

## Applying the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme

### OCC Local Conventions 2009

#### **Introduction**

The Green Book job evaluation scheme analyses jobs under 13 factors. Each factor is broken down into a number of levels and each level is defined by the standard definitions laid down in the 'Blue Pages'. It is the allocation of the appropriate factor level to a job which determines its point score and, hence, its grade.

Clearly, the key to successful job evaluation is to ensure that the **facts** relating to the duties and responsibilities of each job are taken into account. It would be inappropriate to allocate factor levels 'by rote'. However, job evaluation is also about comparisons among jobs and the relativity of the factor levels given to jobs across the spectrum within the organisation is important in producing a grading structure which reflects the true duties and responsibilities of the jobs. For this reason we find that the top and bottom levels in some factors occur relatively rarely in order to maintain appropriate differences in the most senior or junior jobs.

The Green Book Scheme expects that local authorities will enhance the standard definitions by devising a set of local conventions which are identified during the moderation process and which are then applied consistently across all relevant jobs.

These notes give summary guidance on the application of the standard definitions and set down the local conventions determined through the moderation process and how they have been applied. For example, because in Oxfordshire we require that all managers receive training in recruitment and selection, appraisals etc we have determined that each manager has received some training in the theory behind the management of staff, hence the minimum level of knowledge for a fully fledged manager of a group of staff is level 5, which is the first level requiring a theoretical rather than simply procedural knowledge. Similarly, this training incorporates listening, questioning and presentation skills, so such managers receive a minimum of level 4 for interpersonal and communication skills as this is the level where 'developed' skills appear for this factor. Once again, as a manager you are required to solve not only problems to do with the job, but also to do with the management of staff, so the minimum level allocated for mental skills is level 3 where problem solving skills start to be varied and complex. These local conventions, therefore, start to build up exactly what it is about being a manager of staff which is more demanding and onerous than being an ordinary worker.

**It is essential that both the standard definitions and the local conventions are applied consistently where appropriate to all jobs and that where they are not applied there are clear and rational reasons.**

## **Knowledge**

This factor measures the Knowledge required for the job. It covers all technical, specialist, procedural and organisational knowledge required for the job, including numeracy and literacy; knowledge of equipment and machinery; and knowledge of concepts, ideas, other cultures or languages, theories, techniques, policies, procedures and practices.

It takes into account the breadth, diversity and range of knowledge and the depth and complexity of the understanding required.

Ex-manual jobs tend to score a 1 or 2 for knowledge depending on complexity. Most office jobs will score at least level 3. Here a college leaver could have sufficient knowledge to do the job where further experience or specialist procedural knowledge is needed a level 4 will apply. Level 5 is suitable where some theoretical knowledge is required.

Fully-fledged Managers score at least level 5 for knowledge; a job at this level requires theoretical plus practical and procedural knowledge in a specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge.

Standard professional posts score level 6, where the job requires *advanced* theoretical plus practical and procedural knowledge in a specialist area, or an equivalent level of organisational procedural and policy knowledge. The knowledge could be gained through extended previous formal training to post-graduate or professional level, or equivalent.

Senior professional or managing professional posts, which take more knowledge than 3-4 years post qualification experience score level 7.

Very few jobs get level 8 for knowledge. This would need to be the lead professional in a Directorate or the county expert across a very broad field, giving wide-ranging advice and professional expertise.

## **Mental Skills**

This factor measures the Mental Skills required for the job. It includes analytical, problem solving and judgemental skills. It also includes creative and developmental skills, whether related to design, handling of people or development of policies and procedures; and planning and strategic skills.

There is often a difference of 2 factor levels between knowledge & mental skills. However, where a job is a problem solving job such as IT or finance or the job involves significant strategic problem solving it is usual to have one level difference.

It takes into account requirements to gather, collate and analyse the facts needed to solve problems; and also the requirements for imaginative thinking.

Managers or Senior Colleagues who are required to solve problems about the job and management of staff will be at least level 3, while those having to solve varied and complex matters or deal with strategic issues received level 4.

Where the job requires analytical and judgemental or creative and developmental skills; where there is need to interpret information or situations and to solve varied problems or develop solutions or plans over the short term, most jobs have been scored at level 3.

