



Responsibility Allowance Policy and Procedure

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Aim

Our University Strategy 2019-25 sets out our mission of excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities. The University's People Supporting Strategy sets out our ambition for a just and equal workplace where people are at the heart of everything we do.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 The University is committed to supporting the professional development of all staff groups. This includes, where possible, making opportunities available for employees to experience work beyond their substantive role and/or grade. This offers a valuable opportunity for employees to develop their skills and gain experience, helping staff to prepare for permanent career advancement in the future, as well as helping the University to temporarily cover workforce gaps. By providing opportunities for employees to take on additional work at higher levels of responsibility the University makes an appropriate investment in succession planning.

1.2 The business need of the University will determine when it is appropriate to use a responsibility allowance to resource and remunerate work.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all Professional Services staff of the University of Essex. All grades and job roles will be treated in an equitable and consistent way.

3. Definitions

3.1 A responsibility allowance is additional remuneration provided when an employee undertakes additional responsibilities that are a significant extension to their substantive role to meet a business need: for example, providing cover for elements of another substantive role during a prolonged period (in excess of 4 weeks) when the usual role holder is absent or for extra significant duties/responsibilities outside the employees normal duties.

3.2 An acting-up allowance is additional remuneration provided when an employee covers the full range of responsibilities of an alternate role: the individual concerned is seconded into the alternate role and paid the salary commensurate for the grade of the alternate role.

4. Purpose

- 4.1 A responsibility allowance is used to recognise and reward a temporary change in duties or responsibility that is significantly beyond the scope of an employee's substantive role. This is often but not always associated with an established role at a higher grade, but which does not cover the whole of the responsibilities of that higher grade (which would attract an acting-up allowance).
- 4.2 An employee may receive a responsibility allowance payment in the following circumstances:
- a) Where an employee undertakes a significant proportion of higher-level duties and responsibilities beyond their substantive role.
 - b) Where an employee shares responsibility with more than one employee undertaking a specific and or separate part of a wider role, which would be evaluated at a higher grade than their substantive role.
- 4.3 For a responsibility allowance to be considered the employee will normally maintain certain aspects of their substantive role and will not move fully into an alternate role.
- 4.4 Where an employee is required to undertake the full remit of an alternate role on a temporary basis they will be seconded into the role and, if the alternate role is at a higher grade, receive an acting-up allowance where appropriate with the guarantee of a return to their substantive role once the secondment has concluded.

5. Exclusions

- 5.1 Managers and employees are reminded that some flexibility is expected in all roles and responsibility allowances are only suitable for significant changes beyond the remit of the substantive role. If the required duration for work to be covered is for a period of less than 4 weeks, it would be expected that existing staff resources within the department could be temporarily redeployed without the need for the payment of a responsibility allowance.
- 5.2 A responsibility allowance should not be used in the following circumstances:
- a) To reward exceptional performance in an employee's current role. The process for rewarding exceptional performance is through the University's [annual review process](#).
 - b) Where the employee undertakes a project role/specific piece of work within their substantive role for a set period which does not form part of their substantive role but is considered to be work of equal value to their substantive grade. The process for rewarding work on a project/specific piece of work is through the University's [annual review process](#).

6. Calculation of the allowance

6.1 Responsibility allowances will typically be calculated taking into account the difference between the current spinal point of the employee and the lowest spinal column point of the grade of the duties they will be covering. The difference is then pro-rated to reflect the proportion of the activities being undertaken.

Employee's current grade and spinal point	Grade 8 SCP - 34 £38,016pa
Vacant activities	Grade 9 SCP 37 (first point on scale) - £41,527
Difference	£3,511
Proportion of role being covered	50%
Pro rata value	£3,511 x 0.5
Total responsibility allowance	£1,755.5
Monthly payment	£146.29

6.2 Allowances will be calculated using the bottom spinal point of the grade of the role being covered. However, where the employee's salary is at or near the top of the pay scale for their grade and there is an overlap in the spinal points of the grades, the allowance should be matched to the next highest increment. For example, if the individual is currently paid on spinal point 32 in Grade 7 and they are acting up to Grade 8 which starts at spinal point 30, the allowance should be calculated using the difference between spinal point 32 and spinal point 33 within the Grade 8 payscale).

6.3 If an individual is fulfilling 75% of the duties of the substantive role holder then they should receive 75% of the difference between the two values.

6.4 Approval must be sought prior to any extensions to the additional duties covered by the responsibility allowance (supported by an updated business case) at least one month before the end date of the allowance.

