

A Guide for Writing Non Union Employee Job Descriptions

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HRHSE

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Introduction

Job descriptions serve many purposes. They are used for job evaluation, recruitment, performance management, competency development, training needs identification, work fitness assessment and employee relations.

A well-written job description clearly articulates job accountabilities, knowledge, competencies, bona fide requirements, working conditions and other role-specific requirements.

As part of Total Rewards’ commitment to continuous improvement, a new simplified [Non-Union Employee Job Description template](#) has been developed for use by Clients and HR Partners. The template is supported by this guide to assist HR Partners/Associates, Hiring Managers and Supervisors in developing well-written job descriptions.

The guide provides directions on how to complete each section of the job description and provides sample language that can be used in the job description. Where applicable, you are encouraged to copy language from the Guide, edit as required and paste it into the job description template.

Directions on How to Complete the Job Description Template

Job Information

Job Title

A job title is key in generating interest in a position and attracting qualified candidates. It provides a quick indication of what a position does and typically reflects job family and hierarchy within an organization. For example, Chief Information Security Officer: chief - hierarchy; information security - job family; officer - qualifier; Administration Assistant: administration - job family; assistant - hierarchy.

Hierarchies may differ from one organization to the other, however most organizations align titles with these common tiers: Entry level, Individual Contributor, Manager, Director, Executive etc. The University of Alberta aligns with these hierarchies and has guidelines regarding the use of Manager and Director. Please refer to [Position Title Guidelines](#) for more information.

The university also has a list of [Reserved Job Titles](#) that are used in Centres of Expertise. Please review the title you are choosing with your HR Partner or Associate to ensure that it is appropriate for use within your unit.

Effective Date

The effective date for a Non Union Employee job description is the date the description is submitted to Total Rewards for re-evaluation or evaluation. If a specific effective date is required that is different from the date the form is submitted, please indicate this in the effective date field. Please contact Job Evaluation for more information.

Drafting the Job Description

Font and Font Size

The form font and font size defaults to Roboto 9. If you are cutting and pasting language from this guide or some other document, ensure the font and font size is set at Roboto 9 before pasting the text into the job description form.

Job Description Language and Tone

- Be clear and concise. Use straightforward language and avoid jargon that may confuse the reader.
- Write in full the first time an abbreviation is used, for example, International Education and Enrolment (IEE).
- Be succinct - focus on key accountabilities (up to 5) and key responsibilities (6 - 8) per key accountability. Use point form for each responsibility.
- Use an active voice and [action verbs](#) to make responsibilities more engaging. Example: "Educate staff on cybersecurity best practices"; versus "facilitate the development of cybersecurity best practices to inform staff"
- Avoid use of overly ambiguous or qualitative language. State clearly what the position does and avoid the use of words such as "assist" to reduce ambiguity. For example: "the position responds to emails from clients" versus "assist with communication with clients"
- Avoid the use of "complex" without providing clarifying statements or examples
- Use gender-neutral language to promote the university's commitment to Accessibility, Community and Belonging.

Job Purpose Statement

The job purpose statement outlines the fundamental purpose of the position. It should explain why the position exists and how it contributes to the university's/unit's mission/mandate. A job purpose statement should include:

- Who performs what...
- To whom or what...
- With what tools, equipment or processes...
- To achieve what purpose or outcome.

Recommendations:

- Align the purpose statement with the mission, vision and goals of the university or unit.
- Be Concise. Limit the job purpose to a few sentences that encapsulates the essence of the role including key accountabilities/responsibilities
- Focus on Impact. Emphasize the value and impact of the role on the university/unit and the university community (students, faculty, staff, alumni, community, etc.).
- Do not include content that is not directly related to the purpose of the position.

Sample Job Purpose Statements:

Example 1: Front-Line Staff – Patient Services Representative

Purpose Statement:

The University Health Centre (UHC) offers comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing medical care for members of the University of Alberta community. As the first point of contact at the UHC, the Patient Services Representative supports the delivery of high quality patient-centered care to patients by responding to patient inquiries, scheduling appointments and checking-in patients.

Example 2: Manager – Facilities Operations Manager

Purpose Statement:

As part of the Utilities and Operations portfolio, the Facilities Operations Manager promotes safe, reliable, and efficient building and operations environments that support the institution’s mission of education and research. Overseeing the day-to-day maintenance and repair of university buildings, the manager is responsible for team leadership, vendor management, and resource planning.

Example 3: Director-Level – Director of Talent Management

Purpose Statement:

As a member of the Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment (HRHSE) leadership team, the Director of Talent Management leads the development and execution of strategies to attract, hire, and retain top talent across the organization. This position plays a critical role in advancing the institution’s strategic goals by ensuring recruitment practices align with organizational values, support workforce diversity, and meet current and future staffing needs.

