

# **Acting Up, Honorarium and Secondment Policy**

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance for managing acting up, honorarium and secondments within the Council. It aims to ensure consistency, fairness and compliance with employment law and internal pay frameworks.
- 1.2 The Council recognises and values the talents and professional aspirations of its employees and strives to provide opportunities to gain additional experience and develop employees' skills and knowledge.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all permanent, fixed term and temporary employees who have completed their probationary period. It does not apply to any agency workers, contractors or consultants working for the Council.
- 1.4 Teachers and employees working in schools have their own local management and policies to follow.

## **2 Principles**

- 2.1 Ensure all employees have equal access to development opportunities and ensure consistency across the Council.
- 2.2 Decisions should be documented, justified and communicated clearly to affected employees and will only be agreed in line with this policy.
- 2.3 Ensure the continued provision of Council services to residents.
- 2.4 Changes to service demand, vacancies or long term planned absence should be used wherever practicable to afford development for employees.
- 2.5 The allocation of additional duties and associated allowances must be open, transparent, fair and objective based upon service need and the ability to fulfil need. Failure to comply with this policy may result in inconsistencies across the Council and may lead to pay and grading errors or overpayments.
- 2.6 In the event more than one employee expresses an interest, selection should be based on the criteria for the position or project to be covered, assessment of candidate skills and general effect on service provision of the change.
- 2.7 If a manager wishes to fill a post on a permanent basis this will need to go via the Council's recruitment process. Employees who are acting up, on secondment or receiving an honorarium cannot be slotted into a post.
- 2.8 The Council is committed to fostering a diverse workforce that reflects its communities at all levels and by providing development opportunities these can help address any imbalance.

### **3 Acting Up**

#### **3.1 Definition**

- 3.1.1 This is a temporary arrangement where an employee formally takes on the full or partial duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post within their existing team.
- 3.1.2 To ensure continuity, acting-up arrangements can be used to fill vacancies pending recruitment or for longer-term cover such as: sickness, parental leave, secondments, career breaks or work on specific projects.
- 3.1.3 Acting up opportunities provide employees who have completed their probationary period with the chance to develop their careers by gaining experience in higher-level posts.

#### **3.2 Criteria**

- 3.2.1 An acting up payment requires Director approval, which must be received prior to the manager submitting a [Terms and Conditions of Employment Changes Notification](#) Eform for processing.
- 3.2.2 The employee is required to fulfil the full working hours and responsibilities to receive pay in line with the grade. It is possible to take on partial responsibility at which point the relevant percentage will be applied. Upon completion of the acting up period, they will return to their substantive post on terms no less favourable than if the acting-up had not occurred.
- 3.2.3 The employee will adopt the terms and conditions of the higher post, including incremental progression, if they differ from their substantive terms. For example, an employee moving from a PO8 grade to an HC level grade will be required to work the necessary hours to fulfil the post, rather than being limited to a 36 hour working week.

#### **3.3 Duration**

- 3.3.1 The duration of acting up must be defined during the recruitment stage, which should not be more than twelve months. An extension beyond twelve months will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 3.3.2 To request an extension, the manager must prepare and submit a business case in advance, detailing the rationale for the extension, alongside this, the service must set out clearly plans to fill the post on a long term basis, to the Director and the Strategic HR & OD Business Partner for approval. Situations where an extension may be necessary include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - an organisational restructure commencing during the acting up period
  - a project being extended where it was not known at the outset
- 3.3.3 An extension may be approved for a maximum of six months only.

- 3.3.4 An acting up arrangement may be terminated earlier than planned with one month's written notice. For instance, if the substantive postholder resumes work ahead of schedule or if the position is filled through recruitment.
- 3.3.5 If an employee wishes to return to their substantive post before the end of the acting up period, they must provide at least one month's notice to both their substantive manager and current manager.
- 3.3.6 Any date changes or ending of an acting up must be communicated to Human Resources in advance by completing the [Terms and Conditions of Employment Changes Notification](#) Eform, ensuring timely processing and preventing salary discrepancies.

### **3.4 Payment**

- 3.4.1 When an employee acts up, they will assume the vacant post and be compensated at the minimum salary point of the higher grade, unless their current salary matches it, in which case they will receive the next spinal point.
- 3.4.2 If more than one employee is acting up into the post, the additional salary will be shared at the appropriate percentage across all involved employees.
- 3.4.3 Incremental progression will be applied in line with relevant terms and conditions of the specific workforce group.

