



## Human Resources: Policy on acting-up and honoraria

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 We recognise the need for employees, on occasions, to temporarily undertake additional duties or responsibilities of a higher graded role for a limited period of time

## 2. Aim

- 2.1 Employees are entitled to be rewarded fairly for the work they have been asked to undertake, which is above and beyond the scope of their current grade of their role. It is important that this policy is applied in all situations to ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees; it does not apply to casual workers, agency staff or consultants.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Acting up** payments may be defined as a payment given to an employee where they are asked to undertake the full range of duties and responsibilities, which are considered to be of a higher level than the substantive grade of their post, on a temporary basis.
- 4.2 **Honorarium** payments may be defined as a payment given to an employee being asked to undertake specific duties and/or responsibilities, which are considered to be of a higher level than the substantive grade of their post, on a temporary basis.

## 5. Acting-up

- 5.1 The timescale of the acting-up period should be discussed with the employee and confirmed in writing. The temporary arrangement should not exceed 9 months, without re-approval, and must be reviewed at 5 months.
- 5.2 With the exception of long-term sickness absence, most instances of long-term absences are pre-planned. Arrangements to cover the post should therefore be made at the earliest opportunity in order to ensure the most appropriate cover.

- 5.3 Examples of when to apply an acting-up payment:

- Temporarily filling a post until a substantive appointment can be made.
- Covering a post while another employee is on extended leave arrangements e.g. maternity leave, adoption leave, career break etc.
- Filling a role to cover long-term sickness absence (approx. at least 4 weeks).
- Carrying out a specific piece of work with a definitive end.

- 5.4 Selection process for acting-up

If it is clear in the employee's role profile for them to deputise, then they should be asked, in the first instance, to act-up.

However, in the case that one or more employees have this specified in their role profile to deputise for the same manager, it may be necessary for a selection process to take place, whereby these employees would complete an Expression of Interest for this temporary arrangement. Please seek further advice from your HR Adviser.

If there is no obvious employee to take on the work, the line manager should bring the opportunity to the attention of employees within the team, and then advertise more widely as necessary.

An acting-up payment is a monthly payment and it commences from the day the arrangement starts.

The salary should be no higher than the mid-point of the grade.

Employees who partially act-up should be given an honorarium payment and not an acting-up payment.

Line managers need to ensure that any acting-up duties and responsibilities are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

## **6. Honoraria**

- 6.1 Honoraria payments should not be paid where additional work is undertaken which is of a similar nature to the employee's existing role profile and/or commensurate with the grade for the post.
- 6.2 Honoraria payments are not applicable where an employee covers the full duties of a higher-graded role. In these circumstances, the line manager should consider an acting-up payment.
- 6.3 As with acting-up payments, the timescale of an honorarium should be discussed with the employee and confirmed in writing. This temporary arrangement should not exceed 9 months, without re-approval, and must be reviewed at 5 months.
- 6.4 Reasons for considering an honorarium
  - Where there is a need for a specific piece of work to be carried out which may last for weeks/several months that is outside the normal scope of the employee's role.
  - Where an employee is asked to undertake only a proportion of additional duties at a higher-graded post in addition to their substantive duties.
  - To undertake extra work that is particularly demanding.
  - To operate in a difficult or unusual work context in comparison to their normal duties.
- 6.5 In determining the honoraria, the payment will need to be proportionate to the following factors:
  - The difference in grading between the role requiring cover and the job grade of the employee selected to cover.
  - The percentage of additional work to be undertaken.
  - The level of responsibility involved.
  - The duration of the period of absence. A clear start and end date will be agreed before payment is made and duties commence.
  - The level of support provided to the covering employee.

- 6.6 Line managers need to ensure that any additional duties are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- 6.7 Honorarium payments may either be paid as a lump sum for a one-off specific piece of work or paid monthly where the requirement for the additional work lasts several months.

## **7. Authorisation process and timescales**

- 7.1 The line manager/budget holder must complete the relevant form and submit to the monthly HR-Finance meeting for approval.
- 7.2 Depending on the reasons, both acting-up and honorarium arrangements should only be considered when an employee is asked to undertake duties for more than 4 weeks in duration.
- 7.3 Such arrangements should last no longer than 9 months in most circumstances.
- 7.4 Line managers should review all arrangements at the 5-month stage
- 7.5 If it is anticipated that the arrangements will continue beyond a 9-month period, the line manager, with guidance from their HR Adviser, should make a decision whether to:
- Continue for a further specified period (but no longer than a further 3 months);
  - Advertise as a temporary secondment; or
  - Advertise as a permanent role.

## **8. Responsibilities**

- 8.1 The line manager must ensure they:
- Apply this policy consistently and fairly.
  - Monitor the period of acting up to ensure that the payment is still justified.
  - Meet review periods.
  - Follow the current authorisation process.
- 8.2 People Management:
- Ensure that this policy is kept up-to-date and fit for purpose.
  - Write to the employee confirming any acting-up or honoraria payment with a copy placed on their personal file.
  - Produce quarterly reports for the Senior Management Team in order to monitor these payments.

## **9. Relevant legislation and links to other policies and guidance**

- 9.1 Relevant legislation:
- Equality Act 2010
- 9.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Incentives policy
  - Recruitment and selection guidance

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