

University of Cincinnati

Business/Fiscal  
Pay Program  
Policies and Procedures Manual

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# Overview

The Business/Fiscal Pay Program is comprised of eight pay bands for positions in the fiscal, accounting, business and grant classifications positions at the University of Cincinnati: Accountant, Business Administrator, Controller, Business Affairs, Financial Administrator, Financial Analyst, Grant Administrator, and Treasurer.

Unclassified exempt positions within the Business/Fiscal Pay Program include full-time positions that are directly responsible for the oversight and monitoring functions of various levels of budgets and grants at the University of Cincinnati. This program is for those classifications that exercise a substantial degree of independence of actions, analyze and revise fiscal systems as necessary, and implement university policy on a comprehensive basis.

Each band is broadly defined to encompass all exempt job levels, from entry level to the most senior. Broadly defining business/fiscal work has several advantages. These definitions provide more flexibility in assigning work than do discrete job descriptions. They support flat organizational structures. Bands rather than individual salary schedules are more likely to keep pace with rapid changes in the market than narrowly defined classes, and they provide a management tool for promoting and recognizing skill and professional development. Bands also better describe the natural, fluid progression and skill development of financial employees than do narrowly defined classifications.

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## Business/Fiscal Skill Level Overview

### What are Skill Levels?

Skill levels refer to the characteristics of positions and the accomplishments that are required for successful job performance. There are three skill levels within each band.

Just as the band series more broadly defines fiscal functions, the use of skill levels supports a broader concept of “the job.”

In the Business/Fiscal Pay Program, minimum qualifications and skill levels differentiate entry-level positions from those at the more advanced professional practice levels.

The three skill levels used for the Business/Fiscal Pay Program are:

- Skill Level 1 (SL1)
- Skill Level 2 (SL2)
- Skill Level 3 (SL3)

Employees must meet the minimum qualifications of the level they are assigned.

The *Minimum Qualifications Guideline* describes the minimum qualifications for each skill level within each band. Each job or role within a band may have more specific minimum qualifications regarding financial expertise and/or experience.

## SKILL LEVEL 1 POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES

### Skill Level 1 positions:

- Are of minimal to moderate complexity;
- Demand some degree of fiscal, problem solving, training, and team coordination responsibilities; and
- Have some degree of responsibility for interpretation and communication of information, ideas and instructions.

### Skill Level 1 employees:

- Must meet minimum qualifications of the band;
- Typically have a basic knowledge of the assigned specialty area, including standard principles and terminology.

## SKILL LEVEL 2 POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES

### Skill Level 2 positions:

- Have the majority of job functions in one or more fiscal area(s);
- Demand multiple fiscal assignments, problem solving, team coordination, work lead and/or training functions; and
- Need minimal to moderate supervision; and
- Entail work assignments that are of moderate to high complexity and require:
  - A wide range of problem solving
  - Development of practical and thorough solutions
  - Proactive efforts
  - Exploration and adaptation of changing financial systems
  - Identification, evaluation and resolution of routine and non-routine problems
  - Integration, coordination and interpretation of fiscal data.

### Skill Level 2 employees:

- Must meet minimum qualifications of the band;
- Must possess the business/fiscal experience to be fully proficient in performing most or all work assignments; and
- Must possess basic fiscal knowledge of the assigned specialty area, including general principles, theories and practice.
- Skill Level 2 employees cannot *voluntarily* move back to a Skill Level 1 and remain in the same position.
- Skill Level 2 employees may move *through competitive recruitment* from a Skill Level 2 position into a different Business/Fiscal band.

## SKILL LEVEL 3 POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES

### Skill Level 3 positions:

- Engage in functions where the majority of job assignments involve complex and exceptionally difficult problems;
- Require advanced and comprehensive fiscal knowledge in one or more specialty areas;
- Require anticipation of customer and system needs, along with formulation and implementation of plans to meet these needs;
- Require development of solutions that combine information and ideas in new and unprecedented ways;
- Entail work assignments that generally include team coordination, project planning, strategic planning, work lead or training functions; and
- Work at a high level of independence.

