

Staff Personnel Manual (SPP)

SPP 402–01: Classification of Positions

Effective: 2/15/1984

Revised: 12/23/2024

Purpose

To describe how positions are categorized

Sources

Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual - 6–101; –102; –301; –402

University policy

Background

University positions are classified into the Job Architecture Framework to reflect differences in scope and responsibility, the level of expertise required in the position, and the impact of that position on the university as captured through a job description. Market pricing is the method by which the classification is assigned a grade and salary range midpoint. All of these factors are taken into account when classifying a position.

Applicability

New, vacant, or filled regular [classified employee](#), [university staff](#), and [non-faculty administrator](#) positions

Policy

ASU’s framework has seven essential pillars that link employees to potential management levels. These management levels are intended to help individuals understand how their careers might progress at ASU.

The pillars of the ASU Job Architecture include:

1. **Business Title:** A descriptive job title that provides more detail about the function of the position for use in internal and external communications.
2. **Job Profile:** A generic title used for job classification and links individuals to a management level. The job profile defines key features such as pay rate type, Fair Labor Standards Act status and other federal compliance classifications.
3. **Job Family Group:** A broad category of work that can be logically grouped based on similar characteristics and required skills.
4. **Job family:** A subset of a job family, usually more specialized.
5. **Management Level:** A progression of job levels attributed to the fundamental nature of work, providing consistency across job families.
6. **Job Level:** A categorization of the scope, authority, and responsibility required for a job, differentiated by work dimensions.
7. **Work Dimension:** Detail on a job’s complexity, nature and scope of work, degree of responsibility and autonomy.

Management levels and job levels

Management levels and job levels are essential components of job architecture. Think of management levels like potential progression paths and the levels as growth milestones along that path. There are three management levels at ASU that support career planning and progression.

Management level	Description
Operational Contributor	Operational Contributors provide support or service in a “hands-on” environment, contributing to regular university operations.
Professional Contributor	Professional contributors design, implement, guide and deliver processes, programs or policies using specialized knowledge or skills typically acquired through advanced education or equivalent advanced learning attained through experience.
People Manager	People managers oversee broad portfolios of responsibility; plan, prioritize and direct responsibilities of employees; and manage strategy and policy development for a function, department or unit.

Work dimensions

Work dimensions determine job levels within the management levels. While they do not determine progression, work dimensions are used to identify an individual’s current standing and potential progression opportunities, based on factors that include the scope and complexity of work, the level of autonomy and scope of accountability. Depending on the management level, some dimensions may be more heavily weighted depending on the career stream.

The six work dimensions that determine job levels are:

Work dimension	Description
Complexity of work	The complexity of job tasks, problem-solving or creative production.
Communication	The nature and scope of the communication or collaboration.
Scope of accountability	Degree of sole or shared responsibility for the scope and impact of the task, project or initiative.
Autonomy	Degree of sole or shared responsibility for decision-making and degree of supervision.
Effective knowledge	Minimum education, training, skills and experience required to perform the job to the expected performance standard.
People management	The degree to which a position must develop, lead and influence individuals and internal or external stakeholders.

Job Classification Descriptions

Administrative officials and the Office of Human Resources (OHR) work together in partnership to develop the appropriate classification description for new or vacant positions. Reclassification of vacant or filled positions occurs when there has been a significant change to the essential functions and scope of the position. Decisions regarding the mix of classifications within an area/unit are subject to availability of funds and organizational need.

After a classification decision has been made, the administrative official in the requesting area/unit is responsible for obtaining necessary approvals and documenting the decision in the employee’s departmental personnel file.