Jobs will be scored higher at level 4 where the jobholder has to interpret complex information and solve more complex problems.

A job will score level 5 where the jobholder has to also produce solutions or strategies over the long term. The 'long term' is defined as where the act of planning lasts more than a year ahead on major formal plans (e.g. Transport Planners). The emphasis in relation to planning has to be on the amount of time spent planning each project or activity, not how long these may actually take to implement. Thus 'short term' may be appropriate even for large scale developments which take a considerable amount of time to come to fruition, if the planning phase is generally 1-3 months for each.

The most senior managers that are responsible for a whole service, or section of a department would expect to score a level 6.

Those who are responsible for management of contractors would score at least level 3 for this factor as they are required to use varied problem solving techniques in improving service delivery.

### **Interpersonal Skills**

This factor measures the Interpersonal and Communication Skills required for the job. It includes oral, linguistic, sign and written communication skills.

The emphasis of the factor is on the purpose to which the interpersonal and communication skills are put (for example, presenting, training, promoting, obtaining information from others, interviewing, gaining the co-operation of others, team working, advising, motivating, persuading, counselling, conciliating, negotiating, meeting the needs of others).

The factor covers the complexity and contentiousness of the subject matter to be conveyed, and any requirements to exercise confidentiality or sensitivity. It takes into account the nature, diversity, cultural background and size of the intended audiences.

Most office workers are expected to hold level 3 skills in interpersonal skills on letter writing, grammar etc will be required. Developed interpersonal skills would be expected of all trained managers and so they would score level 4. They would have gained these developed skills through training and experience, but would usually have a senior manager with whom to discuss

the more difficult problems. For those roles where there is a requirement for extensive interaction with contractors or agency staff, it would be expected that job holders would score at least level 3.

Presentations to difficult or hostile audiences where the jobholder has to defend the department/service's corner and take the flack are usually level 5. However, these need to involve interacting with external audiences in arenas such as public enquiries or formal settings, rather than dealing with other work colleagues. Regular attendance at committee or cabinet meetings, or significant working with elected members would often give a level 5.

Those jobs scoring level 6 are where a major part of their job is to convey difficult or highly complex information to a wide range of audiences, including non-specialists, e.g. Social Workers dealing with clients where there may be specific barriers to understanding or communication difficulties, or solicitors who go to court as the advocate rather than giving evidence, the latter of which would be at least level 4.

### **Physical Skills**

This factor measures the Physical Skills required for the job. It covers manual and finger dexterity, hand-eye co-ordination, co-ordination of limbs, and sensory co-ordination.

It takes into account the purpose to which the skills are put and demands arising from the need to achieve specified standards of speed and precision.

Most office workers with an ongoing use of a keyboard would score level 2 on this factor.

Those who spend all day working on spreadsheets or similar, e.g. in finance, and IT, would score level 3, for use of speed and precision.

Qualified typists trained to RSA level 2 or above should get level 4, as would those people who need to produce lengthy documents where accuracy and speed is important.

Drivers of large vehicles such as a mobile library would score level 3. Driving of everyday vehicles would be covered under level 2.

### **Initiative & Independence**

This factor measures the scope allowed to the jobholder to exercise initiative and take independent actions.

It takes into account the nature and level of supervision given to the jobholder; the level and degree of direction and guidance provided by policies, precedents, procedures and regulations; and any requirements to organise or quality check their own work.

Jobs where a supervisor/manager or senior person is almost always available to call upon when unsure about something would be level 2. If the jobholder has more independence because the line manager is not always around or the manager has little knowledge about the responsibilities of the post, it would be level 3.

Where the jobholder is expected to deal with situations that have not happened before and there is no existing procedure or practice to refer to but he/she has to decide without reference to anyone else what to do (unanticipated not just unexpected), this would be level 4. This is not often found in office bound jobs as most of these would have another more senior person on site to refer to, or would perhaps be able to defer a decision until the return of a suitably experienced person to assist. However, this is the level which would go with the field-working professional model, where an individual would make decisions without reference to others because the professional training undertaken has equipped the post holder with the necessary knowledge to do this.

