

Revised Promotions Policy For Technical Roles

Members will be aware that LTU and Group IT have agreed to revise the career progression policy, which was introduced last year, to enable staff at Grades F, G and H performing certain technical roles to be promoted without the need to move roles.

All eligible staff will be invited to 1:1 discussions with their Line Managers to determine whether their current capabilities, knowledge and skills meet the criteria for promotion to the next level. Staff must be given adequate time to enable them to prepare for the meeting.

The criteria that will be used are as follows:

- BSC rating - At least 'met expectations' aggregate rating for previous 12 months. (Applicants with ratings above 'Met' will be considered as stronger applications).
- Experience to date (last 3 years).
- Evidence against the majority of the grade criteria accountabilities for higher grade.
- 3 key technical achievements in past year.
- Technical training and development activities completed in last 12 months.

- Increased accountabilities, scope and size of role performed at higher grade.

For example, if you are currently a Grade F Technical Specialist and believe that you're performing the role of a Grade E Technical Specialist then you must be prepared to justify that to your Line Manager during your 1:1 meeting and any subsequent meetings. We would suggest to members they ensure they are able to provide examples to show that they meet at least the majority of the grade criteria accountabilities. This will be particularly important in those cases where you disagree with your Line Manager on your suitability for promotion to the next level.

The aim of the 1:1 meeting is to complete the Technical Promotions Application Form. If your Line Manager recommends your application then it will be assessed by a Review Panel and ultimately considered by the Directorate Decision Panel to sign off. If your Line Manager refuses to recommend you for promotion you should ask for a detailed explanation of his/her decision.

You should then discuss his/her explanation with the Union before deciding whether to use the grievance procedure. There will be no appeals mechanism for those individuals whose promotions are turned down by the Review Panel or Directorate Decision Panel and members of staff must wait six months to reapply.

If members need help in interpreting the grade criteria or would like to discuss their 1:1 meetings they can contact the Union's Bedford Office on 01234 262868.

Review of Tester Roles

Since the C & PF grading alignment exercise, the role accountabilities for Tester roles have been the subject of much controversy. A review of Tester roles was carried out following the alignment exercise and this confirmed that depending on the size and complexity of a project many of the accountabilities set out in the grade criteria could be undertaken by Testers at different grades. For example, only a Grade D can produce a Master Test Plan but if there is no Grade D assigned to a project then the plan would be carried out by a Grade E member of staff. Similarly, a Grade D often undertakes accountabilities that are normally undertaken by a Grade C. The review also showed that you could have Grade D members of staff undertaking Grade E responsibilities.

Following that review, which created more questions than it answered, it was agreed that the role accountabilities for Testers would be reconsidered taking into account the work actually done by Testers on the ground. LTU also pressed for a grade alignment exercise to ensure that

Testers were graded according to the work they could do rather than the work they were doing at a particular time. Not surprisingly, much of the work on Testers was put on hold during the voluntary severance / voluntary early retirement programme and subsequent reorganisations. However, a new Working Party has now been set up to look at the role accountabilities for Testers.

It's true to say that some of the more pressing cases for promotion amongst the Tester population will be resolved by the new promotions policy discussed above, but we believe a revised set of updated accountabilities, with Testers ultimately being aligned properly to the right grade, is the right way forward.

We will keep members informed on the progress of the review but in the meantime if members have any questions or comments they can contact LTU's Advice Line on 01234 262868 or email me at Mark.Brown@ltu.co.uk.

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