### Skill Level 3 employees:

- Must understand problems from a broad, interactive perspective; and
- Possess substantial knowledge of other specialties and ability to integrate this knowledge;

In addition to performing the previously described types of work, Skill Level 3 employees **must meet all of the following conditions:**

- Possess an ability to function as either the financial expert in a single highly complex and integrated financial area, or as the financial expert in multiple complex financial areas.
- Possess an underlying business/fiscal breadth of knowledge and applied ability such that they are capable of functioning at an expert level in a related area in a relatively short period of time.

- Be viewed as an industry expert and role model to peers both within and external to the organization, based on certifications, awards, and other honors.

## Special requirements & other program issues:

Movement to a higher skill level is based on achievement of all skill level requirements and departmental need.

It is possible for employees to move to a *lower* skill level in their current band or in another band, either voluntarily (Skill Level 3 to Skill Level 2 only) or through competitive recruitment (to whichever Skill Level is appropriate). A Skill Level 3 employee, with the approval of management, may voluntarily move to Skill Level 2 and remain in the same job, typically with a lessening of function, duties and salary, if appropriate. A review by the VP designee and HR/Total Compensation & Wellness is required.

## Determining an Employee's Skill Level

There are eight pay bands: Accountant, Business Administrator, Controller, Business Affairs, Financial Administrator, Financial Analyst, Grant Administrator, and Treasurer. Each band has different *Skill Level Guidelines*.

An individual is placed within a band at a level based on a comparison of the individual's skills and minimum qualifications against the overall requirements of the position being performed. Skill level recommendations are the responsibility of the immediate supervisor but should be determined in conjunction with the employee. The supervisor and the employee should discuss the employee's skill level. Any time a skill level is changed, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to obtain the employee's signature, thus notifying the employee of the change.

When skill level movement is under consideration, typically a salary adjustment is warranted. If movement from Skill Level 2 to Skill Level 3 is being considered, it first must be determined if the university has a need for additional staff at Skill Level 3, which requires approval of the VP designee.

An individual may be working at different skill levels in varying work assignments. To qualify for a particular level, the individual must be able to fully demonstrate to the satisfaction of his/her supervisor 100% of the skills for that level in that position.

Promotional increases in skill level are permitted after the first six months an individual is in a position. Decreases in skill level are permitted in the first six months as indicated in this manual.

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# Roles and Responsibilities

Identified below are the associated roles and responsibilities required in administering the Business/Fiscal Pay Program:

## **Supervisor**

- Assess and recommend skill level of incumbents, new hires and transfers
- Assure equitable and non-discriminatory application of all policies
- Conduct formal annual performance review including skill level review
- Recommend salary adjustments based on growth of skills, annual review, new skill level attainment, certifications, etc.
- Provide informal performance feedback throughout the year to the employee
- Make an initial assignment of band for new positions
- Screen resumes for related job skills and minimum qualifications

## **Manager or Department Head**

- Review employee appeals regarding skill level placement or salary increase recommendations
- Recommend whether the department needs additional employees at various skill levels
- Review and approve all pay decisions within University policies (subject to audit)

## **VP Designee**

- Implement program policies and procedures and assure that policies are being followed within the VP area
- Approve skill level & submit Personnel Maintenance Request (PMR) Form to the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness
- Review and approve determination of department need for additional staff at various skill levels
- Review employee's request and department's recommendation to reduce from SL3 to SL2 in consultation with Labor Relations & Policy Development (salary to be reviewed by HR/Total Compensation & Wellness and VP designee)
- Review and approve Business/Fiscal Questionnaire
- Review and approve new employee's starting salary within the  $\pm 20\%$  range of target market
- Review, approve, and monitor to assure that salaries remain **within** band and skill level range
- Submit pay exceptions outside policy to the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness

## **Office of Total Compensation & Wellness**

- Oversee and monitor the implementation of the Business/Fiscal Pay Program
- Conduct periodic audits of pay practices for Business/Fiscal positions to ensure policies are being implemented in a fair, unbiased and equitable manner

- Provide update of Business/Fiscal target market data (no less than annually)

### **Joint Responsibilities between HR/Total Compensation & Wellness and VP Designee**

- Consult with departments with regard to Business/Fiscal Pay Program
- Review and approve all exceptions to University policy – HR Department is the final authority
- Review and revise policies as necessary for Business/Fiscal Pay Program
- Review salary for individual moving from SL3 to SL2
- Review and approve starting salaries that fall outside the  $\pm 20\%$  range of the target market salary

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## Miscellaneous Information

### University Policies

Unless specifically described differently within this document, all university policies apply to employees included in and paid under the guidelines of the Business/Fiscal Pay Program. Labor Relations & Policy Development should review any issues of performance and/or corrective action, prior to implementation.

### Equal Employment Statement

The University of Cincinnati reaffirms its policy that discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, and status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era will not be practiced in any of its programs or activities. Furthermore, where past or present discrimination continues to have an adverse impact upon protected class members, such as minority groups, women, disabled, Vietnam era veterans, or disabled veterans, the University will implement its policy of equal opportunity for all.

### Business/Fiscal Job Classification Table

A new *Job Classification Table* has been created to accommodate the Business/Fiscal Pay Program. It appears on the HR website at [www.uc.edu/hr](http://www.uc.edu/hr) under **Compensation**.

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# Salary Structure

The Business/Fiscal pay structure is comprised of a broad pay range for each band. Minimum and maximum pay rates are established for each band pay range.

Employees will be paid at least the minimum of the skill level to which assigned. An employee's salary cannot exceed the maximum of the skill level to which assigned. The only exception to this will be for an employee who transfers from one band to another with existing pay higher than the maximum of the skill level to which newly assigned.

If a transferring employee's pay level exceeds the maximum of the assigned skill level in the new position, no increase to the base salary may be granted until the base salary falls within the range of the assigned skill level.

In that case the employee and supervisor will agree on an acceptable period of time in which the employee will demonstrate skills at the higher level. If performance level is not achieved within that time period, the individual's salary shall be reduced as determined by Total Compensation & Wellness.

An employee currently paid the maximum amount for a position may be eligible for a lump sum award based on performance.

## Progression through the Salary/Band Structure

Progression through the pay ranges occurs primarily as a result of:

- Individual performance-based salary increases
- Acquiring and applying higher level responsibilities
- Taking on more complex work assignments
- Acquiring **relevant** certifications

Process for movement through the salary structure and/or to a different skill level:

1. Review and document job performance
2. Document rationale for salary adjustment
3. Contact VP/VP designee for target market salary
4. Review internal equity and determine salary according to Business/Fiscal Pay Program Policies & Procedures
5. Obtain VP/VP designee approval on the Personnel Change Request (PCR) Form and submit to HR/Human Resources Service Center to effect the salary adjustment

### Progression to a different band:

- Assuming a position within a different band

### Process for movement to a different band:

1. Review and document job performance
2. Complete a Business/Fiscal Questionnaire, documenting duties and rationale for the band change
3. Obtain VP/VP designee approval
4. Submit to HR/Total Compensation & Wellness for final review and determination
5. If duties have changed more than 50%, position must be posted

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## Pay Practices

This section describes the compensation effects of various events. Exceptions to policy must also be reviewed and approved by the VP designee and the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness.

### Creating a New Position

A supervisor who wishes to create a new position to be included in the Business/Fiscal Pay Program must, submit a *Business/Fiscal Band Questionnaire* to the VP designee for approval, and forward it to the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness for disposition. A copy of the determination letter must be attached to the Position Maintenance Request (PMR) Form.

### Starting Salary for Competitive Recruitment

The hiring supervisor/manager has the authority, with VP designee approval, to determine an equitable starting salary within  $\pm 20\%$  range of the target market salary for that position. The salary offer should be based on an assessment of the candidate's skill level, education, background, departmental equity and target market salary. Any salary more or less than 20% from the target market salary also requires approval from the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness.