A fair degree of initiative and independence over an area of work where the jobholder is a team leading professional, managing a number of different streams of activity, or manages their own large team with a considerable degree of initiative and refers to a senior manager only for policy and resource issues comes under level 5.

Very few jobs have been judged to be above level 5. Those under level 6 would involve using discretion and initiative over a broad area of activity with very little access to a senior manager, e.g. Group Managers, Service Managers, corporate jobs covering the whole council.

### **Physical Demands**

This factor measures the type, amount, continuity and frequency of the physical effort required by the job. It covers stamina as well as strength.

It takes into account all forms of bodily effort, for example, that required for standing and walking, lifting and carrying, pulling and pushing. It also includes the physical demands involved in working in awkward positions, for example, bending, crouching, stretching; for sitting, standing or working in a constrained position; and for maintaining the required pace of work.

*It is important to remember that Physical Demands is a frequency-based factor. A job may have some demand for high physical effort, however very few jobs have to do this as a significant part of the job.*

Most office jobs where the jobholder can get up and move when they want are level 1.

Library Assistants, Post Room Assistants, get level 2 for bending, stretching, lifting, working in awkward positions and being on feet all day.

Teaching Assistants in small or special schools get level 2 for similar reasons plus sitting on small seats, lifting or carrying small children etc.

Home Support Workers get level 2 for less frequently lifting heavier weights or using hoists/wheelchairs etc.

Caretakers/cleaners get level 3 for considerable levels of lifting and carrying, pushing or pulling for a large part of their job.

Very special needs Teaching Assistants where the lifting and carrying of disabled children is a part of their role also scores level 3.

### **Mental Demands**

This can be quite a subjective factor because the level of work related pressure experienced by individual job holders is greatly affected by the individual's ability, or perceived ability, to cope.

This factor measures the degree and frequency of the mental concentration, alertness and attention required by the job.

It takes into account features that may make concentration more difficult, for example, repetitive work, interruptions or the need to switch between varied tasks or activities; and other forms of work related pressure, for instance, arising from conflicting work demands. It also takes into account the responsiveness required of the jobholder.

This factor has only 5 levels so there is limited differentiation between the levels and they have therefore been allocated along the lines below:

Basic/straight forward administrative positions, with variety of tasks and limited intense concentration on any particular activities but some conflicting demands, deadlines etc, would be level 2

Prolonged periods of concentrated sensory attention as required by Teaching Assistants to very small children or special needs will be level 3

Office based jobs that have conflicting demands, frequent deadlines, and require attention to detail would be level 3.

Considerable report writing or research/stats/figure work will be level 4.

Very pressurized jobs, such as Service Manager in Social & Health Care, and jobs requiring very long periods of concentration such as very senior finance posts etc, would be level 5.

### **Emotional Demands**

This factor measures the nature and frequency of the Emotional Demands on the jobholder arising from contacts or work with other people.

It takes into account the situation in which the contacts or work with other people occur, for example, whether they are upset or unwell; and whether their circumstances are such as to cause stress to the jobholder. For

example, if the people concerned are terminally ill, very frail, at risk of abuse, homeless or disadvantaged in some other way.

However, simply encountering these groups of clients or customers in the course of one's job doesn't automatically score more highly than level 1 unless there is a requirement on the job holder to engage with them and attempt to assist them in improving their situation. For example a cleaner in a children's home is still a cleaner and will score in line with that model in this factor rather than in line with a residential social worker.

Again this factor is frequency based, and is sometimes confused with 'working conditions'. If the jobholder is subjected to verbal abuse it should be covered in the working conditions factor.

The majority of office-based staff have few emotional demands and so are on level 1. To reach level 2 the jobholder needs daily encounters with a situation that causes occasional emotional demands on them e.g. Home Support Workers.

Some staff in Social and Health Care, Trading standards and legal services score level 2 where the job involves regular and ongoing exposure to upsetting and disturbing material.

To score level 3 the jobholder either has regular emotional demands placed on them, or occasional significant emotional demands, e.g. Lawyers involved in child welfare cases, special needs teaching assistants.

