within 3 working days to such a request; and
- 2.8 That when requesting assistance, that Heads will act in the best interests of the University, the department and current staff. In addition, that where current staff are required to work longer hours or take on additional responsibility that they receive due compensation and are treated fairly. It is also important that staff are treated consistently in this regard across the institution. Where staff are under utilised and are not fully occupied for the duration of the day or can pick up the additional capacity without working additional hours, staff can be expected to assist during the absence of other staff and/or where there are vacant posts, without compensation.

### **3. Regulations that govern the allocation of assistance:**

Temporary assistance in the form of staff working additional hours (for work they will be paid over-time or leave in lieu of over-time as per the Support Staff Leave Policy) and responsibility allowances will usually not be provided where:

- 3.1 Current staff are away on annual leave as the Head is expected to ensure that staff take leave at appropriate times;
- 3.2 Staff being on sick leave for less than 10 working days; and
- 3.3 Current staff take long leave that is less than one consecutive month.

Heads can motivate otherwise particularly in situations with there are lean staffing structures, high traffic areas in terms of clients and students, where other staffing difficulties are being encountered or where the work has got to be done within particular time-frames and cannot be delayed.

In addition, responsibility allowances will be only authorised for periods of more than one month.

Recipients of a responsibility allowance will continue to be paid during periods of annual leave provided that such leave does not exceed more than two working weeks and that the individual has already received an allowance for at least one month.

In the case of the shut-down period, the following shall apply:

- A responsibility allowance shall be paid over the shut-down period if the responsibility started in November, continues in December and into January;
- A responsibility allowance shall NOT be paid where the responsibility ceases in December.

### **4. Process for applying for assistance &/or a responsibility allowance:**

When a circumstance arises (e.g. vacancy, medical boarding etc) and as soon as the HR Division becomes aware of it, the relevant HR Generalist will liaise with the Head as regards interim staffing needs. Alternatively, the Head may apply to the Human Resources Division for assistance. The relevant application form should be completed to ensure that the HR generalist has the relevant information in order to assist the HoD as well as to ensure good governance (validating expenditure against the budget in event of an audit).

### **5. Determination of appropriate remuneration**

- 5.1 For those staff working additional hours at the same grade of work, this is regarded as over-time and paid at the relevant over-time rate. Leave in lieu of over-time can also be granted. Please remember that where staff complete additional work in normal work hours, the staff member is not paid a responsibility allowance nor overtime. In such instances, the manager/HoD can use this evidence of assistance in a merit award application;

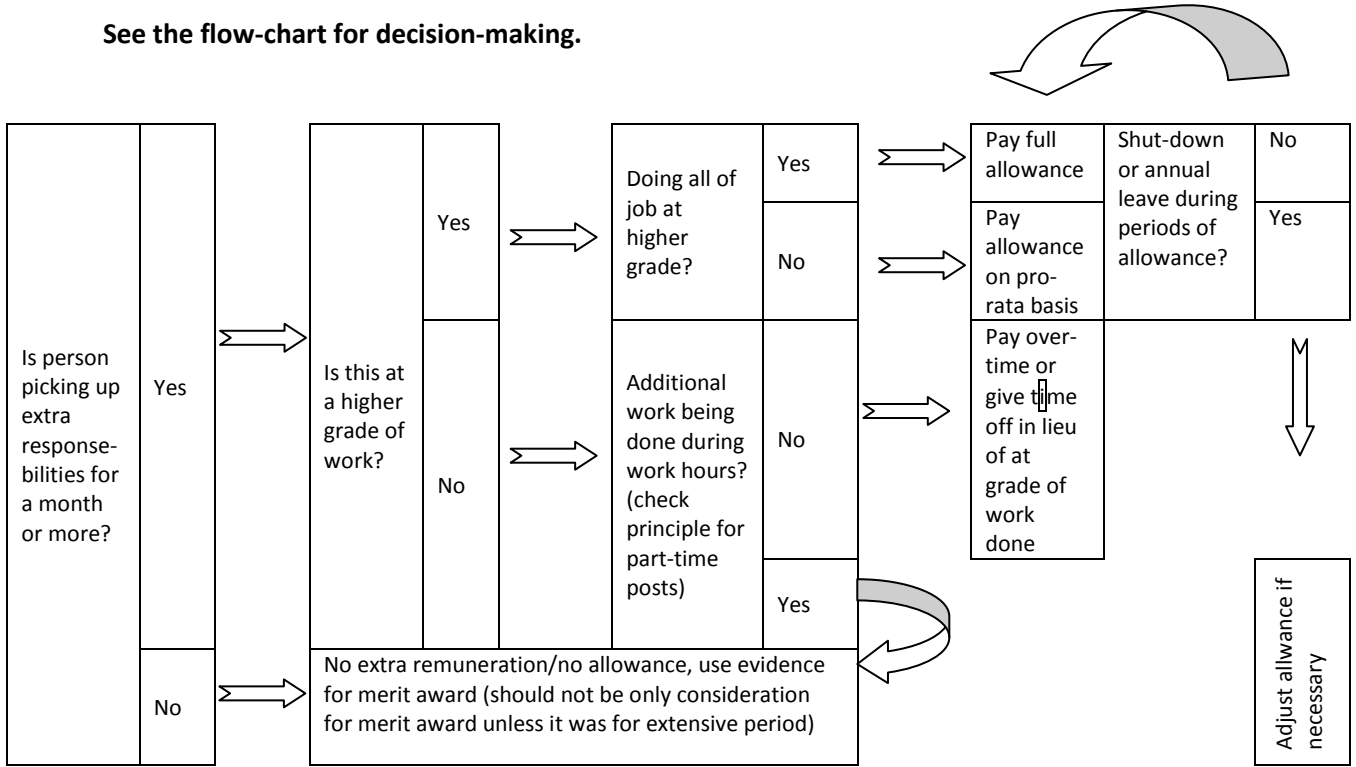
5.2 For those staff assuming work at a higher level of responsibility (i.e. a different grade), the **responsibility allowance** is determined as follows:

