Guidance on Acting-Up Allowances

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide consistency and fairness in the application of acting up allowances.

2. Acting-up allowances are subject to the following guidelines:

   2.1. The allowance should normally only be paid where the acting up period is: for band 100 to 500 roles, for a minimum of 2 months; and for roles at grade 6 and above, for a minimum of 3 months.

      2.1.1. If there is a case to be considered for rewarding a member of staff for acting up over a shorter period, this case should be considered through the annual review of salaries/PDR process. For there to be a possibility of such a case being approved, it would need to meet the criteria for a non-consolidated one-off bonus: a one-off task that is not normally an objective for the job, unlikely to be repeated, involved a substantial amount of time and effort and done particularly well.

   2.2. The payment of an acting-up allowance is subject to the approval of either: for posts in Corporate Services, the Head of the Corporate Services function (or representative); or for posts in a College, the College Post Approval Group.

   2.3. An acting-up arrangement should be for the minimum period possible to cover for a vacant role, and should not normally last for more than 12 months; if it does, the objective justification should be approved by the College/Corporate Services Head of HR, and the acting-up contract should state that at the end of the acting-up period, the individual will return to the specified substantive role, on a specified grade and salary. If a role is vacant for 12 months or more, longer-term arrangements should usually be made to cover the duties; for example, making an appointment to the role or re-structuring so the role is no longer required.

   2.4. The Head of School/Budget Centre may determine that some of the duties normally carried out by the absent person can be organised in such a way that they may be carried out by a member of staff on a lower band without the need to pay an acting-up allowance. This might involve a more senior person at a suitable level taking on a supervisory and decision-making role for those delegated duties.

   2.5. In a case where an acting-up allowance has been paid, the fact of acting-up should not be used as evidence in assessing rewards under the performance and development review scheme (bands 100 to 500) or annual review arrangements (grades 6 to 9), because this would be rewarding the same contribution twice.

   2.6. In a case where a person who receives an acting-up allowance is subsequently promoted to a role either at or above the grade being covered, their salary in the higher graded role will still normally either be the minimum salary point on the higher grade or the salary point on the higher grade that is equivalent to one increment increase compared to their substantive salary (not the acting-up salary), whichever is the greater.

   2.7. Budget Centres should bear in mind the University’s Recruitment Selection policy and the principles of Equality and Diversity when selecting the employee who is offered an acting-up opportunity. There are often practical constraints that limit the number of employees that can be considered for any opportunity. Such as; the need for cover arising at short notice, the number of people with the requisite skills and experience or the budget available. When an opportunity arises budget centres should consider whether it is possible to advertising the opportunity to the relevant group who may be interested in the opportunity but the judgement as to whether this is feasible will need to be made on a case-by-case basis.
3. The value of an acting-up allowance should normally be calculated as follows:

3.1. The person acting up should normally be paid an allowance equivalent to one increment point for the duration of the cover. This rewards the employee for the higher contribution required on the higher grade, and is consistent with the salary that an individual would typically receive upon promotion to a higher grade.

3.1.1. If the person acting up is paid in his/her substantive post below the bottom point of the band of the post to be covered, s/he will receive an acting up allowance for the duration of the cover provided equivalent to the bottom point of the higher band.

3.1.2. If the person acting up is paid in his/her substantive post in the overlap area between the band of his/her substantive post and that of the post to be covered, s/he will receive an acting-up allowance equivalent to 1 increment for the duration of the cover.

3.1.3. If the Head of School/Budget Centre (or representative) wishes to pay a higher allowance than outlined above, this is subject to objective justification, in line with the principle of seeking consistency and fairness in the payment of acting-up allowances.

3.2. In cases where the Head of School/Budget Centre either: a) divides the work of the absent person between more than one person providing cover; or b) only requires the person/people providing cover to undertake some but not all of the higher-graded responsibilities, the allowance will be paid pro rata according the volume and responsibility carried by each of those providing acting-up cover.

3.3. The allowance may be paid either as a temporary increase in the salary or as a lump sum at the end of the acting-up period. In either case, the allowance will not be superannuable, but will be subject to all other normal deductions.

3.4. If an individual receives an increment in his/her substantive post during the period of his/her acting-up allowance, the amount s/he receives for their acting-up duties may be reduced accordingly.

3.5. If the person acting up is paid a protected salary (ie above the top point of the band/grade for his/her substantive post), they will receive an acting-up allowance for the duration of the cover provided equivalent to one increment, subject to this being no higher than the maximum salary point of the band/grade of the post being covered.