

**The University of Queensland**  
**Classification Guidelines for**  
**Research-Related General Staff Positions**  
**(HEW Levels 1 - 9).**

## **PART 1 - Definitions**

The qualification levels that are referred to in these guidelines are defined as follows:

### **Qualifications**

**Year 12:** Completion of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, usually in Year 12 of secondary school.

**Trade certificate:** Completion of an apprenticeship, normally of four years duration, or equivalent recognition, eg Certificate III.

**Post-trade certificate:** A course of study over and above a trade certificate and less than a Certificate IV.

**Certificates I and II:** Courses that recognise basic vocational skills and knowledge, without a Year 12 prerequisite.

**Certificates III:** A course that provides a range of well-developed skills and is comparable to a trade certificate.

**Certificate IV:** A course that provides greater breadth and depth of skill and knowledge and is comparable to a two year part time post-Year 12 or post-trade certificate course.

**Diploma:** A course at a higher education or vocational educational and training institution, typically equivalent to two years full time post-Year 12 study.

**Advanced Diploma:** A course at a higher education or vocational educational and training institution, typically equivalent to three years full time post-Year 12 study.

**Degree:** A recognised degree from a higher education institution, often completed in three or four years, and sometimes combined with a one year diploma.

**Postgraduate Degree:** A recognised postgraduate degree, over and above a degree as defined above.

**Note:** Previously recognised qualifications obtained prior to the implementation of the Australian Qualifications Framework continue to be recognised. The above definitions also include equivalent recognised overseas qualifications.

## **PART 2 - Position Classification Guidelines**

The training level or qualification and indicative tasks/activities, to be used as guidelines in determining the classification level of a position, are as follows:

### **General Assistant (Research) (HEW Level 1)**

#### **Training Level or Qualifications**

General Assistants (Research) (HEW Level 1) would not be required to have formal qualifications or work experience upon engagement.

General Assistants (Research) engaged at the base may need to be provided with structured on the job training.

#### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

Perform a range of manual tasks.

### **General Assistant (Research) (HEW Level 2)**

#### **Training Level or Qualifications**

General Assistants (Research) (HEW Level 2) shall typically require a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge, training or experience relevant to the duties to be performed, or

- completion of year 12 without work experience, or
- completion of Certificates I or II with work related experience, or
- an equivalent combination of experience and training.

#### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

General Assistants (Research) at this level may undertake duties involving straightforward data entry and retrieval, and laboratory or technical work.

### **Assistant Research Technician (HEW Level 3)**

#### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Assistant Research Technicians (HEW Level 3) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training in clerical/administrative, trades or technical functions equivalent to:

- completion of a trades certificate or Certificate III, or
- completion of Year 12 or a Certificate II, with relevant work experience, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

Assistant Research Technicians (HEW Level 3) may typically perform duties which require further on the job training or knowledge and training equivalent to progress toward completion of a Certificate IV or Diploma.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

As an Assistant Research Technician functioning in a technical/laboratory position:

- order supplies.
- assist in setting up routine experiments.
- monitor experiments for report to the Chief Investigator or senior research staff.
- assist with the preparation of specimens.
- feed and care for animals.

Staff would be expected to perform a greater range and complexity of tasks as they progressed through the level and obtained further training.

In clerical positions:

- use in a standard manner a word processing package (including store and retrieve documents, key and set out correspondence and reports, merge, move and copy; use columns, tables and basic graphics) or an established spreadsheet or database application.
- provide clerical support to senior research staff, including set up meetings, and answer straightforward inquiries.
- process accounts for payment.

An Assistant Research Technician (HEW Level 3) may, as directed by the Chief Investigator or a more senior member of the research staff:

- undertake library or archival work.
- process and collate information and data.
- prepare bibliographies.
- assist with surveys, observations, field trials, tests and associated research activity.

## **Research Technician (HEW Level 4)**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Research Technicians (HEW Level 4) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- completion of a diploma level qualification with relevant work related experience, or
- completion of a Certificate IV with relevant work experience, or
- completion of a post-trades certificate and extensive relevant experience and on the job training, or

- completion of a Certificate III with extensive relevant work experience, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

As a Research Technician in a trades related position:

- work on complex engineering or interconnected electrical circuits.
- exercise high precision trades skills using various materials and/or specialised techniques.

Similarly, in technical positions:

- develop new equipment to criteria developed and specified by others.
- under routine direction, assist in the conduct of major experiments and research programs and/or in setting up and using equipment for a range of experiments and demonstrations.
- operate equipment and prepare reports of a technical nature, as directed.

In administrative/secretarial positions:

- be able to undertake a full range of word processing functions, including mathematical formulae and symbols, manipulation of text and layout in desktop publishing software and use of a range of word processing packages if required.
- be responsible for providing a full range of secretarial services in a research unit
- plan, set up spreadsheets or data base applications and maintain records.
- provide information to postgraduate research students.

A Research Technician (HEW Level 4) may, as directed by the Chief Investigator or a more senior member of the research staff:

- carry out or participate in surveys, investigations, analyses, tests, observations or field trials
- undertake library or archival searches or related activities
- undertake case studies and collate relevant information assist with data analysis.
- Undertake research projects with supervision.

## **Senior Research Technician (HEW Level 5)**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Senior Research Technicians (HEW Level 5) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- completion of a degree without subsequent relevant work experience, or
- completion of an advanced diploma qualification and at least 1 years subsequent relevant work experience, or

- completion of a diploma qualification and at least 2 years subsequent relevant work experience, or
- completion of a Certificate IV and extensive relevant work experience, or
- completion of a post-trades certificate and extensive (typically more than 2 years) relevant experience as a technician, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

In professional positions, and under professional supervision, work as part of a research team in a support role.

