GUIDELINES FOR HIGHER DUTIES and SECONDMENT APPOINTMENTS
(HEW Levels 1-9)

Preamble

These guidelines provide advice and guidance for appointments by Higher Duties Allowance (HDA) and Secondment.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the following WSU documents:

- Professional Development Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- and WSU Professional Staff Agreement 2014

1. Definitions

The key distinctions between a Higher Duties Allowance and a Secondment are:

1.1 Higher Duties Allowance
- a call for expressions of interest will be used as the basis for filling vacancies of more than two weeks’ duration where the University has had at least three weeks’ notice of the vacancy from staff within the work unit where the vacancy will occur
- are normally for shorter periods of relief and as a general principle, are for periods less than 3 months
- are not superable due to the short term nature of the appointment

1.2 Secondments
- are for periods greater than 3 months
- secondments of less than six months duration may be advertised through expressions of interest from staff within the Unit, School or Division, or advertised on Jobs@WSU to target a broader pool of internal applicants
- a secondment for a period of more than six months may be advertised either internally only or internally and externally dependent upon the vacancy (noting that up to and including HEW 6 must be advertised internally only in the first instance).
- may be for positions at the same level, at a higher level, or in exceptional circumstances, at a lower level than the staff member’s existing substantive HEW level
- may be superable if the Secondment is for a period longer than 12 months

2. Higher Duties Allowance (HDA)

2.1 HDA is defined in the Professional Development Policy as:

A temporary appointment to perform the duties of a higher classified position which provides eligible staff with a career development opportunity. An opportunity for higher duties may arise through the taking of leave, secondment or resignation of another employee who is at
A higher classified position and is generally a short term appointment. Appointment to a higher classified position is covered in the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The staff member must be able to demonstrate sufficient capabilities to undertake the duties of the higher level position in which they are acting.

2.2 Conditions covering a Higher Duties Allowance Appointment

2.2.1 HDA may be offered for a minimum of 5 consecutive working days\(^1\) and up to 3 months. Short term vacancies available for longer than 3 months should be advertised as a secondment through the e-recruit system.

2.2.2 Where a staff member is not required to or does not have the capabilities to fully perform the duties of the higher graded position, the Head of Unit may approve the payment of the HDA at a relevant percentage of the higher graded position\(^ii\). Managers should seek advice from their Senior HR Partner on the percentage of Higher Duties Allowance to be paid.

2.2.3 Under normal circumstances expressions of interest should be called from within the work unit where the vacancy will occur. This may be done via email, and the application can constitute a response via email. Example questions are: Briefly state your reasons for being interested in the position. What skills and experience will you bring to the position?

2.2.4 The Head of Unit with delegation to approve a Higher Duties Allowance will then select the staff member to be offered the HDA.

2.2.5 HDA is not superable which means the additional allowance that is paid in relation to performing duties at a higher level does not attract employer contribution superannuation, nor does the employee pay employee contribution superannuation on that portion.

2.2.6 The whole salary of a staff member on HDA is to be paid by the Unit in which the higher grade position is situated. The HDA is paid at step 1 of the higher graded position.

3. Secondment

3.1 A secondment is a career development opportunity that allows a staff member to move to another position for a minimum of 3 months to undertake duties at their existing HEW level or at a higher HEW level. In exceptional cases a staff member may apply for and accept an offer of secondment at a lower HEW level. Salary maintenance at their existing HEW level will not apply and the secondment will be paid at the highest step for the lower HEW level advertised.

3.2 A secondment is defined in the Professional Development policy as:

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\(^1\) HDA is not payable for periods of 1 – 4 days; HDA can be paid for at least 5 separate days within a 2 month period when the basis of the appointment does not involve consecutive working days but is regular (for example one day per week) Professional Staff Agreement 2014 29. (2) (b)
A secondment provides an eligible employee with a career development opportunity. Where a vacancy is advertised internally for a specified period of time and an eligible employee is selected as the preferred applicant, the employee may be seconded from their substantive position for the duration of the vacancy. Appointment by secondment, eligibility, approval and associated conditions are covered in the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The opportunity for a secondment or other forms of career development should be discussed by the employee with their supervisor at the time of the annual performance planning and development meeting and form part of the employee’s individual development plan.

3.3 Conditions covering Secondment appointments

3.3.1 Secondments must be advertised through the e-recruit system, unless advertised through expression of interest. A secondment may be advertised internally if approved by the appropriate delegated officer.

3.3.2 A secondment may be offered for a minimum of 3 months and should be offered for a specific period of time to coincide with the absence of the substantive owner of the vacant position.

3.3.3 Normal recruitment and selection processes will apply.

3.3.4 Secondments of 12 months or longer are superable unless the staff member expressly declines this benefit, which means both the employer and employee superannuation contributions will apply to the salary in the secondment position.

3.3.5 Secondments will be initiated at step 1 of the salary of the advertised position.

4. Releasing staff to undertake secondment

4.1 It should be recognised that secondment opportunities benefit both the staff member as a career development opportunity and the business unit which the staff member holds a substantive position as an opportunity for corporate knowledge sharing on the return of the staff member from their secondment.

4.2 Under normal circumstances a staff member will return to their substantive position immediately following their period of secondment for a minimum period of 6 months before applying for another secondment opportunity. A shorter eligibility period may apply if agreed by the releasing manager in advance of the application for secondment being made.

4.3 Release of staff to undertake a secondment must be approved by a manager holding a minimum delegation of CAT 4 Delegations (Administrative) policy. As per the Recruitment and Selection policy (94), should a manager refuse to release a staff member to undertake a secondment, the manager must prepare a submission to their Dean/Director detailing the reasons. Should the Dean/Director also refuse to release the staff member the matter should be referred to the Director, HR Strategy and Services for determination.
Note is it not mandatory to offer a HDA opportunity because a staff member takes leave. The position may be left vacant. It is at the discretion of the unit manager.

* The Office of People and Culture are available to provide advice in these instances. Please contact your Senior HR Partner.