- In the event of any long-term responsibility allowance being paid, the person picking up the additional responsibilities should have the same or similar education and experience required for the responsibilities they are assuming. If not the responsibility allowance will need to be adjusted as is done for staff on development posts;
- All comparisons normalise cash salary for long leave and pension/provident fund differences;
- Establish the grade at which the individual is assuming responsibility e.g. grade 10;
- Establish the grade at which the individual is currently employed e.g. grade 8;
- Calculate the difference between the minimum cash salary of the higher grade job and what the person is earning on cash of the lower grade job;
- If the person is doing the full job, then this is paid at 100%. If the person is doing less than the full job, then the allowance is paid pro-rata according to the responsibilities assumed;
- If the person is doing the full job, but doesn't meet the full requirements of the job in terms of the qualification or the number of years' experience required, then the allowance will be reduced according to the years the person has for the job. The allowance will be reduced by 5% for every year that Joe is short of but this should not exceed 15%. If the person is capable of doing the job but the gap in terms of meeting the requirements is greater than 15%, approval should be sought from the Deputy Director: HR or the Director: HR in his/her absence.
- In some instances where the person may already be earning above the minimum of higher grade, a recommendation as to the responsibility allowance will be made by the Deputy Director: Human Resources or his/her absence, the Director: Human Resources.

Some examples:

- (a) Joe is on a grade 11 post and earns cash of R10 000 per month. Joe is asked to pick up all (100%) responsibilities for the grade 14 Assistant manager post for a period of 3 months. The minimum cash on this post is R12 000 per month. Joe therefore receives a responsibility allowance of R2000 per month ( $R12\ 000 - R10\ 000$ ) for 3 months. If Joe only picked up 50% of responsibilities, then the allowance would be  $50\% \times R2000$  per month = R1000 per month.
- (b) Joe is on a grade 11 post and earns cash of R10 000 per month. Joe is asked to pick up (50%) of the responsibilities for the grade 14 Assistant manager post for a period of 3 months. The minimum cash on this post is R12 000 per month. Joe therefore receives a responsibility allowance of R1000 per month ( $R12\ 000 - R10\ 000 \times 50\%$ ).
- (c) Joe is on a grade 11 post and earns cash of R10 000 per month. Joe is asked to pick up (50%) of the responsibilities for a colleague's post at the grade 11 level until the post is filled. The manager motivates for a responsibility allowance. The response is "no, this is not a responsibility allowance" If this additional responsibility requires Joe to work over-time and this is agreed to, this will be paid as over-time.
- (d) Joe is on a grade 11 post and earns cash of R10 000 per month. Joe is asked to pick up all (100%) responsibilities for the grade 14 Assistant manager post for a period of 3 months. The minimum cash on this post is R12 000 per month. If Joe is short by two years' experience to fully match the Assistant Manager job. Joe therefore receives a responsibility allowance of R1800 per month ( $R12\ 000 - R10\ 000 - 10\%$ ).

See the flow-chart for decision-making.



Last updated: August 2014