### **3.5 Recruitment**

- 3.5.1 The post to be covered must be an established post with an evaluated job description. Prior to advertising the post, the manager must review the job description to ensure that it is relevant as jobs change over time.
- 3.5.2 In the event that the post has changed substantially a new job evaluation should be carried out. Further information can be found in the [Job Evaluation Policy](#). A minor change to a job description, such as job title change, will not affect the grade of the post therefore no re-evaluation is required.
- 3.5.3 The responsibilities of the manager and employee can be found at Appendix A.

## **4 Honarium**

### **4.1 Definition**

- 4.1.1 This is a one off or short term payment arrangement made to an employee or team who undertakes duties outside the scope of their substantive post and where these

duties do not warrant a permanent regrading. For example, additional work due to increased unplanned workload, unforeseen service needs or time limited project work.

## **4.2 Criteria**

- 4.2.1 An honorarium payment requires Corporate Director approval, which must be received prior to submitting a [Terms and Conditions of Employment Changes Notification](#) Eform.
- 4.2.2 An honorarium payment is not applicable when an employee takes on additional work that aligns with their existing job description or grade or lower grade.
- 4.2.3 If there is a need to award an honorarium the manager should consider all colleagues who may be able to take up the additional work and give fair opportunity for all to be considered.
- 4.2.4 This may apply to an employee performing duties where an acting up is not suitable, as they are not carrying out the majority of the responsibilities associated with the higher-graded post.
- 4.2.5 In the event an honorarium is not requested in a timely manner then evidence will need to be provided by the manager to justify a retrospective honorarium payment.

## **4.3 Duration**

- 4.3.1 The duration of an honorarium payment must be defined prior to requesting expressions of interest, which should not be more than six months. An extension beyond six months will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances
- 4.3.2 Situations where an extension may be necessary include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - covering a long term absence such as maternity leave
  - taking on additional responsibilities to cover another employee's sabbatical
- 4.3.3 Honorarium payments are not applicable for additional duties performed for less than one calendar month, such as covering annual leave or short-term absences.
- 4.3.4 Any date changes or ending of an honorarium payment must be communicated to Human Resources in advance by completing the [Terms and Conditions of Employment Changes Notification](#) Eform, ensuring timely processing and preventing salary discrepancies.

## **4.4 Payment**

- 4.4.1 The amount paid is based on the difference between the employee's current spinal point and the next available spinal point.

- 4.4.2 If they have reached the top of their pay grade, they will receive the lowest spinal point of the next pay grade. In the event that there is an overlap between grades, the employee should receive the next spinal point.
- 4.4.3 In certain exceptional circumstances, an employee may be awarded two incremental points, subject to approval from the Strategic HR & OD Business Partner.
- 4.4.4 An employee receiving an honorarium payment will continue to progress to receive increments within their substantive grade until they reach the highest spinal point of their grade. During a period where an honorarium is in place, employees will not progress incrementally, however when the annual pay award is applied, the honorarium will increase in line with this.
- 4.4.5 Payment is calculated by taking the difference between the employee's current spinal point and the next spinal point of the grade or if the employee is at the top of their current grade, the lowest spinal point of the next grade will be paid.
- 4.4.6 The allowance will be paid monthly to the employee as a separate element to their basic pay and will be subject to the tax, national insurance and pension deductions.
- 4.4.7 In the event an employee goes on long term sickness, the honorarium payment should be paid for the remainder of the month the employee is considered as being on long term sickness and for a further three months thereafter. For the subsequent three-month period, the payment should be paid at 50% of the total honorarium amount.

## **4.5 Recruitment**

- 4.5.1 When identifying there is a need for additional duties to be taken up, the manager must have a sound business reason for this, in line with the policy. In the first instance, details of the opportunity should be circulated to all relevant team members outlining the additional responsibilities clearly. Team members who would like to be considered should submit an expression of interest. The manager must demonstrate fairness and transparency throughout the process.

## **5 Secondment**

### **5.1 Definition**

- 5.1.1 This is a formal temporary transfer to another post, department within the Council or external organisation for a defined period of time with a clear return date to substantive post.
- 5.1.2 A secondment allows employees to gain new skills, valuable experience in a different work area which will help them develop and assist in career progression. Secondments can also help with raising the organisation's performance by allowing

the exchange of ideas, techniques and approaches between the different services within the Council.

## **5.2 Criteria**

- 5.2.1 All employees who have passed their probationary period are eligible to apply for a secondment.
- 5.2.2 An employee who returns from a secondment cannot commence a further secondment for at least six months from the date of return.
- 5.2.3 We would encourage employees to inform their manager prior to applying for a secondment, in any case, the substantive line manager would need to agree the release of an employee for a secondment.

