

# **Guidance notes on the consultation over the new “Teaching” strand of role profiles for sessional lecturers and all other related teaching staff**

## **Introduction**

It is intended that most\* staff currently engaged by individual schools on a “sessional” basis to teach or to directly support the teaching of others will be matched to a generic role profile. The College’s team working on this project, the Framework Negotiating Group (FNG) now needs your feedback on these draft profiles to ensure that what is finally agreed is an accurate reflection of what you do. These guidance notes aim to explain the context in which to read the role profiles and to provide some additional detail around the harmonisation process. It is intended that your individual duties will continue to be agreed locally between you and your School.

The draft profiles are designed to codify the full spectrum of the work that teaching staff undertake. There are four profiles (A to D) of increasing range and complexity. It is assumed that the duties and responsibilities at each level subsume those at the preceding level. Role profiles are being used instead of more exact job descriptions in recognition of the fact that most staff in this group will typically undertake only a certain number of the duties outlined within the profile that most closely reflects their work.

Once the profiles are agreed you will be matched to the level at which you do the greater part of your work. It is not possible for the FNG to know at this stage to which of these profiles you will be matched, not least because the profiles will change in response to your comments, so you are therefore asked to review the full range of four profiles. You are asked to check that the work you do is adequately represented by at least one of the profiles and, if it appears to straddle two of the profiles in equal measure, please tell us. We would also be grateful if you would check that the profiles make sense as a sequence. That means that ideally they need to be clearly differentiated from each other, while not being so different that significant gaps exist between them. Whilst the profiles are designed to be inclusive of the fullest range of tasks and duties that may be required at each level, it is not necessary for every last task to be specified in the fullest of detail. However, if there is a critical aspect of your work that has either been omitted or been inappropriately described, please tell us.

Much has still to be agreed, so if you feel that there are gaps in the information that is provided to you here in this guidance document, it is probably because the detail your question relates to still needs to be worked out. Most that has so far been provisionally agreed is included here but if you do have questions, please address them either to the College’s named management representative or to the UCU representatives and they will do their best to give any additional information as far as they are able to.

Once the profiles have been finally agreed the FNG expects to be able to move forward quite rapidly with the negotiations and harmonisation process and there will hopefully be more to communicate soon.

## **The National Framework Agreement and Job Evaluation**

The National Framework Agreement (NFA) calls for employees of all British universities to have their pay matched to a single national pay-spine that is sub-divided into pay-bands (i.e. grades). The intention is to simplify pay negotiations and to produce a system that is fair and transparent and where all pay differentials are justified uniformly and objectively. The full text of the Framework Agreement may be downloaded from:

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\* The only exceptions will be those who are engaged as “guest lecturers”. Further work will be undertaken to establish if this group should be accommodated in the Framework Agreement and, if so, how.

[http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/Pay\\_and\\_Reward/Framework\\_Agreement/](http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/Pay_and_Reward/Framework_Agreement/)

To make this possible, all work that is undertaken by staff at the College needs to be described and then those descriptions (i.e. role profiles) evaluated to establish the 'size' of the roles. Once this evaluation has taken place the outcome is then translated to a pay-band/grade on the single pay-spine. At Birkbeck the evaluation will be undertaken using the Hay scheme (see <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/jobevaluation/evaluation> )

Birkbeck's guidance about the implementation of the NFA may be found at:  
<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/jobevaluation/>.

UCU's guidance about the NFA is to be found at:  
<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1922>

## **Matching people to the most appropriate role profile**

As previously stated, the vast majority of staff employed to teach or to directly support teaching at Birkbeck will, once the role profiles are agreed, be matched to one of the four generic role profiles and therefore to one of the grades of the single pay-spine. The initial match will be undertaken, in consultation with Human Resources, by someone who knows your work. Once matched to the closest role profile that reflects the work that you do, you will be notified of this outcome in writing. You will then have a chance to seek a review of that decision or to appeal against it, should you wish to do so. Specific duties will continue to be agreed locally within the framework of the overarching role profile that most closely reflects the work that you do.