In order to get to level 4 the jobholder must have greater involvement with and responsibility for the care and welfare of the vulnerable and disadvantaged which regularly place significant emotional demands on the jobholder, e.g. Occupational Therapists.

Level 5 is usually only given where the work involves the most demanding feature such as child abuse, terminal illness & removing liberty from an individual.

### **Responsibility for People**

This factor measures the responsibility of the jobholder for individual, or groups of, people (members of the public, service users and recipients, clients). This can be a direct service or indirect through advice or setting of policies which affect the well being of people.

If the jobholder provides a direct service to the public or an internal service to those other than immediate work colleagues then level 2 applies.

Indirect impact on Health/Safety/well being, e.g. Planner/Engineer is also regarded as level 2

In order to score higher than level 2 the job has to have a formal responsibility for assessing needs. The assessment of needs or enforcement of law relating to the welfare of people would be level 3. Also, for staff who provide advice and guidance to people on the internal practices and procedures of the Authority, level 3 would be appropriate.

Invoking court proceedings or having a big influence over groups of people is regarded as level 4 (e.g. Trading Standards)

Also level 4 for those staff giving advice and guidance on the implementation of external regulations that affects the well being of the public.

level 5 applies for those staff who have a major role in determining policy that impacts on the well being of the public.

level 6 applies for those staff who have a major role in determining policy that impacts upon the health and welfare of the public.

Health and Safety responsibility comes under this factor, but will not necessarily take it higher than level 2.

Responsibility for first aid is also regarded as level 2. The Teaching Assistant in a nursery, would be level 2, whereas the nursery nurse would be level 3 as they have a formal responsibility for assessing the needs of children and developing appropriate plans to aid development.

### **Responsibility for Supervision**

This factor measures the direct responsibility of the jobholder for the supervision, co-ordination or management of *employees*, or others in an equivalent position. It is important to note that this does not include the monitoring of the class in schools, but the management, and co-ordination of other OCC employees.

It includes work planning and allocation; checking and evaluating the work of others; and training, development and guidance. It also includes responsibility for personnel functions for those for whom the jobholder has a formal supervisory responsibility, such as recruitment, discipline, appraisal; and planning, organising and long-term development of human resources

A person who allocates and checks the work of others, as a formal and regular requirement rather than when deputising for the line manager, but is not responsible for carrying out formal appraisals may be level 2

A jobholder who manages just 1 other person, or demonstrates work to others in an informal training role would also be level 2. Occasional demonstration of own duties to temporary staff or other would be covered by level 1.

A formal manager with responsibility for more than 1 or 2 people is level 3.

To achieve level 4 you need to be either managing managers (of other staff rather than resources) or large numbers of staff.

Not many people have been given level 5 or level 6, except some Home Support Mgrs, and senior CFM posts.

Those who have “management” of the work of contractors, but are not involved with acting on behalf of their employers as time managed, e.g. recruiting, appraising etc, will not score as highly as those who are a line manager. Indeed for the most part, the skills involved in this activity have been scored under interpersonal and communication skills, as well as mental skills because it involves persuasion, negotiation, and problem solving as this is how improvements in working practices/performance will be achieved not through the traditional line management approaches, use of disciplinary procedures etc.

Human Resources staff who advise on, or interpret policy on the management of others will score level 3 or above in this factor. Those with specialist knowledge or some policy input will score level 4.

### **Responsibility for Financial Resources**

This factor measures the direct responsibility of the jobholder for financial resources, including cash, vouchers, cheques, debits and credits, invoices, budgets and income.

It takes into account the nature of the responsibility, for example, correctness and accuracy; safekeeping, confidentiality and security; deployment and degree of direct control; budgetary and business planning responsibilities; planning, organising and long term development of the financial resources.

It also takes into account the degree with which other employees contribute to the overall responsibility, the frequency with which the responsibility is exercised and the value of the financial resources.

This factor only has 6 levels, so needs to not only reflect the different responsibilities in the finance jobs, but also those who process invoices, and payroll as well.

Anyone who is responsible for money regularly or is a budget holder/cost centre manager has been considered to be at least level 2. This includes those who regularly process invoices, input payroll information or are e-procurement specialists. Those who raise orders on e-procurement are generally considered to be level 1.

