

CHAPTER 13

PROFESSIONAL, DEGREE AND RELATED GRADES

Scope

13.1 This chapter contains our proposals for those grades which normally require a professional qualification or a degree as a minimum entry requirement. Also included in this chapter are a number of grades the entry qualification for which is at present matriculation but which, having regard to their duties and responsibilities, should, in our view, require a degree. However, in these cases, we consider that suitable matriculants should exceptionally be considered for appointment, entering at an appropriate point below the minimum of the scale designed primarily for graduates.

13.2 We have classified the professional, degree and related grades into three groups :

Group I : Those grades which normally require membership of a professional institution and grades requiring qualifications, such as a Master Mariner's Certificate, traditionally accepted as comparable.

Group II : Primarily honours degree grades with a pay structure related to the grades in Group I but with provision for candidates without an honours degree to enter at the assistant rank.

Group III : Other degree and related grades, including those grades whose entry qualifications we recommend should be upgraded from matriculation to degree.

Background

13.3 Because of the blurred line which exists between "degree" and "professional" grades in the civil service, using educational benchmarks for these grades poses special problems. Prior to 1971, the term "professional" was used loosely to refer to those grades the salary scales for which were on the then Model Scale 10 - "Administrative and Professional". This included grades which did not normally require membership of a professional institution. The description "Administrative and Professional" was never a very satisfactory one, because the scale also included ranks such as Chief Pharmacist and Chief Executive Officer, which were promotion ranks for Pharmacist and Executive Officer,

and which were included in the "Technical" and "Executive" Model Scales respectively.

13.4 The difference between "professional" and "degree" became more significant after 1971. Prior to 1971, there was only a difference of five increments between what an honours graduate on the then Model Scale 8 (Executive) or the then Model Scale 9 (Assistant Professional) would receive and what he would receive on Model Scale 10. However, following acceptance of a recommendation by the 1971 Salaries Commission, the differential was increased to ten increments.

13.5 In this Report, we have attempted to draw clear distinctions among the professional, honours degree and pass degree grades. Group I comprises those grades which normally require membership of professional institutions e.g. associate membership of the Hong Kong Society of Accountants or corporate membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers. In addition it includes those Aeronautical and Marine grades whose qualifications, such as a Master Mariner's Certificate, are traditionally accepted as comparable. Group II consists primarily of honours degree grades which have a pay structure related to Group I grades. The membership of this group and the pay structure need to be further reviewed, but, for the time being, we have broadbanded the entry point at Point 31, even though the post-graduate requirements vary in recognition that if such variations were applied to the normal degree benchmarks, they would still not result in an entry point as high as Point 31. Group III consists of other degree and related grades, and those grades whose entry qualification we consider should be upgraded from matriculation to degree.

Benchmarks and pay scales

13.6 We have retained Point 20 as the benchmark for degree entry, and Point 31 as the benchmark for "professional" entry. These entry points were introduced following recommendations by the 1971 Salaries Commission which took into account factors such as post-graduate qualifications and required experience. The overall pay scales we recommend have regard to the existing scales for the major grades in this chapter.

13.7 For Group I the benchmark for the first full professional rank is Point 31 and the starting pay varies to reflect differences in the training period and qualification. The scales are broadbanded from the maximum of this rank upwards.

13.8 In general we consider the existing pay scales of the assistant professional ranks to be unduly long. Most of these ranks were introduced as a means of furthering localisation. The intention was that local people with a university degree, or equivalent, would be appointed and given opportunities to acquire a full professional qualification by further training, study and experience in the appropriate discipline. In their representations, some assistant professionals have requested that their scales be extended to Point 41. We understand, however, that most assistant professionals can normally achieve full professional status in three or four years. The need for such a long scale is therefore not apparent, and can be counter-productive in promoting localisation in that it tends to result in the retention of officers who fail to become professionals, thus blocking a number of training posts. Accordingly, we recommend that the maximum point for the pay scales of these ranks be lowered to Point 31 to bring them into line with the pay scales of other graduate ranks. We also recommend that, in future, alternative arrangements should be made for those assistant professionals who fail to achieve full professional status within a specified period, so that the posts they occupy may be released for new trainees.

13.9 The existing pay scales for the assistant ranks in Group II are generally retained as we consider them to be appropriate. Agricultural Engineer and Industrial Training Officer are the only exceptions.

13.10 The pay scales for the higher ranks are broadbanded and no adjustment is made to the starting pay to take account of differences in post-graduate requirements or experience.

13.11 The benchmark for Group III is Point 20. Within this group are three grades whose entry qualification is at present matriculation, but for which we consider a degree would be more appropriate.