The most crucial thing that will be considered in the matching process will be where the most significant part of your duties sits within the various role profiles. That means, especially for someone who works for a relatively small number of hours, that they may appear to do few of the possible tasks shown, while still being properly matched to that role profile. Equally, it is possible that they may undertake some tasks at a higher level without being matched to that level, if the core of their work is reflected, on balance, within another role description.

In reference to the "Person Specification" section, it is recognised that some staff will have skills, experience and qualifications that exceed the essential requirements. However, it is the work and duties that a person is required to do at the College that will be foremost in the matching process.

It is envisaged that most staff currently referred to as Teaching Assistants/Graduate Teaching Assistants/Seminar Tutors/Graduate Teaching Fellows and Demonstrators will be matched to Role A and Sessional Lecturers (and other similarly titled roles) to Roles B, C or D depending on their level of responsibility and the complexity of the duties that they are required to perform at the College.

If you do not feel that any of the profiles within the range covers the work that you do, we need you to tell us about your role.

## **Role summaries**

As per the introductory note on each of the draft role profiles, these documents indicate the expectations and responsibilities of staff within each of the role levels. This does not mean that it is intended that you will do all of the listed duties and activities all of the time, nor does it guarantee that you would necessarily be given the opportunity to undertake all of the activities, although it does mean that the College could, subject to discussion and capability, request that staff at each level undertake any of the activities at that level, with reasonable notification, guidance and support. Similarly, the role profiles, whilst inclusive, are not exhaustive, and you may be called upon to undertake duties at a similar level and responsibility that are not spelt out in the profile.

**Role A** - Teaching staff within this role will generally also, though not exclusively, be studying for higher degrees at the College. In these circumstances individuals will have a dual relationship with

the College as student and staff member. Although these relationships will undoubtedly inform each other, they will be discrete arrangements. Prior experience of teaching will not be essential as these roles are generally developmental positions where support and training will be formalised as integral to the engagement. Postholders will teach and support the teaching of others within settings where the ultimate responsibility for delivery is assumed by a senior colleague. They may conduct classes, seminars, tutorials or laboratory work. They will work on modules that have been designed by other members of staff, although there will generally be latitude for developing teaching methods and materials. They will plan their own work to meet agreed aims and will participate in assessment and teaching-related administration. They will maintain their knowledge of their subject area(s), and seek to develop their skills as teachers with the support of more experienced Research & Teaching colleagues.

Where the role is undertaken by someone concurrently studying for a higher degree at the College, the position will typically come to an end on the completion of the post-holder's studies.

**Role B** - Teaching staff in this role will normally come to the role with prior experience of teaching, ideally this having been gained within HE or with adult learners, possibly within a role similar to that profiled at A. They will usually teach within established modules that have been designed by others. Where they are required to develop modules, these are likely to be within their own area of subject specialism. Sometimes they will be teaching under supervision as part of a teaching team, e.g. on a large or complex module. However, they may have full responsibility for the delivery of modules, albeit within the oversight of senior Research & Teaching colleagues. They will organise their own work, conduct assessment of students, collaborate on course development and undertake teaching-related administration. They will be expected to develop and sustain their own independent scholarly activity relating to their teaching and subject area(s).

**Role C** - Teaching staff in this role will have prior experience of teaching adult learners or experience of teaching in HE and will normally have had experience of teaching and running their own modules. They may be required to contribute to the development of their subject areas and may bring professional/industry experience to that task. Normally their teaching will be within established programmes of study but they may also be tasked with designing and delivering new modules or with contributing to the design of entire programmes. Teaching staff at this level may be tasked with leading teaching teams. Where their teaching is in areas where there is no Academic staff member with comparable subject specific knowledge, they may exceptionally be invested with the directorship of those programmes of study. They may be responsible for modules that call for both a breadth and depth of expertise. They will review the content and delivery of modules, making revision as necessary. They may play a role in the running of their departments and schools. They will be expected to organise their own independent scholarly activity, and to disseminate the results of it, as appropriate.