Level 3 is most often achieved by finance posts, or those with the authority or responsibility over a significant budget. The senior payroll Assistant would also score level 3 as they have responsibility for checking the accuracy of considerable amounts of financial information.

Another reason for achieving level 3 in this factor would be provision of internal advice to people on financial matters, whereas level 4 would provide guidance on laws etc. and be accountable for the information that they give.

Level 4 could also be more senior finance posts where the amounts involved are larger, or budget holders who don't actually spend and account for money, but monitor very large sums of expenditure from a fixed budget.

In many cases the factor level above 3 depend on both the budget size and how much discretion the jobholder has on spending a budget. If you are given money for a particular project you have a responsibility on how that money is spent, if most of the budget is for payroll, then the job holder has relatively little discretion on how the money is spent.

Those at level 6 would be the most senior finance manager, with a major direct responsibility for finances. They would be accountable for extremely large expenditures from an agreed budget, they would also have a role in setting the budgets, and for policy development. level 6 has not been widely given.

### **Responsibility for Physical Resources**

This factor measures the direct responsibility of the jobholder for physical resources, including manual or computerised information; data and records; office and other equipment; tools and instruments; vehicles; plant and machinery; land, construction works, buildings and fittings and fixtures; personal possessions; and goods, produce, stocks and supplies.

It takes into account the nature of the responsibility, for example, safekeeping, confidentiality and security; deployment and degree of direct control; maintenance and repair; ordering, purchasing and replacement authority; planning, organising and long term development of the physical resources.

The maintenance of accurate records and data of any form is considered to be level 2. Many office jobs have been given level 2 responsibility for this reason. The post which orders small items of stationery etc is still considered to be level 2 responsibility covered under the either/or conditions of the level on blue pages.

Creating spreadsheets, and other applications etc for your own personal use would still be level 2. The creation of IT applications with a larger sphere of influence than own service area and used by other people may take this factor to level 3.

Checking of confidential information which has an impact of a wide range of people, and/or where accuracy is extremely important would be level 3 e.g. Personnel of Finance jobs. This may also apply to those posts where there is a responsibility for others producing large amounts of information, where there is a responsibility on the job holder for checking, validating and ensuring consistency to aid the appropriate decision making processes.

To take it to level 4 there needs to be an impact on a wider area, so a payroll manager for example would be level 4 due to the volume and importance of the information being handled.

To score higher than level 4 you would need to have a major direct responsibility for physical resources in the county.

In terms of responsibility for buildings, a key-holder would score level 2, and the person with responsibility for the security and maintenance of the building would get level 3 if it is just one site, or a few small sites, (e.g. in a school).

If the jobholder has responsibility for a large number of high value properties in a variety of locations, it would come under level 4.

### **Working Conditions**

This factor measures exposure to disagreeable, unpleasant, uncomfortable or hazardous working conditions arising from the environment or from work with people.

It covers the frequency, duration and nature of conditions, such as dust, dirt, temperature extremes and variations, humidity, noise, vibration, fumes and smells, human or animal waste steam, smoke, grease or oil, inclement weather, lack of privacy or isolation, and the risk of illness or injury arising from exposure to diseases, toxic substances, machinery or work locations. It also covers abuse, aggression and risk of injury from people.

This factor is based on frequency, most office based staff come under level 1, as their exposure to disagreeable conditions is minimal.

Taking complaints from the public on a regular basis would be level 2, as it may involve considerable verbal abuse. Receiving occasional verbal abuse would only be level 1, as it is not a regular feature of the job.

Residential Social Worker should be level 4 or 5 for people related behaviour as it is targeted at the individual worker.

Highways Inspectors have to be out everyday but are in the car most of the time so they would be level 3.

Many jobs have control over their environment, and can choose whether to be outside or not so score level 1. Some like School Crossing Patrol have no choice but to be outside at a particular time, whatever the weather, so score level 4.

In Social and Health Care the working conditions are generally level 2 due to interaction with the client group. Nursery Nurses and Special Needs Teaching Assistants will also score more highly due to the toileting etc that is involved which is not a standard part of the job in a mainstream school setting.