

LTU Agrees Regrading of Tester Roles

Background

Since the C & PF grading alignment exercise, the 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 had 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.

Grade Alignment

Following the re-writing of the new Tester accountabilities, which included input from the whole of the testing community, the next stage is to align Testers to those new accountabilities. The results of that realignment process will then form the basis of further discussions. That said we have initially agreed that where Testers are doing lower graded work the aim will be to move them to appropriately graded work within 2 months. Where individuals have been carrying out work of a higher grade for 6 months or more, and the expectation is that the member of staff will be achieving the majority of accountabilities at the higher level, then those individuals will be promoted to the higher grade with effect from 1st December 2006.

Thinking About Your New Grade

The accountabilities and skills for each of the Tester roles are set out in the grade criteria that have been sent to each Tester. We would advise staff read through the accountabilities carefully and to identify the grade criteria that best fits the level that either they are currently working at or have worked at in the last 12 months. As we have said already Testers don't need to meet all the accountabilities for the role but they must be able to demonstrate that at least the majority apply. Testers should seek a meeting with their Line Manager to discuss the completion of the review template. We would suggest to members who are looking to be aligned to a higher grade that before their meeting they ensure that they are able to provide examples to show that they meet at least the majority of the accountabilities.

Consistency Panel

Line Managers are responsible for undertaking the review and completing the agreed template for each Tester. When undertaking the review the Line Managers will only be looking at the work that has been undertaken by the Tester in the last 12 months. To ensure that all staff are treated fairly and that the process has been applied consistently across the community LTU and Group IT have agreed to set up a Consistency Panel. The panel will review all the grade alignments and will have the authority to question the individual decisions of line managers. LTU's nominee on the panel is Joanne Rutherford, who's been instrumental in driving this review of testing roles forward.

LTU Advice and Information

Members with any questions or comments on the new accountabilities and the realignment process can discuss those with either Joanne Rutherford, who can be contacted at Joanne.Rutherford@ltu.co.uk, or they can speak to a member of the Union's Advice Team on 01234 262868.

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