

Administrative Officer (AO) – Grade Descriptor

Overview of Roles at this Pay-band Level

- Roles at this level tend to be administrative support roles undertaking work in support of senior staff or functional areas of activity. For the most part work will generally comprise a series of well-defined tasks where the correct course of action is fairly obvious. Some roles will receive and respond to enquiries from staff or external stakeholders including members of the public, on largely transactional issues e.g. requests for support, or requests for information. Other roles may involve maintaining systems or processes – processing documentation, preparing documents following standard formats or templates, maintaining and updating records and databases, running straightforward reports, cross-checking information to ensure completeness etc. - or providing general administrative or secretarial support e.g. arranging meetings, co-ordinating diaries etc.
- The principal requirement of these roles is typically to maintain systems and records; provide administrative support; respond appropriately to enquirers and provide information to assist decision making usually in relation to transactional operational or process issues.

Key Functions at this Pay-band Level

- **Administration & Secretarial:** may include providing administrative and secretarial support for the general office and senior staff; maintaining databases; undertaking basic research on behalf of more senior staff; keeping database records up-to-date; acting as a focal point for a specific issue; secretarial and administrative support e.g. making arrangements and arranging travel itineraries, administrative support to committees e.g. preparing and dispatching papers; scheduling meetings etc.
- Dealing with straightforward external enquiries; house styling of documents; uploading web content; processing invoices, fees and expenses; updating management information systems; drafting and editing straightforward documents on behalf of more senior staff; collating information and preparing management reports.

Key Differences from Roles in the Pay-band Level below

- Roles at the level below will typically undertake straightforward administrative or support tasks. At this level there is a greater requirement

to make choices about how the job is done, albeit within a well-defined framework. Interaction internally and externally will be more substantial with roles in the grade below typically dealing with basic, straightforward enquiries or queries. Much of the work will involve some fact-finding and initiative in terms of selecting the right choice or approach from one or two alternatives. Role-holders will also need to have a good understanding of their work area and a general understanding of the work of the organisation to be effective.

Knowledge & Skills

- Roles at this level will require an appreciation of how work links between various areas of the department. The main focus of these roles is on practical application of processes, procedures or systems and providing advice and guidance to others in relation to those processes, procedures and systems. Role-holders will therefore require a good understanding of techniques and processes obtained through training and work experience sufficient to identify relevant issues and answer a standard range of queries from staff and external stakeholders including members of the public.
- Depending on the nature of the role some specialist or technical knowledge together with basic analytical or supervisory skills may also be required.
- Additionally, good oral and written communication skills together with interpersonal skills are key requirements for these roles.

Contacts & Communications

- Contacts at this level will typically focus on identifying and satisfying internal or external stakeholder requirements, for example, providing clear advice and guidance to members of the public on the correct approach to follow in relation to a particular process or procedure; or determining how to respond to enquiries.
- For some roles interactions may focus on servicing and providing administrative support to senior staff or committees e.g. preparing and dispatching agendas and other committee related papers, monitoring and following actions to conclusion etc.

Problem Solving

- The majority of problems at this level will relate to identifying issues and determining how to deal with them. In general terms evidence or facts will readily identify issues but additional evidence or information may have to be obtained and some interpretation of that information may be required. This may include: identifying and resolving data discrepancies; prioritising and dealing with requests for information; determining how to respond to more detailed enquires or complaints; or analysing and interpreting data using a range of standard techniques and processes. Resolving these problems will require the exercise of some initiative within a framework of recognised procedures and established guidelines.
- Support roles may involve managing and amended diaries on behalf of senior staff; arranging meetings and adjusting priorities to accommodate short notice events; and determining whether something needs the immediate attention of a senior officer.
- For those roles which encompass supervisory responsibilities some planning and organisation of workload will be required to ensure workflow is maintained, however, the nature of problems encountered will mainly relate to the timing and sequencing of assigned tasks.

Decision Making

- At this level decision making will typically involve determining the most appropriate course of action within procedural limits or established guidelines. In this regard, role-holders will be expected to undertake basic research and analysis and exercise judgement to select the most appropriate solution or approach from a limited range of known options.
- Supervisory roles will assign straightforward and routine tasks to others and make adjustments to individual work allocations and schedules in the light of prevailing circumstances. Role-holders will also assist first line managers and other senior staff in monitoring and planning future work. For roles providing direct personal support to senior staff managing time commitments is an important consideration. In this regard, judging whether something needs to be brought to the attention of that individual immediately or passed on to another member of the team to action is a key element of the role.
- Advisory work will vary according to the nature of the role. It may include conducting database searches, analysing data or information using a range of standard procedures or approaches and presenting outcomes to more senior staff. For some roles providing clear advice

and guidance to internal clients or members of the public on, for example, the correct approach to follow in relation to a particular process or procedure may form a key part of the role.

Autonomy

- Roles at this level usually work within a framework of set rules and established procedures with limited discretion required i.e. required choice from one or two straightforward options within well-defined limits. Although not all elements of work will be subject to 100% check, supervision or access to more senior staff will usually be available.

Management of Resources

- Some roles may involve limited supervision including allocating work to others and ensuring tasks are completed satisfactorily. This may also include providing on-the-job training to other staff.

Impact

- Main impact will primarily be on operational efficiency, for example, responding appropriately to enquirers; prompt dispatch and delivery of papers; invoices issued and receipts credited to accounts; all administrative arrangements made for particular meetings/events etc. In short, decisions or actions are only likely to impact on the effectiveness of own work area and possibly on the work of others or the perceptions of internal or external customers on largely transactional issues.