



Albany State University

# Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) Reference Guide

January 2022

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# Introduction

## *Background*

Albany State University has engaged Segal (a nationally recognized Human Resources consulting firm) to assist in efforts to design a fair and equitable classification and compensation program for staff.

As part of this process, we request your assistance in completing this online Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) to ensure we have the most up-to-date, clear, and accurate information for your staff position. The people who best know the work involved in any given position are those that are closest to the position — you and your supervisor.

Your response to this questionnaire (and subsequent supervisor review) will help create a better understanding of positions across the University, which in turn, will enable the University to:

- Create specific position descriptions that define more accurately the content and minimum requirements for each position
- Develop the University's generic job classification specifications and job families
- Develop a job titling protocol so that titles are used consistently and appropriately across the University
- Compare salaries of positions at Albany State University to those at comparable institutions and organizations in order to obtain an accurate assessment of ASU's market pay competitiveness across the staff population
- Accurately assign positions to grades so that positions with similar impact, scope, and required knowledge are in the same salary grades, unless market dictates otherwise.

This questionnaire does not measure your performance but focuses on the key position responsibilities and requisite skills, knowledge and abilities to perform the work.

# Introduction

## *Roles in Completing PDQs*

**Individual employees** are responsible for ensuring that:

- Position description questionnaires are complete and submitted on time
- Reference documents (e.g., position description) are utilized when available to ensure completeness of PDQs

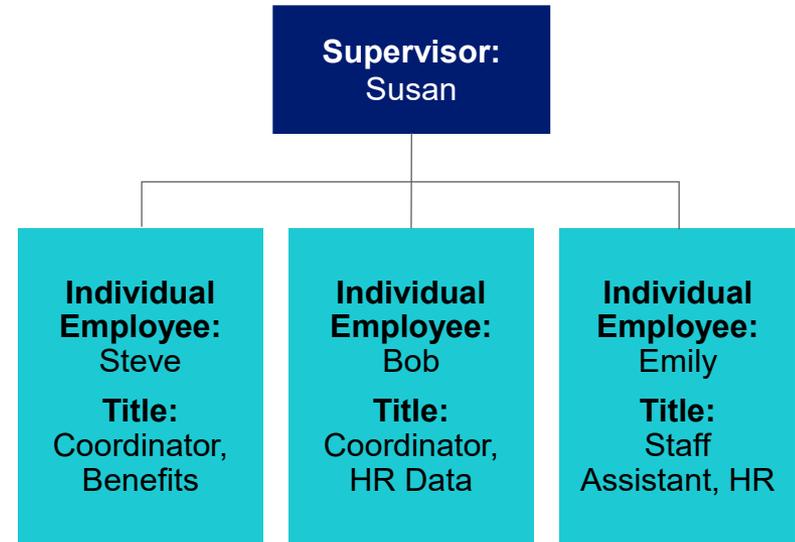
**Supervisors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring all position description questionnaires within their department/unit have been completed and are accurate
- Signing off on their direct reports completed questionnaires
- Ensuring that employee and supervisor have consensus on the final PDQ

**Human Resources** will be responsible for ensuring that:

- Employees and supervisors complete questionnaires
- Supervisors discuss major differences in PDQ content before submitting

### Illustrative Example



**Note:** Steve, Bob, and Emily complete their own PDQs (soliciting supervisor input during completion), then Susan reviews and approves all three questionnaires.

PDQs are used to ensure position descriptions are current and accurate

# Reference Guide

## What You Will Need:

- Employee ID - Your employee ID number will serve as your password to take the survey
- Current Job Description (*if available*)
  - If you do not have a job description, please use the **Essential Functions Worksheet** to organize your thoughts. This can be completed prior to starting the PDQ.
- Computer Access (*Google Chrome or Safari web browsers are preferred*)
- Copy of PDQ Training Deck

## Reminders:

- If at any point while completing the survey you want to save the results and continue the survey at some other point in time, please click on the “**click here to save and continue survey later**” button located at the very top of the screen in the right-hand corner
- An asterisk (\*) next to a question means that the question is required, you will not be able to move to the next page if you do not complete required questions
- You should describe the position under a normal operating environment; do not describe responsibilities or circumstances that are a result of the global pandemic

# Timeline



The University will send an all-employee email on **February 7, 2022** which will include a link to access and complete the PDQ.



