TAFE Know Your Rights: Above base grade



Main clauses and documents

- For information on above minimum commencement salaries and base grade appointments see clauses 30.1 (b) and 30.1 (c) of the ***Western Australian TAFE Lecturers' General Agreement 2023***.
- For more details information read the **STERC – Memorandum of Understanding – Above Base Grade (ABG)** *in full before applying for an ABG*. A copy of this MOU can be found on the college intranet or through the union via Member Assist.
- Each college will have process and application documents on their intranet. College documents must adhere to the requirements of the Agreement and the **STERC – Memorandum of Understanding – Above Base Grade (ABG)**.

Applying for an ABG

- A new lecturer must be given a copy of the **STERC – Memorandum of Understanding – Above Base Grade (ABG)** no later than four weeks following their appointment to the college.
- If a lecturer wishes to be appointed further up the grade scale, they will need to submit an Above Base Grade (ABG) application. Lecturers need to organise an ABG application as soon as possible after being appointed. Lecturers have *six months* to submit an application.

Minimum commencement salaries

The minimum required qualifications and experience for appointment to salary grade 1 and grade 2 are detailed in **Clause 30 – Salaries and classifications**, specifically in the table in clause 30.1 (a) as found below. Note that lecturers can be appointed to grade 2, as a minimum, with seven years relevant industry experience.

Recognition of casual service

A lecturer's prior hours of casual service must be taken into account in determining the commencement salary, in

accordance with the provisions of the STERC Above Base Grade Policy.

Casual service claimed must:

- Equate to a minimum of 500 lecturing hours for one grade, or 100 days, whichever is the lesser time; 1000 lecturing hours, or 200 days, whichever is the lesser for two grades and so on, and
- Be continuous in nature (no break of more then six months between lecturing dates).

Lecturers should request a statement of casual hours from their college/s (or other such proof of casual hours worked) and email this to their manager and human resources just prior to, or as soon as possible after, appointment as a fixed term contract or permanent lecturer. Lecturers need to be persistent to ensure their casual service has been counted in determining their starting salary. Contact the union through Member Assist if the matter is not progressed in a timely manner.

Other criteria

In addition to recognising casual service, the commencement salary of new lecturers can be negotiated beyond the minimum rate having regard to the skills, knowledge and experience the future lecturer brings to the position.

The **STERC – Memorandum of Understanding – Above Base Grade (ABG)** states that the “skills, knowledge and experiences of the employee should be the primary focus of an ABG assessment and not the past remuneration of an employee”.

According to the STERC MOU, an application for an ABG should address one or more of the following:

- Higher levels of skills, knowledge and/or industry experience in relation to the years of service in the industry area.
- Recruitment difficulties (e.g. a few suitable applicants from an externally advertised position).
- Prior teaching at a school or university.
- Market forces (higher remuneration) in specialised areas – it is recognised that the workforce from which a college can recruit potential lecturers who have specialised qualifications, skills and experience may, at a particular point in time be limited due to market demands and normal business cycles. Managers should be satisfied that the prospective employee was earning in excess of that on offer and equivalent or greater than that requested by obtaining written proof of the sustained level of remuneration previously held (could be in the form group certificate, tax statement, formal pay slips or the documents that may provide sufficient evidence to support and application).
- Possession of very specialised expertise unavailable elsewhere.
- Prior lecturing service at the college. Salary classification grades (other than Principal Lecturer) will be maintained between appointments at the same college where the interval between appointments is no greater than two years, provided up to date knowledge and skills are maintained.
- Prior lecturing service at another college/s. Salary classification grades (other than ALSs appointed after 31 December 1998 and Principal Lecturer) will be maintained between appointments at different colleges where the interval between appointments is no greater than two years, provided up to date knowledge and skills are maintained.

Clause 30 – Salaries and classifications

30.1. **Lecturer**

(a) A lecturer’s minimum commencement salary grade will be in accordance with the following:

Commencement Grade	*Minimum Required Qualifications / Experience*
Grade 1	*5 years industry experience and;* *a) certificate level qualification, or* *b) basic qualifications and/or criteria deemed as necessary by the college to perform the position* *OR* *Diploma / Advanced Diploma* *OR* *Tertiary Degree*
Grade 2	*Higher teaching qualification (e.g. Bachelor's Degree, Graduate Diploma, Masters); or 7 years relevant industry experience*

(b) A lecturer's prior hours of casual service will be taken into account in determining the commencement salary, in accordance with the provisions of the STERC Above Base Grade Policy.

(c) At the discretion of the Employer the commencement salary of new Employees may be negotiated beyond the minimum rate having regard to the skills, knowledge and experience the future Employee brings to the position.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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