Job Accountabilities and Responsibilities

Position accountabilities stipulate the employee’s obligation(s) within the organization. The accountability title describes this obligation.

Responsibilities are the specific duties or tasks performed by a position in fulfilling an employee’s obligations. The responsibility statements outline these duties or tasks.

Safety

In alignment with the University’s Culture of Care, Safety has been identified as a core accountability for every employee. One set of safety responsibilities has been drafted for Leaders/Supervisors and one for Staff. These safety responsibilities are pre-drafted and cannot be edited. Select either the Leader/Supervisor or the Staff radio button depending on the nature of the position.

Other Accountabilities and Responsibilities

Following the safety accountability and responsibilities, add up to five accountabilities and the associated responsibilities following the directions below.

If the position involves managerial and/or confidential labour relations functions it is important to clearly identify the scope of these responsibilities.

Examples of managerial functions include, but are not limited to:

- Supervision: Does the position exercise supervisory responsibility over other employees, and/or subordinate supervisor(s) who are in a bargaining unit? How many employees are supervised and what are their employee types?
- Hiring and Promotion: Does the position make hiring decisions or at least make effective recommendations to others?
- Discipline and Discharge: Describe the extent of the position’s role in making these key decisions.
- Labour Relations Input: Does the position represent management in responding to grievances and interpreting the collective agreement?
- Evaluating Employee Performance: What is the role of the position in assessing the performance of others.
- Policy Setting: What role does the position have in establishing or altering organizational policy?

Examples of confidential labour relations activities include, but are not limited to

- Grievances and disputes: Assisting with grievance responses, settlements, arbitration preparation, evidence, and counsel communications.
- Collective bargaining: Preparing or reviewing internal bargaining proposals, costing, strategy, and management briefing materials.
- Workforce planning: Confidential planning related to restructuring, contracting out, or workforce changes.
- Access to sensitive LR information: Routine access to confidential labour relations files, correspondence, strategy, or acting as a confidential assistant to senior LR/HR leaders.

Drafting the Accountability Title and Responsibility Statements

Accountability Title

- The title for the accountability should only be one to four words in length.
- Be specific. Describe each accountability clearly and succinctly.
- Prioritize your accountabilities from highest to lowest

- Do not use abbreviations

Responsibility Statements

- Below each accountability title, list the responsibilities associated with the accountability. Identify six to eight responsibility statements that identify primary duties or tasks that the position performs.
 - Use point form putting a dash (-) before each statement. This format enhances clarity and allows for easy scanning.
 - Use an active voice and action verbs to make the responsibilities more engaging (e.g., "Manage" instead of "Responsible for managing").
 - Inclusivity. Use gender-neutral language to promote the university's commitment to Accessibility, Community and Belonging.
 - Prioritize. Identify responsibilities in order of importance from highest to lowest
 - Do not create an extensive list - only focus on the primary responsibilities.
 - Do not use abbreviations

Sample Accountability and Responsibility Statements

The following samples are designed to capture a range of positions with varying accountabilities and responsibilities. Remember these are examples only. If you use these statements ensure they are revised/updated accordingly.

Example 1: AVP Information and Systems Technology and Chief Information Officer

Accountability Title: Safeguarding Information Assets

Responsibilities:

- Implement firewalls, intrusion detection/prevention systems, antivirus, and endpoint protection
- Manage access controls, authentication, and authorization systems
- Continuously monitor networks, systems, and logs for suspicious activity.
- Regularly scan systems for vulnerabilities
- Ensure all systems and equipment include data encryption
- Develop and enforce cybersecurity policies, standards, and procedures.
- Educate staff on cybersecurity best practices
- Investigate security alerts and breaches

Example 2: Labour Relations Officer

Accountability Title: Collective Bargaining

Responsibilities:

- Gather and analyze data on wages, benefits, working conditions, and labor market trends

- Advise management on negotiation strategies, potential outcomes, and labor relations risks
- Act as the primary liaison between management and employee representatives/unions
- Lead or support collective bargaining negotiations on behalf of the organization
- Present employer proposals clearly and persuasively
- Work towards mutually acceptable agreements that balance organizational goals and employee needs.

Example 3: Legal Counsel

Accountability title: Legal Agreement Drafting, Interpretation and Review

Responsibilities:

- Draft legal agreements to meet the needs of the client while protecting the university from legal, financial and reputational risk
- Provide legal counsel to the client on the interpretation of a legal agreement
- Work with the client in resolving disagreements in the interpretation of a legal agreement
- Review legal agreements to identify, assess and manage legal risks to the university

The following are examples of accountability titles and responsibility statements that may be applicable to a broad range of positions.