**Role D** - Postholders within this role will generally have extensive experience of adult/HE teaching and have external recognition as a scholar or within a profession appropriate to their teaching subject area(s). Where the duties of staff appointed at this level are confined to teaching, assessment and teaching-related administration, the expectation is that they will be contributing expertise and knowledge of a distinction that is the result of their experience and accomplishment in their professional work external to the College, which will objectively justify their appointment at this level.

In addition to teaching and related activities, Level D postholders may have overall responsibility for the development of new programmes, the wider curricula and be involved in the development of policy and the definition and maintenance of academic standards at School and College level. They may undertake significant roles in the management of their Department or School and be involved in College-wide committees and governance.

Please note that the role D profile has not been worked through in as much detail as those for Roles A – C. However, the working group thought it important to seek comment on a profile at a higher level and it has therefore been included here.

## Staff groups

Individual staff at Birkbeck are grouped via the broad work types that they are required to undertake as their main work activity/reason for employment. It is anticipated that Sessional Lecturers (and all other related teaching staff) will form a new staff group under the wider Research & Teaching heading. The name for the group has still to be determined by the FNG, however it is anticipated that it will be either Teaching or Teaching & Scholarship. The table below shows the group as one of the Research and Teaching Staff groups, and puts them alongside the Professional and Support Staff groups for comparison.

Research and Teaching Staff Groups	Professional and Support Staff Groups
Academic	Professional & Administrative
<b>Teaching (&amp; Scholarship)</b>	Operational & Facilities Support
Research	Technical

## Titles of the four role profiles

To date various job titles have been used by individual Schools to denote the different types and levels of role that Teaching staff have been required to undertake at the College e.g. seminar tutor, teaching assistant, graduate teaching assistant, visiting lecturer, sessional lecturer, tutor, associate lecturer, teaching fellow, etc. It would seem sensible to attempt to agree a common nomenclature for the Teaching roles at the various levels. The following options are put forward for your consideration:

Profile	Name option 1	Name option 2	Name option 3
<b>A</b>	Graduate Teaching Assistant <i>or</i> Demonstrator	Graduate Teaching Assistant <i>or</i> Demonstrator	Graduate Teaching Assistant <i>or</i> Demonstrator
<b>B</b>	Programme Lecturer A	College Lecturer A	Teaching Fellow A
<b>C</b>	Programme Lecturer B	College Lecturer B	Teaching Fellow B
<b>D</b>	Snr. Programme Lecturer	Senior College Lecturer	Senior Teaching Fellow
Profile	Name option 4	Name option 5	
<b>A</b>	Graduate Teaching Assistant <i>or</i> Demonstrator	University Teacher A <i>or</i> University Demonstrator	
<b>B</b>	School Lecturer	University Teacher B	
<b>C</b>	Associate Lecturer	University Teacher C	
<b>D</b>	Senior Associate Lecturer	University Teacher D	

Please indicate your preferred option, or suggest alternatives.

If agreement cannot be reached, the College may stick with the least contentious option of using the simple differentiators of A, B, C and D centrally and leaving it to the discretion of the five individual Schools to decide how the jobs are named locally.

## Progression

There are two kinds of progression that concern the current phase of negotiations: incremental progression within a grade and progression from one grade to another.

**Incremental progression** is movement from one point on the pay-spine to the next within any given grade. For example, Grade 7 covers points 31-38, and Grade 8 covers points 37-46 (the current salary scales can be viewed at <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/fin/services/payroll/salaryscales>). It is expected that Teaching staff who maintain continuity in service (see section below on Continuity in service) will progress through these core (non-discretionary) increments each year until they reach the top of the grade; this progression is intended to reward staff, in addition to acknowledging an increasing level of skill gained with experience in the role year on year. Such progression would, however, be conditional upon satisfactory performance.

**Progression from grade to grade** is also a consideration of the FNG. The principle underlying the negotiations is that whatever is ultimately agreed should be “on an equitable and transparent basis” for staff within this group. The College is committed to supporting the professional development of all of its employees and the FNG is considering the most appropriate mechanisms to support the movement of Teaching staff from grade to grade.