## **5.3 Duration**

- 5.3.1 The duration of a secondment can range from three months to twenty-four months.
- 5.3.2 An extension beyond twenty-four months will require a business case submitted by either the host organisation or the relevant Council service.
- 5.3.3 An extension may be approved for a maximum of twelve months only, with the overall duration of the secondment not exceeding twenty-four months.
- 5.3.4 At the end of the secondment, the employee (secondee) will return to their substantive post on terms no less favourable than if secondment had not occurred.

## **5.4 Payment**

- 5.4.1 Employees who are seconded internally will be moved to the post they are seconded to and will be paid at the minimum spinal point of the post that they are seconded to. For example, where a secondment is at a higher grade the employee will be paid the minimum salary point or if the employee is seconded to a lower grade they will be paid the maximum spinal point. Incremental progression will be applied in line with relevant terms and conditions of the specific workforce group.
- 5.4.2 Employees who are seconded to an external organisation will continue to receive their substantive salary via the Council and remain on their existing terms and conditions. Incremental progression will be applied in line with relevant terms and conditions of the specific workforce group.
- 5.4.3 The external (host) organisation providing the secondment opportunity is responsible for the employee's (secondee's) salary and for paying oncosts and any allowances for the duration of the secondment. The employee's substantive manager must raise an invoice and send to the external (host) organisation for them to re-imburse the full salary and oncosts.



## **5.5 Recruitment**

- 5.5.1 The normal recruitment and selection procedures will apply to all types of secondments over three months in duration.
- 5.5.2 The responsibilities of the manager and employee can be found at Appendix B.

## **6 Further References**

Organisational Change Policy  
Recruitment Policy  
Job Evaluation Policy

## Appendix A - Acting Up Responsibilities

No.	Manager Responsibilities	Employee Responsibilities
1	Decide on the expected duration of the acting period.	Carefully consider their reasons for applying for the post and how the experience will help them in their future career.
2	On the job description clearly identify which are the minimum essential criteria that they would expect the successful candidate(s) to display.	Complete the Expression of Interest or application form, clearly outlining how their existing skills match the job description.
3	Seek advice from the Recruitment team prior to advertising, to ensure advertising is carried out correctly.	Take part in an interview if invited
4	Circulate the advert with details of the duration, application process and the closing date.	Use any constructive feedback for personal development.
5	Carry out shortlisting	
6	Arrange interviews for those shortlisted. N.B. Keep notes of the interview and the scoring and decision made for 6 months.	
7	Offer acting up opportunity to the successful applicant(s) and complete <a href="#">Terms and Conditions of Employment Changes Notification</a> Eform.	
8	Unsuccessful applicants must be given constructive feedback on their performance to enable them to develop.	

## Appendix B - Secondment Responsibilities

No.	Host Manager Responsibilities	Manager Responsibilities	Employee Responsibilities
1	Decide on the expected duration of the secondment	<p>Must be open to listening to requests from employees for secondment opportunities.</p> <p>If a manager does not agree the secondment, reasons must be given in writing. Possible reasons may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The secondment is not a development opportunity</li> <li>• There are insufficient resources to release the employee to another post</li> <li>• Agreement was not sought or given before the application was made</li> </ul>	Carefully consider the reasons for applying for a secondment and how they will use the experience to help them in their future career and in their substantive job
2	The potential for development offered by the post must be assessed for each applicant	If employee is successful, consider backfilling post on a temporary basis for the duration of the secondment.	Discuss intention to apply for a secondment with manager before submitting an application. Manager must agree to release before an application is submitted.
3	Interviews should be offered to all shortlisted applicants and following a panel interview, the decision should be made. If only one candidate has expressed their interest but they fully match the essential criteria they can still be interviewed and may be offered the job. N.B. Keep notes of the interview and the scoring and decision made for 6 months.	<p>Must maintain contact with employee whilst on secondment and include employee in any consultation that affects their substantive post, as well as updating any team changes</p> <p>N.B. Employees on secondment must be given the same opportunity to apply for posts in the new structure at the same time as other members of the team. Further information can be found in the organisational change policy.</p>	Complete the Council's application form, clearly outlining how their existing skills match the job description, how the secondment will enable their career development and confirming that their manager supports the application and their release.
4	Unsuccessful applicants must be given constructive feedback on their performance to enable them to develop.		Prepare and take part in interview if invited and use any constructive feedback for personal development.

## Document Control

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