Accountability Title: Strategic Planning and Implementation

Responsibilities:

- Engage the leadership team and staff to develop a strategic plan that prioritizes measurable strategic initiatives, goals and objectives
- Assign goals and objectives to staff members for action
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the goals and objectives including their effectiveness, adjusting as needed to ensure optimal outcomes
- Update the strategic plan as required

Accountability Title: Human Resource Development

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate human resource related matters with the Human Resources Partner
- Recruit qualified employees to meet the requirements of the unit
- Onboard and off-board employees in compliance with university practices
- Direct and guide the work of staff and assess progress on expected outcomes
- Manage and document employee performance in compliance with university practices including discipline and discharge of employees.
- Identify training and development needs for employees and implement programs accordingly

- Foster a positive organizational culture by promoting teamwork, communication, and employee engagement
- Support succession planning efforts to build unit resilience and develop future leaders

Accountability Title: Budgeting and Financial Management

Responsibilities:

- Prepare and submit an annual budget as required
- Allocate and manage resources in alignment with the approved budget and in support of the strategic plan
- Analyze and forecast financial performance on a quarterly basis and take appropriate action in response to the forecast
- Identify efficiencies and cost-saving opportunities while maintaining quality service delivery

Accountability Title: Mentoring and Coaching

Responsibilities:

- Create an environment of trust and open communication, encouraging employees to share ideas and feedback
- Offer constructive feedback, advice, and support to help employees improve their performance and overcome challenges
- Provide guidance on career paths, opportunities, and strategies for advancement
- Encourage employees to think critically and creatively, challenging them and encouraging different perspectives
- Demonstrate behaviors and attitudes that are consistent with university values to serve as a positive role model to staff

SCOPE

The scope statement helps assess the impact a position has within the organization and the magnitude of the impact. This is done by providing a brief description of the elements that describe the scope such as whether position activities are limited to a unit or are provided university-wide. This is followed by a table that allows you to enumerate the most relevant factors associated with the position. For example, the number of positions that report directly to the position or the operating budget managed by the position. The table includes common factors associated with many positions. If these factors are not relevant to the position, put N/A in the amount column. Additional fields are provided to add other primary factors more relevant to a position. For example this may include the number of students or clients serviced by the area, the size of the research or capital budgets managed or the number of labs inspected.

Sample Scope Statement for a Manager

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The Manager oversees a team of 5 certified health and safety professionals who provide health, safety and environment regulatory and consulting services to Faculties and portfolios across the university. The team assists all faculty, staff and students in operating in compliance with municipal, provincial and federal legislation and university policies and procedures. The manager builds relationships with all faculty, students and staff as well as engages regulatory agencies at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.

Factors	Amount
Number of direct reports	5
Number of indirect reports	N/A
Total annual approved operating budget	\$500,000
Regulatory agencies accountable to	8

Relationship Management

Relationship management provides additional clarity to the scope of the position by specifically identifying primary internal and or external collaborators, the nature and frequency of the interaction. Using the drop down menu in the table identify primary internal collaborators followed by external collaborators. Enter the title of the collaborator, office or agency the position collaborates with followed by a very brief description of the nature of the interaction (note the description must fit within the fixed text box). Complete the table by selecting the frequency of the interaction using the drop down menu.

Example:

Internal or External	Collaborator	Nature of Interaction	Frequency
Internal	AVP Leadership Team	Engages with leadership team taking action as required	Weekly
Internal	President/VP Offices, Deans	Coordination of activities; issues management; priorities	Daily
Internal	Development Officers	Identify required support; Coordination of activities; priorities	Daily

External	Alumni/Donors	Respond to queries/coordinate meetings/events	Weekly
External	Fed, Prov Gov; Agencies	Respond to queries/coordinate meetings/events	Quarterly
External	Facilities and Vendors	Coordinate facilities and events	Quarterly

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Competencies

This section details the qualifications and experience required of the position. This specifies theoretical knowledge (typically acquired through formal academic training); practical application of knowledge, and acquired expertise and competencies applicable to the position. In order of knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies, identify minimum academic qualifications, years of experience, required techniques, expertise and competencies that are relevant to the position.

Sample Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Competencies.