## **Professional development**

The NFA attaches importance to all staff having access to appropriate staff development, and includes a commitment to HE institutions making “available suitable training and development opportunities to all staff, irrespective of their present grades or career pathways.” The College recognises the importance of fostering the talents of all of its employees for the benefit of Birkbeck’s vitality and success. Work so far has highlighted areas where good practice currently exists in support of the professional development of Teaching staff and the FNG will work to find ways to ensure that where such good practice exists that it is made available to all Teaching staff.

## **Continuity in service (or continuity in employment)**

Is the duration that a staff member has worked at the College without any breaks in service. In the context of the Framework Negotiations at Birkbeck, continuity of service is a very important consideration as it will have a bearing on things such as eligibility to incremental progression and the acquisition of certain employment rights, e.g. the right not to be “unfairly dismissed”, the right to redundancy pay or the right to move from a fixed-term to an open-ended (i.e. “permanent”) contract. It should be noted that continuity of employment is a statutory concept. The legal framework concerning this issue is highly complex and evolving and detailed analysis would need to be undertaken to establish any individual’s status. Therefore, with some 1,000 current Teaching employees, each with a unique employment history and pattern of employment at the College, the FNG needs to arrive at a position that is transparent, fair and workable.

## **Hourly rates and fractional posts**

Most, though not all, Teaching staff are currently paid at an hourly rate determined by their individual teaching contact hours. These hourly rates vary from school to school, not only in their amount but also in their inclusion or not of scholarship/preparation time, admin time, holiday pay and whether or not they are intended to cover remuneration for marking and any other duties associated with the core teaching.

Whilst a great deal of the detail is still to be agreed, as per the role profiles, it is anticipated that the future engagement of teaching staff will be based on the expectation that most (or an appropriate proportion) of the duties associated with the core teaching will be factored in when the decision is made as to how much time an individual is to be contracted to work. Therefore, the expectation is that post-harmonised contracts of employment will wherever practicable and possible express working hours as a fraction of a full-time teaching role.

This will be one of the most complex issues to be addressed in the negotiations over the coming months. Some balance will have to be struck between recognising differences and developing a system that is fair, transparent and simple enough to be workable.

## Market supplements, and attraction and retention policy

The FNG recognises that pay in addition to that determined by “equal pay for work of equal value” may be required in certain subject areas, where due to market forces, the Hay evaluated grade for the job results in an inability to successfully recruit or retain staff in that subject area. Birkbeck’s existing policy on attraction and retention payments can be viewed at [www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies\\_services/Attraction/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/hr/policies_services/Attraction/) . There are likely to be further negotiations about market supplements and the appropriateness of the existing policy in application to the Teaching staff group.

## Travel allowances

Some of the old Faculties made payments to Teaching staff in respect of travel to their main work location(s) but most Faculties did not. This will be an area for review by the FNG as the intended outcome of the process is the harmonisation of all terms and conditions, wherever appropriate and possible, with those of all other staff groups. The main body of College staff are not eligible for this allowance. It should also be noted that these payments are regarded by HM Customs & Revenue as a taxable benefit and are therefore subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions and not direct reimbursements.

## Your views and comments

Please send your comments to the management side of the College’s negotiating group to Gareth Stirrat (Human Resources Projects Officer) via email to [g.stirrat@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:g.stirrat@bbk.ac.uk), or to the UCU side to Mike Berlin (Joint President Birkbeck UCU) via [mikeberlin@talktalk.net](mailto:mikeberlin@talktalk.net) or to James Brown (UCU FNG member) [jpcbrown@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jpcbrown@yahoo.co.uk), or to all parties by **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009**.

In commenting on specific points in the role profiles, please make it clear which of the roles (A, B, C or D) your comment relates to, and which section it relates to (e.g. Main Duties, Scholarship, Person Specification). If you are commenting on a specific numbered clause, please give the number. You can also send an annotated copy of the document with any comments or suggested additions or revisions. We would also welcome your comments on the sequence of the role profiles and their relation to each other and on any of the issues discussed in these guidance notes.

We thank you in advance for your input to this process. Be assured that what you say is very important to us, and could prove even more important to you.