Individual grades

13.12 Our comments on the individual grades follow, and a table setting out the pay scales is in Appendix XVII.

/ Group I

Group I

(Grades normally requiring membership of a professional institution and grades requiring qualifications traditionally accepted as comparable)

13.13 Air-Conditioning Engineer

The posts in this grade are filled by Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and we therefore recommend that an examination be carried out to determine whether this grade can be merged with an existing grade. In the meantime, we propose the pay scales of the grade be brought into line with other comparable grades.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Air-Conditioning Engineer	22 - 38	22 - 31
Air-Conditioning Engineer	36 - 45	36 - 45
Senior Air-Conditioning Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.14 Air Pollution Control Officer

Entry to this grade requires either corporate membership of the Institute of Fuel or Institution of Chemical Engineers plus relevant experience; or a degree in Fuel Technology or Chemical Engineering plus relevant experience. We consider the existing pay scale reflects the level of responsibility and the degree of specialisation required, and recommend no change.

	<u>Existing</u>
Air Pollution Control Officer	46 - 48

13.15 Architect

The minimum of the Assistant Architect rank is raised to Point 23 to reflect the number of years taken to obtain the basic qualification for appointment. We consider the pay scales of the Architect and Senior Architect ranks appropriate and recommend no change. The maximum of the assistant rank has been reduced to Point 31 for the reasons given in paragraph 13.8.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Architect	22 - 38	23 - 31
Architect	35 - 45	35 - 45
Senior Architect	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.16 Assessor

Assistant Assessors claim that their work is a combination of the knowledge of managers, accountants, lawyers and public relations officers. They also compare themselves with Assistant Trade Officers whose pay scale is higher but in view of the difference in the nature of the jobs we find it difficult to accept such a comparison.

The minimum entry qualification for appointment as Assistant Assessor is a degree or an intermediate qualification in accountancy. In line with our broadbanding system we recommend a one-point increase at the maximum for the Assistant Assessor scale and at the minimum for the Senior Assistant Assessor rank.

The pay scale for the Assessor rank is based on possession of a full professional qualification, for example, associate membership of the Hong Kong Society of Accountants, plus one year's post-qualification experience. We consider the pay scales for the professional and senior professional ranks to be appropriate and recommend no change. However, candidates appointed to the professional rank with a relevant degree plus post-graduate experience but without the full professional qualification should enter at Point 31. Assistant Assessors who obtain the full professional qualification and are promoted to the Assessor rank should enter at Point 33, since they do not possess the one-year post-qualification experience prescribed for direct entry.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Assessor	20 - 30	20 - 31
Senior Assistant Assessor	31 - 37	32 - 37
Assessor	34 - 45	34 - 45
Senior Assessor	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.17 Auditor

Auditors contend that their pay scale is unfavourable when compared with that of Assessor which is one point higher. They also say that the requirement for promotion from Assistant Assessor to Assessor is the same as that for the in-service appointment of Examiner to Auditor.

The pay scale for Assessor is fixed one point higher to take account of the fact that Assessors require a professional qualification plus one year's post-qualification experience for appointment, whereas Auditors require no post-qualification experience. We consider the existing pay scales of these two grades to be appropriate and recommend no change except that candidates appointed to the rank without professional qualifications but with a degree and post-graduate experience in lieu should enter at Point 31, i.e. two points below the minimum.

	<u>Existing</u>
Auditor	33 - 45
Senior Auditor	46 - 48

13.18 Bank Examiner

Assistant Bank Examiners are required on appointment to have an intermediate qualification in Accountancy which enable them, through further training, study and experience, to obtain a full professional qualification. We recommend a one-point increase to the maximum of the pay scale for this rank. The pay scales for Bank Examiners and Senior Bank Examiners equate with those of Auditors and Senior Auditors, and we recommend no change.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Bank Examiner	20 - 30	20 - 31
Bank Examiner	33 - 45	33 - 45
Senior Bank Examiner	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.19 Building Services Engineer

We note that for appointment to the full professional rank, one year's post-qualification experience is required after the acquisition of corporate membership of one of the recognised institutions. We have therefore retained the existing starting point. The maximum of the scale for the assistant rank has been lowered to Point 31 for the reasons given in paragraph 13.8.

/ Existing

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Building Services Engineer	22 - 38	22 - 31
Building Services Engineer	36 - 45	36 - 45
Senior Building Services Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.20 Building Surveyor

We consider the existing pay scales for the full professional ranks appropriate and recommend no change. We have, however, reduced the maximum point of the assistant rank for the reasons given in paragraph 13.8. The Student Building Surveyor rank was first introduced in 1971 to provide a training cadre for local candidates who are not qualified for appointment as Assistant Building Surveyors. There is a continuing need for this student rank in the interest of promoting localisation, and we recommend its retention.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Student Building Surveyor	17 - 23	17 - 23
Assistant Building Surveyor	22 - 38	22 - 31
Building Surveyor	34 - 45	34 - 45
Senior Building Surveyor	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.21 Crown Counsel

It has been represented to us that the Assistant Crown Counsel rank should be abolished and merged with the Crown Counsel rank. We have no objection to solicitors and barristers who are in all respects qualified to practise being appointed directly to Crown Counsel. As for those solicitors and barristers who do not possess the requisite period of post-qualification experience since call or admission required for appointment as Crown Counsel, we recommend they should enter at an appropriate point below the minimum of the Crown Counsel scale.