All employees should complete their PDQ by **Monday, February 21, 2022.**



All supervisors will need to conduct their final review of their direct reports responses and approve by **Monday, February 28, 2022.\***

*Note: Supervisor review can occur immediately. Segal strongly recommends supervisors review their employees' questionnaires as soon as they receive the submission link via email indicating their employee has submitted a PDQ.*

\* If agreement cannot be made between a supervisor and his/her direct report regarding the content of the PDQ, a conversation should be had either between the supervisor and employee, or within the department chain of command

# Tips for Completing the PDQ

## When completing the PDQ questionnaire, make sure to:

- Describe the position, not your personal characteristics
  - Example: I am a bilingual financial analyst however my position does not require me to be bilingual. Please do not add bilingual as a position requirement in the PDQ
- Describe the current position content in a normal operating environment, not anticipated changes or outdated functions no longer in use
  - Example: I am an office assistant and previously was in charge of booking travel for the office executives. A staff assistant has been hired and that is no longer my responsibility but is instead his/hers. Please do not include the outdated position responsibility
- Don't include temporary assignments/position responsibilities that will not be a permanent part of the position's responsibilities going forward
  - Example: I am the Assistant Director for HR acting as interim HR Director. Please do not include responsibilities related to the interim role in the PDQ



You should describe the position under a normal operating environment; do not describe responsibilities or circumstances that are a result of the global pandemic

# Tips for Completing the PDQ

- Avoid jargon, spell out acronyms, and define technical terms (when necessary)
  - Example: I am an Accountant and my position requires a CPA certification. Please write out Certified Public Accountant
- Use position titles or roles when referring to others within Albany State University. Use names of people only when specifically requested
  - Example: Instead of “works with Cindy to ensure all local laws and regulations are met, you should say “works with Compliance Manager to ensure all local laws and regulations are met”
- Save your progress if you intend to continue the PDQ at another point in time
  - Note: You will have the option to save throughout the PDQ by clicking a link in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Do not just exit out of the PDQ



You should describe the position under a normal operating environment; do not describe responsibilities or circumstances that are a result of the global pandemic

# Tips for Completing the PDQ

## Include

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- ✓ Essential and regularly required responsibilities
- ✓ Expected outcomes within essential functions
- ✓ Normal expectations of a fully competent person, meeting all position requirements
- ✓ Clear, accurate descriptions

## Do Not Include

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- ✗ One time, short-term assignments
- ✗ Exhaustive list of tasks, and/or details on “how” work is done
- ✗ Tasks or expectations designed around an individual (e.g., performance, professional interests, etc.)
- ✗ Acronyms without explanation, misleading or vague descriptions

**For example,  
instead of writing...**

“Enters the following information into system screens ABC and XYZ: Employee Name, Address, Phone Number...”

**You would write...**

“Enters required data into HRIS module and audits entries for completeness and accuracy”

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## **Why should I complete a PDQ?**

As a University employee, you are the subject matter expert in your position. You are the best person to describe the functions and requirements of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform your position duties. By participating in the PDQ process, Segal will be able to incorporate a comprehensive review of the University's positions.

## **Where do I get the PDQ?**

The link to the PDQ will come from an all-employee email sent out by the University. Any questions you may have throughout the completion of the PDQ process should be directed to [veon.williams@asurams.edu](mailto:veon.williams@asurams.edu)

## **What if I believe my position duties will be changing in the near future?**

We understand that positions change, however, we ask that you complete your PDQ using your current title and position responsibilities and not include responsibilities you had in the past or think you may have in the future.

## **Will my position title change? What if I disagree with my new position title?**

Some titles may change to ensure consistency across positions or to make a title describe a particular position more accurately. Although careful consideration will be made to determine relevant position titles. If you disagree with your title or would like further review of your position title, you may discuss this with your department head and Human Resources.

## **Can my supervisor change my questionnaire or any of my responses?**

No. Supervisors will be providing comments and/or sending the questionnaire back to their employees for edits. Your supervisor should not modify any of your questionnaire. Supervisors may assist in the completion of PDQs if desired but should not complete questionnaires for employees.