6.5 Where the duties of the higher grade role are covered by more than one individual the approximate proportions should be calculated and the pay difference made pro rata (e.g. if 2 people are covering, each employee would get their substantive pay plus 50% of the difference as detailed above).

6.6 The payment will be made in equal monthly instalments for the duration of the period of additional responsibility allowance.

7. Procedure

7.1 Arrangements to cover part of a role/additional duties and responsibilities through additional responsibility allowance should be made at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure the most appropriate cover. Retrospective requests or backdating will not be approved.

7.2 The line manager should seek advice from People & Culture before discussing the allowance to be paid with the employee to ensure that their proposal is in accordance with this guidance.

7.3 In order to request an additional responsibility allowance, the line manager should in the first instance speak to their Head of Section, Registrar and Secretary or Executive Dean as appropriate. The line manager will complete a [contract change form](#) and attach a rationale for the change, which sets out:

- The reason for the responsibility allowance e.g. to cover long-term absence.
- The roles and individual(s) affected.
- The duties/responsibilities to be covered.
- The duration of the arrangements –specifying from and to.
- The action that will be taken at the end of the period i.e. recruitment to a position permanently, the return to work of the substantive jobholder.
- Alternatives considered.
- What selection process has taken place to identify the correct person to undertake the additional duties/responsibilities.
- Costs – including confirmation of budget provision and other options.

7.4 The request for changes in responsibility and payment of an allowance will be considered by the Director of People & Culture, prior to approval by the Vice-Chancellor or their nominee. The line manager must not confirm the allowance with the employee until it is approved.

7.5 Once approved, the completed change form and rationale should be sent to staffing@essex.ac.uk Once processed the individual will receive written confirmation including the details of the allowance to be paid, the duties to be undertaken, the duration of the allowance, any review date and any other changes to their terms and conditions from People & Culture.

8. Duration

8.1 The provision of a responsibility allowance is a temporary arrangement which should not exceed 12 months and should not be viewed as a permanent change to pay.

8.2 Any request to continue the additional payment beyond 12 months must be submitted to the Director of People & Culture prior to approval by the Vice-Chancellor or their nominee.

9. Management and review

9.1 At the start of the arrangement the line manager will identify where the employee undertaking the additional duties/responsibilities has training needs and ensure that these are addressed and that the individual is appropriately supported.

9.2 It is important that the manager and employee regularly review how the arrangement is working and discuss any additional support that may be required whilst the allowance remains in place.

9.3 Allowances will cease at the end of the specified period or sooner by giving one months' notice if the business need ceases.

9.4 If the Manager identifies performance concerns related to the additional duties/responsibilities, the employee should be supported to improve their performance. If this support fails to deliver the improvements required, the responsibility allowance will cease and the individual will revert to their substantive duties and remuneration.

10. End of responsibility allowance

10.1 It is the responsibility of the line manager to inform People & Culture of any approved extension to the responsibility allowance. If no such notification is received, the responsibility allowance will automatically end on the anticipated date.

10.2 On conclusion of the responsibility allowance the employee will revert to their substantive role and pay, taking account of any pay award and/or incremental progression that has occurred during the period that the responsibility allowance was in place.

University sources of information and support

- [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#)
- [Work-related stress](#)
- [Lone working health and safety](#)
- [Stress management guidance for line managers](#)
- [Coaching Essentials for line managers](#)
- [Improving assertiveness](#)
- [Burnout - how to avoid it and look after yourself](#)
- [Recreational and sporting activities](#)
- [Bystander intervention training](#)
- [Report and support](#)
- [Mental health first aid](#)
- [Zero tolerance of harassment and bullying](#)
- [Building Resilience in periods of change](#)
- [Working from home](#)
- [Top tips working from home for managers](#)

Equality impact assessment

We are committed to meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which requires the University show no discrimination as required by law on account of age, disability, gender reassignment*, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The University will always act lawfully and this may include taking action to support people with particular protected characteristics, including disability and sex. In addition to its obligations under the EA, the University shall adopt policies, practices, and procedures that define expected standards of behaviour and specify any additional characteristics, beyond those required by law, to which protection is provided, for example, in relation to political belief, social background and refugee status.

*The University's policies, practices and procedures specifically extend to all gender identities including trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people.

Our [Equality, diversity and inclusion policy](#) sets out our approach, in the context of our institutional mission, values and objectives as set out in our Strategic Plan, our People Supporting Strategy, our Education and Research Strategies and equalities legislation.

Monitoring

People, Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group will monitor the impact of this policy.