INTRODUCTION

This guide will provide instructions on how to complete the UA position description resource, as well as a general background on the uses and importance of a clear, accurate position description.

Why are position descriptions important?

Position descriptions are important because they document the essential functions and requirements associated with each position at the University. This information available facilitates mapping each position to the career architecture and ensures greater accuracy in many important activities, including:

Position Classification: to ensure that positions are assigned to the appropriate salary grades.

Market Pricing: to assist in determining the competitive rate of pay for the job.

Performance Evaluations: to ensure that the employee and supervisor have a clear, shared understanding of the position's responsibilities and requirements.

Recruiting: to help identify the most appropriately qualified candidates and provide new hires with a clear understanding of the responsibilities and requirements.

Who will be responsible for writing position descriptions?

Writing the position description should be a joint effort between employees and supervisors. Employees are encouraged to complete the position description resource and review it with their supervisor.

Working together ensures both employees and supervisors will have the opportunity to develop a description that accurately and clearly describes the essential functions and other content information, and that the content reflects the needs of the both department and the University.

It may be necessary for supervisors to complete position descriptions without employee feedback. This would be appropriate if an employee is new to the position, if the position is new or newly structured, and/or if the department is newly reorganized.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

THE LOGISTICS

Please access the resource at: https://uarizona.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2mWjRt6pG6Atrj7

- After the position description resource is started, it can be accessed for 30 days.
- Once the position description is submitted, it cannot be edited unless a new form is completed. Employees will receive an e-mail with their completed form responses.

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION RESOURCE – COMPLETING THE SURVEY

This section breaks the position description format down into its distinct elements and provides instructions and guidance on completing that section.

> **Position Tracking Information:** Details about the position such as title, reporting relationship, position code, etc.

- Use correct titles, not personal names, when referring to others.

- Consult with HR if you are uncertain about any of this information.

> **Position Summary:** A brief summary of the overall purpose of the position.

- Summarize the position's responsibilities and role in no more than 4 sentences.
  (Think of this as the "elevator speech." How would you describe your position to someone in a very short period of time?)

- If you are finding it difficult to summarize your position, proceed to the next section. You may find it is easier to complete the summary once you have worked through the more detailed descriptions of Primary Accountabilities and the other sections of the description.

- An example of a Position Summary for an Administrative Assistant might be:

  "This position supports the operations of the department by providing administrative assistance to the director and several managers. Oversees the day to day clerical activities of the office by planning and directing the work of student workers."

> **Principal Responsibilities:** A detailed description of the main tasks and duties for which a position is accountable.

• List up to five principal responsibilities, in descending order of importance and time required. The statement should indicate the end result for which the position is accountable and the related duties. <u>For example:</u>

– Maintain audio-visual equipment inventory by:

- *Tracking borrowed equipment*
- *Entering new equipment into the equipment log*
- *Ensuring the accuracy of the equipment inventory and database*

– Prepare monthly financial reports by:

- *Collecting and verifying financial data*
- *Entering current data into spreadsheets*
- *Running analysis reports*
- *Consolidating final figures into standard monthly financial reports*

• Focus on larger components of a job rather than on specific tasks. A task is the simplest/most basic element in a job while, job duties and responsibilities are a summary of those related tasks.

• In order to give an accurate picture of the relative importance of each responsibility, indicate the approximate percent of time that you spend annually on each.

– This may be challenging, and percentages will be a rough estimate, but this is important in describing a job's principal responsibilities.

– In general, any task with a percentage of less than 5% should not be included.

(If you have a function that requires less than 5% of your time, it is likely to be a subset of a broader function)

• When describing a principal responsibility, please use the following pattern

> **Action Word + Subject + Duties/Activities**

For example:

"Monitor department budget by maintaining accurate expense records."

Action word   *Subject*   *Duties/Activities*

Please refer to the Commonly Used Action Words for further position descriptions writing assistance.

> **Work Dimensions:** Detailed expectations for a position that provides a way to level jobs internally and externally.

THE WORK DIMENSIONS THAT WILL BE CONSIDERED POSITIONS MAPPING ARE:

Complexity of Work – Degree and difficulty level of problem solving and innovation required in the job.

Communication – Scope and nature of internal and external interpersonal contact.

Operational Latitude & Impact – Extent of oversight for and implications of decision making required of the job.

Knowledge, Education & Experience – Understanding of the job content required.

Leadership and Influence – Scope of management responsibilities and impact with respect to strategy, operations, and people.

When writing the position description, it is important to focus on the duties and qualifications for the position, not the current incumbent in the position.

Once the position description is completed, it should be used as a resource to facilitate the discussions between employees and their supervisor for how their position aligns to the career architecture.