## **What about vacant positions?**

If a position is vacant, we will ask that the positions supervisor complete the PDQ on behalf of the vacant position.



# | Appendix



# Essential Functions Worksheet

**Use the Essential Functions Worksheet to organize your thoughts:**

- 1. List all activities, duties and tasks the position performs in the “Duties and Tasks” column
- 2. Cluster related activities together under the “Related Groupings” column
  - a. Eliminate duplicates
  - b. Clarify language
  - c. Delete extraneous statements
- 3. Review each grouping to develop an Essential Function Statement

Duties & Tasks	Essential Functions Statements

The sample worksheet on the following slides shows activities for a position called “Administrative Assistant,” but the process can be used for any position

# Essential Functions Worksheet

## Position Title: Administrative Assistant

### Duties and Tasks

- Maintains calendars
- Schedules meetings and appointments
- Prepare and plan for meetings
- Secure space for meetings
- Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time
- Distribute agendas and presentation materials
- Transcribes meeting minutes
- Draft and type correspondence
- Maintain department files
- Update computer records
- Run reports
- Resolves routine customer service problems or inquires
- Take and deliver messages
- Conducts research



**As you read this list,  
it is hard to determine  
overall responsibility of  
this position**

# Essential Functions Worksheet

## Position Title: Administrative Assistant

Duties & Tasks	Related Groupings	Essential Functions Statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains calendars</li> <li>• Schedules meetings and appointments</li> <li>• Prepare and plan for meetings</li> <li>• Secure space for meetings</li> <li>• Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</li> <li>• Distribute agendas and presentation materials</li> <li>• Transcribes meeting minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains calendars</li> <li>• Schedules meetings and appointments</li> <li>• Prepare and plan for meetings</li> <li>• Secure space for meetings</li> <li>• Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</li> <li>• Distribute agendas and presentation materials</li> <li>• Transcribes meeting minutes</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and type correspondence</li> <li>• Maintain department files</li> <li>• Update computer records</li> <li>• Run reports</li> <li>• Resolves routine customer service problems or inquires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and type correspondence</li> <li>• Maintain department files</li> <li>• Update computer records</li> <li>• Run reports</li> <li>• Conducts research</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take and deliver messages</li> <li>• Conducts research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resolves routine customer service problems or inquires</li> <li>• Take and deliver messages</li> </ul>	

# Essential Functions Worksheet



## Position Title: Administrative Assistant

Duties & Tasks	Related Groupings	Essential Functions Statements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains calendars</li> <li>• Schedules meetings and appointments</li> <li>• Prepare and plan for meetings</li> <li>• Secure space for meetings</li> <li>• Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</li> <li>• Distribute agendas and presentation materials</li> <li>• Transcribes meeting minutes</li> <li>• Draft and type correspondence</li> <li>• Maintain department files</li> <li>• Update computer records</li> <li>• Run reports</li> <li>• Resolves routine customer service problems or inquires</li> <li>• Take and deliver messages</li> <li>• Conducts research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains calendars</li> <li>• Schedules meetings and appointments</li> <li>• Prepare and plan for meetings</li> <li>• Secure space for meetings</li> <li>• Inform meeting participants of meeting location and time</li> <li>• Distribute agendas and presentation materials</li> <li>• Transcribes meeting minutes</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and type correspondence</li> <li>• Maintain department files</li> <li>• Update computer records</li> <li>• Compile reports</li> <li>• Conducts research</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resolves routine customer service problems or inquires</li> <li>• Take and deliver messages</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain calendar and coordinate all aspects of meetings and appointments by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling meetings and appointments and informing participants of location and time</li> <li>• Securing space and working with key stakeholders on logistics</li> <li>• Sending soft-copy agendas to participants before the meeting and distributing hard copies during the meeting</li> <li>• Transcribing meeting minutes and distributing them as necessary</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>Support specific activities and initiatives through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting and typing correspondence and other documents</li> <li>• Updating computer records and maintaining department files</li> <li>• Conducting research</li> <li>• Compiling management reports</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>Provide operational support by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resolving routine problems and customer services inquiries</li> <li>• Screening calls and taking and delivering messages</li> </ul>