In technical positions:

- develop new equipment to general specifications.
- under general direction, assist in the conduct of major experiments and research programs and/or in setting up and using complex equipment for a range of experiments and demonstrations.
- prepare reports of a technical nature.

A Senior Research Technician (HEW Level 5) may:

- carry out tasks described for a HEW Level 4, but at a more advanced level
- draft reports on the research tasks carried out.
- Provide authoritative advice within area of specialisation
- Be given a research project, with guidance from senior staff.

## **Research Assistant (HEW Level 6)**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Research Assistants (HEW Level 6) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- a degree with subsequent relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and specialist expertise or broad knowledge in technical or administrative fields,  
or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

In technical positions:

- provide highly specialised technical services
- set up complex experiments

- design and construct complex or unusual equipment to specifications
- assist postgraduate students with their laboratory requirements
- install, repair and/or provide computer services in a research setting
- manage a research laboratory or a field station.

In administrative positions:

- provide financial, policy and planning advice
- monitor (research grant) expenditure against a budget in the organisational context of a school or small faculty

In professional positions:

- work as part of a research team.

A Research Assistant (HEW Level 6) may, while receiving broad direction from the Chief Investigator:

- design and conduct standard research experiments, case studies and questionnaires
- evaluate and interpret the results for presentation to the Chief Investigator as analysed data
- prepare reports resulting from surveys, investigations, tests, field trials, observations and related activities
- undertake a range of computer programming tasks
- provide documentation and assistance to computer users
- analyse less complex user and system requirements

## **Senior Research Assistant (HEW Level 7)**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Senior Research Assistants (HEW Level 7) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- a degree with at least 4 years subsequent relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and management expertise in technical or administrative fields, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

Senior Research Assistants (HEW Level 7) are normally responsible for meeting objectives set by the Chief Investigator which may include the prosecution of research tasks, preparation of reports, data analysis and staff supervision. A Senior Research Assistant may be required to apply high level technical skills or experience in a particular field.

In technical management positions this may entail:

- the management of research facilities for a School or Centre.
- the application of acknowledged expertise in a specialised area.
- or performing a combination of technical management and specialist research tasks.

In professional positions this may entail work as part of a research team.

A senior research assistant (HEW Level 7) may, while receiving broad direction from the chief investigator of the project or other senior investigator:

- design and conduct standard research experiments, case studies and questionnaires;
- evaluate and interpret the results of presentation to the chief investigator or other senior investigator as analysed data; or
- prepare reports resulting from surveys, investigations, tests, field trials, observations and related activities

## **Research Manager (HEW Level 8)<sup>1</sup>**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Research Managers (HEW Level 8) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- postgraduate qualifications or progress towards postgraduate qualifications and extensive relevant experience, or
- extensive experience and management expertise, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

As a general principle, Research Managers (HEW Level 8) are to be differentiated from Academic research appointments by virtue of the majority of their duties being in management, finance and administrative functions. Project management of research programs of significant size (in terms of funds under management, supervision of staff, coordination of fieldwork locally and overseas, project planning and budgeting under broad supervision of the chief investigator) will be a key feature of such positions.

A further distinction between a Research Manager (HEW Level 8) and those related to the Academic scales would be the ratio of management/administrative duties to research only activities. This split would typically be 75/25 – project management/research only duties. It would not normally be expected that a Research Manager would be named as a co-investigator on a project. In the role of project manager, a Research Manager would ensure continuity and compliance with project milestones during short periods of absence of the chief investigator.

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<sup>1</sup> The salary scales for HEW Level 8 equates with the Academic Level A (UQ Research Fellow) while HEW Level 9 almost equates with Academic Level B (lower points), UQ Research Fellow/UQ Senior Research Officer Grade 1.

Nevertheless, whilst there is a similarity in salary rates across HEW Level 8 & HEW Level 9 and Academic salary scales, a research-related general staff position at HEW Level 8 or HEW Level 9 will entail different duties from a research position on the Academic scale.

On medium size projects with several or more staff and a substantial non-salary budget (equipment, maintenance items, travel), a Research Manager would exercise financial and managerial discretion equivalent to a school manager (or research centre business manager) of a medium to large school.

## **Senior Research Manager (HEW Level 9)<sup>1</sup>**

### **Training Level or Qualifications**

Senior Research Managers (HEW Level 9) shall typically perform duties at a skill level which assumes and requires knowledge or training equivalent to:

- postgraduate qualifications and extensive relevant experience, or
- extensive management experience and proven management expertise, or
- an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.

### **Indicative Tasks/Activities**

The same indicative tasks/activities would be expected as for Research Manager (HEW Level 8), but would entail higher level problem-solving and accountability, commensurate with the higher level training level or qualifications specified for Senior Research Manager (HEW Level 9).

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<sup>1</sup> The salary scales for HEW Level 8 equates with the Academic Level A (UQ Research Fellow) while HEW Level 9 almost equates with Academic Level B (lower points), UQ Research Fellow/UQ Senior Research Officer Grade 1.

Nevertheless, while there is similarity in salary rates across HEW Level 8 & HEW Level 9 and Academic salary scales, a research-related general staff position at HEW Level 8 or HEW Level 9 will entail different duties from a research position on the Academic scale.