### Failure to Perform Stated Skill Level

All unclassified exempt employees of the University of Cincinnati serve at-will, that is, at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees. As an at-will employee, both the employee and the University remain free to end employment for any or no reason.

## Skill Level Changes

An employee is eligible for a pay adjustment for advancing to a higher skill level. The increase will be at least the amount required to bring pay to the minimum of the new skill level.

## Timing of Base Pay Changes

Changes to base pay for skill advancement, performance, and new licensure or certifications are typically made at the time of the annual performance review; however, they can be effective at any time. In addition, when market trends indicate the need for special adjustments and band increases, base pay increases can be authorized by the VP designee using available department budget dollars.

## ADL / TWL Issues

Current university policies regarding additional compensation for temporary assignments apply to the Business/Fiscal bands as well. Contact the HR/Total Compensation & Wellness.

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# New Employees

## Recruitment

Competitive recruitment is required any time a new position is established or a vacant position is to be filled. Competitive recruitment should be considered whenever there is a significant and permanent change in job function involving at least 50% of the job duties. The redefined job may or may not remain at the same skill level. More subtle or gradual job changes, where the employee remains in the same position while assuming increased, more complex job responsibilities, do not require competitive recruitment but may warrant a salary increase.

When it is time to recruit new employees to an open position, the hiring supervisor/manager should identify job requirements at two levels:

- The acceptable minimum qualifications including education and years of experience and financial related job skills
- The ideal knowledge, skills and abilities including specific business and financial management expertise

The Human Resources Service Center will screen out any applicants who do not meet the minimum education and experience qualifications as advertised in the job listing. HR/Human Resources Service Center will forward all applicants who pass initial screening to the hiring

supervisor/manager for review. The hiring supervisor/manager must send HR/Human Resources Service Center a list of those applicants not selected.

During the interview, the interviewer should ask enough questions to determine the preferred candidate's skill level. This is necessary in order to assign an appropriate starting salary, which must fall within the assigned skill level range.

Although applicants must meet only the minimum qualifications of the position, a newly hired employee may exceed one or more of the minimum qualifications. For purposes of employee skill determination, exceeding minimum qualifications or minimum experience requirements does not necessarily mean that the employee should be placed at the next higher skill level. Such employee, however, may be offered a salary above the minimum.

For new hires, refer to the *Offer Letter* that is to be used for Business/Fiscal positions. In recruiting for Business/Fiscal positions, departmental management has the authority to award a monetary sign-on bonus up to \$2000 as part of the compensation package. Generally, sign-on bonuses are used as an additional incentive to gain acceptance of an employment offer. Some are paid in stages after a number of days or months of employment, while others are paid on the employee's first paycheck. Supervisors/managers should document for the file their justifiable reasons for using sign-on bonuses.

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## Employee Career Progression

Career progression is a responsibility shared by both the employee and the immediate supervisor. Employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor to plan the activities and functions that will lead to skill development. Employees are encouraged to set and follow through with training and development goals.

To support career progression in as equitable a manner as possible, supervisors, managers and directors are encouraged to announce opportunities within the work area that will allow interested and qualified employees to benefit from internal development opportunities. Employees also are encouraged to take advantage of competitive recruitment opportunities in other University financial positions.

Employees are encouraged to communicate openly and frequently with their immediate supervisor concerning skill development goals. At a minimum, training, development and career progression should be discussed annually as part of the performance appraisal process. Other unofficial meetings during the performance cycle are encouraged to facilitate communication between supervisor and employee about current performance, progress toward skill development and career plans.

Employees may take advantage of opportunities for on-the-job training, formal training, performing higher-level duties, applying for position vacancies that expand their knowledge base

and other opportunities to demonstrate increased skills. Demonstrating increased skills is one way employees may increase their value to UC and become eligible for salary increases. The underlying philosophy of the program is to reward performance and productivity among current employees.