# Essential Functions Worksheet

## Other Examples of Primary Position Responsibilities:

### Maintain audio-visual equipment inventory by:

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

### Provide technical IT support to the organization by:

- Responding to telephone calls, email, and personnel requests for technical help
- Troubleshooting user computer problems by documenting, tracking, and monitoring the problem to ensure a timely resolution

### 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

### Maintain electrical systems by:

- Performing maintenance, installation, and repair of medium-voltage equipment
- Locating, planning, and carrying out system repairs and component failures
- Preparing and maintaining work records and repair cost estimates

# Glossary of Action Verbs

**Adjust** — Bring to more satisfactory state; change to enhance a situation.

**Administer** — Exercise and implement control over the performance of specific operations, approved plans, or established policies within the scope of limited and well-defined authority.

**Advise** — Give information or opinion pertinent to a probable course of action.

**Analyze** — Study the factors of a problem to determine a proper solution.

**Arrange** — Put into suitable order or sequence; to make preparations or plan.

**Assist** — Take an active part or give support in performing a function.

**Balance** — Arrange so that one set of elements exactly equals another.

**Calculate** — Work out by mathematical computation.

**Check** — Compare with a source, original, or authority.

**Compile** — Put together a series or group of facts or figures from somewhat related sources into a related whole; usually used in the sense of making a report.

**Compose** — Form by putting together; formulate or write.

**Conduct** — Exercise leadership in a project or study.

**Coordinate** — Combine (through balancing, tuning, or integrating) the efforts of separate groups to accomplish a specific objective; coordination can be exercised without line authority.

**Counsel** — Give advice and guidance to another.

**Demonstrate** — To show clearly; illustrate or explain with many examples.

**Develop** — Advance programs, planning or personnel capabilities to higher state.

**Direct** — Authoritatively define, regulate, or determine the activities of subordinate organizational units to achieve predetermined objectives.

# Glossary of Action Verbs

**Distribute** — Give out; divide among several.

**Execute** — Put into effect according to a plan (See "Administer").

**File** — Arrange in order for preservation or reference; place among official records.

**Gather** — Come or bring together into a group mass or unit.

**Initiate** — Start, begin, or introduce a program or action.

**Install** — Set up for use or service.

**List** — Place in a specified category; register.

**Maintain** — Keep in an existing state; to continue or preserve; keep in a state of efficiency or validity.

**Manage** — Plan, organize, and control to achieve coordinated objectives by leading and directing subordinates without giving detailed supervision.

**Monitor** — Watch, observe, or check for a special purpose; keep track.

**Negotiate** — Reach agreement on specific proposals through discussion with others of a different viewpoint.

**Obtain** — Gain or attain by planned action or effort.

**Operate** — Perform a function.

**Organize** — Set up plans and procedures for achieving objectives.

**Participate** — Take part in and share responsibility with others for action but without individual authority to take action.

**Perform** — Carry out, accomplish; to do in a formal manner or according to a prescribed method.

**Plan** — Devise or determine a course of action to achieve a desired result.

**Provide** — Furnish necessary information or services.

**Post** — Transfer an entry or item from one record to another.

# Glossary of Action Verbs

**Prepare** — Make ready for further action or purpose.

**Process** — Perform a series of actions or operations leading to an end.

**Prove** — Determine extent of agreement or disagreement with intended relation between results.

**Recommend** — Offer for acceptance and support a course of action to persons responsible for approval or authorization.

**Record** — Register, make a record of.

**Repair** — Restore by replacing a part or putting together what is torn or broken; to fix.

**Report** — Give an account of; make a written record or summary.

**Research** — Careful or diligent search; investigate or experiment with the aim of discovery and interpretation of facts.

**Review** — Critically examine (completed work, reports, performance) with a view to amendment or improvement.

**Schedule** — Plan a timetable; to set, appoint, or designate for a fixed time.

**Sort** — Put in a certain place or rank according to kind, class or nature.

**Supervise** — Oversee or watch with authority work, proceedings, or progress; control employment status, including hiring, salary adjustment, promotion, termination; implies day-to-day concern with details of operation.

**Tabulate** — Arrange figures or items in rows and columns; computing by means of a table.

**Transcribe** — Make a written copy; dictated or recorded information in longhand or on a typewriter; transfer from one recording form to another.

**Verify** — Determine the accuracy of one thing or figure in relation to other things or figures known to be accurate.