However, situations may arise where the Legal Department wishes to appoint barristers who are still serving pupillage and thus have no or a limited right to practise. In these cases we recommend that appointment be to the Assistant Crown Counsel rank.

The existing pay scales are in line with those of other similar judicial/legal posts and we recommend no change.

	<u>Existing</u>
Assistant Crown Counsel	31 - 33
Crown Counsel	35 - 45
Senior Crown Counsel	46 - 48

13.22 Dental Officer

Assistant Dental Officers are eligible for promotion to Dental Officer after four years' service. We therefore consider the existing scale of the assistant rank unnecessarily long and recommend that it should be shortened in line with other assistant ranks. We understand that five posts of Senior Dental Officer and two posts of Consultant (Dental Service) have been created recently, and that this will improve promotion prospects.

In paragraph 13.38 we have recommended a one-point increase to the starting pay of Medical and Health Officers and we propose a similar one-point increase for Dental Officers.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Dental Officer	26 - 38	26 - 31
Dental Officer	33 - 45	34 - 45
Senior Dental Officer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.23 Electrical Engineer

We consider the existing scales appropriate as they reflect the years of experience required for appointment to the professional rank and are related to other grades which demand similar qualifications. No change is recommended for the full professional ranks. The maximum of the assistant rank has been lowered to Point 31 for the reasons given in paragraph 13.8.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Electrical Engineer	22 - 38	22 - 31
Electrical Engineer	36 - 45	36 - 45
Senior Electrical Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

/ 13.24 Electrical

13.24 Electrical Engineer (Desalting)
Mechanical Engineer (Desalting)

We understand that consideration is being given by Government to the replacement of these two grades by a new specialised grade or other existing grades. Pending further examination of this proposal, we recommend no change to the existing scales, except that the maximum of the assistant rank should be revised to Point 31 in line with our recommendation in paragraph 13.8.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Electrical Engineer (Desalting)	22 - 38	22 - 31
Electrical Engineer (Desalting)	36 - 45	36 - 45
Assistant Mechanical Engineer (Desalting)	22 - 38	22 - 31
Mechanical Engineer (Desalting)	36 - 45	36 - 45

13.25 Electrical and Mechanical Engineer

Similar professional qualifications to those of Electrical Engineer are required for appointment to this grade. We therefore recommend that the existing scales for the full professional ranks be retained. The maximum of the scale of the assistant rank is lowered to Point 31 for the reasons given in paragraph 13.8.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Electrical and Mechanical Engineer	22 - 38	22 - 31
Electrical and Mechanical Engineer	36 - 45	36 - 45
Senior Electrical and Mechanical Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.26 Electronics Engineer

Staff of this grade compare themselves with Airport Managers and Air Traffic Control Officers. The duties of these grades are different and the comparison drawn seems inappropriate.

/ We

We note that the qualifications for appointment to this grade are similar to the qualifications for appointment to the Electrical Engineer grade. We therefore recommend that the pay scales of these grades should be equated. The minimum of the pay scale of the Assistant Electronics Engineer is reduced to Point 22, and the maximum is raised to Point 31 accordingly.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Electronics Engineer	23 - 27	22 - 31
Electronics Engineer	36 - 45	36 - 45
Senior Electronics Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.27 Engineer

Entry to this grade requires corporate membership of either the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Institution of Municipal Engineers, the New Zealand Institution of Engineers, or equivalent. We consider the existing pay scales for the full professional rank adequately reflect the number of years required to obtain these qualifications. No change is therefore recommended except that the maximum of the assistant rank is broadbanded with that of other assistant professionals.

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Assistant Engineer	23 - 38	23 - 31
Engineer	35 - 45	35 - 45
Senior Engineer	46 - 48	46 - 48

13.28 Estate Surveyor

The entry qualifications for this grade are similar to those for other Surveyor grades. The pay scales are therefore the same. We consider this comparability should be maintained, and recommend no change to the pay scales except to broadband the maximum of the assistant rank.

The introduction of the Student Estate Surveyor rank in 1971 has contributed towards the localisation of the grade as it provides a training cadre for local candidates to qualify for advancement to the Assistant Estate Surveyor rank. We therefore recommend the retention of this rank and the existing pay scale.