- Bachelor, masters or PhD in [insert degree]
- Minimum of X years of experience in [insert area]
- Expert working knowledge of [insert something like specific programming language, governance structures, specific accounting or labour relation practices]
- Ability to operate [insert type of equipment]
- Key competencies including (insert three to five key competencies unique to the position)
 - Examples of core competencies may include leadership, team building, decision making/problem solving, written and verbal communication, change management, organizational skills, strategic planning)

Bona Fide Occupational Requirements

Bona Fide Occupational Requirements (BFORs) are requirements that **must** be met to carry out the duties of a position. A BFOR can be an attribute, a rule, a standard or certification necessary to do a job.

Certain positions at the University have BFORs. In this section select all the BFORs applicable to the position and provide a brief rationale in the space provided.

Below are examples of BFORs commonly used at the University and examples of the justification. You can cut and paste the justification into the job description and edit as required.

Select other if there is a unique BFOR that is not in the drop down menu. In the text field identify the BFOR and provide the justification.

Drivers Licence and Abstract	Compliance with the Driver Authorization Procedure as position requires operation of a vehicle
Funding Source Requirement	Compliance with [insert funding agency name] requirement for a Police Information Check due to working with [insert example such as biohazards]
First Nation, Metis and Inuit Requirement	Requires confirmation of First Nation, Métis or Inuit membership or citizenship to meet the [select teaching and or research and or operational] requirements of the position
Language Proficiency	Requires spoken and written proficiency in (insert language) to meet the [select teaching and or research and or operational] requirements of the position
Location	Requires ability to work/live in [insert location] to meet the [select teaching and or research and or operational] requirements of the position
Passport	Requires valid passport to travel internationally
Physical	Requires ability to [insert specific physical requirements i.e. lift 20 KG] to meet the operational requirements of the position
Professional Licence	Requires registration in good standing with the [insert professional association] to meet legislative requirements of the position
Safety Certification	Requires registration in good standing with [insert professional association] to meet the operational requirements of the position
Security Clearance	Police Information Check due to [insert reason i.e. working with vulnerable people or minors] and to mitigate risk to the institution
Ticket/Seal Certification	Requires a [select either Ticket or Seal] in [insert trade] in good standing to meet [select legislative and or operational requirements] of the position
Other	Identify the Bona Fide Requirement and provide the justification

Working Conditions

The Working Conditions section details the physical, environmental and psychological aspects of a job. Most pay equity legislation requires that jobs are evaluated based on skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. By outlining these in the position description, they will be considered during the evaluation of the position.

In this section, outline the requirements of the job from the perspective of:

- Physical effort - describe the degree of physical activity required in the job considering the intensity, duration and frequency of the activity. This may include things like heavy lifting, stretching, pushing, pulling of carts or long durations sitting at a desk.
- Physical environment - outline any exposure to physical and environmental factors that could increase the risk of incidents, ill health or discomfort. This may include things like working at heights or in confined spaces, operating heavy equipment, exposure to dust, chemicals or other irritants, or working in cold or extreme heat environments or isolated locations.
- Sensory attention - describe the intensity, duration and frequency of the need for concentration using one or more of the five senses. This may include things like extended time viewing through a microscope, or touching and handling of large animals or rodents.
- Mental stress - describe any exposure to factors inherent in the work process or environment that could increase tension or anxiety. This may include exposure to emotionally disturbing experiences, isolation, lifestyle disruption caused by work schedules such as working shifts or boredom resulting from repetitive tasks.

Sample Working Conditions for various positions

Example 1: Hazardous Waste Technician - Physical Effort

- Requires the daily movement and loading/offloading of hazardous materials in drums or on pallets and the lifting of boxes and containers up to XX kilograms.

Note: for administrative type positions with limited physical requirements you can use the following sample statement

- Requires typical physical attributes associated with an office like setting.

Example 2: University Veterinarian - Physical Environment

- Requires working in a physical environment with exposure to farm animals, dust, hay, animal feed and bedding and other materials that may require the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment.

Note: for administrative type positions with an office based physical environment you can use the following sample statement

- Requires working in a typical office environment setting.

Example 3: Finance Partner - Sensory Attention

- Requires extensive time using a computer developing/using spreadsheets, entering data and analysing data displayed on multiple computer screens.

Example 4: Assistant Director, University Health Centre - Mental Stress

- Requires meeting with students who may be experiencing mental health issues, are emotionally upset or who are sharing information on incidents that include disturbing material.

Organization Chart

Insert or attach a current organization chart for the unit that includes the position under review. The organization chart provides context for the area the job is situated in - peers, other comparable jobs, direct reports, supervisor etc.

Resources

The following are three sample job descriptions for reference purposes:

- [Sample Job Description Executive Coordinator, Development and Alumni Relations](#)
- [Sample Job Description Manager Student Life](#)
- [Sample Job Description AVP IST and Chief Information and Security Officer](#)