



United States Office of Personnel Management

Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Digest of Significant Classification Decisions and Opinions
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Standard: [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#) (August 1991)
The Classifier's Handbook (August 1991)
Factor: N/A
Issue: Classifying positions when no standards have been published

Identification of the Classification Issue

This issue arose in an Office of Personnel Management region's adjudication of a classification appeal. The agency used the standard for the Production Control Series, GS-1152, to determine the grade of a position that was classified as Scheduling Technician, GS-0303-6. The appellants performed a variety of tasks required for the control, coordination, and utilization of ranges, terrain, and facilities for recruit training in live fire and nonfire exercises and for recreation activities at a military installation. Their primary duty was to schedule training requests within range, terrain, and safety limitations. The appellants requested their position be classified at the GS-7 level. The Office of Personnel Management had to determine the appropriate classification criteria for evaluating the position.

Resolution

The Introduction to the Position Classification Standards (August 1991) directs that if there are no specific grade-level criteria for the work, as is the case for positions classified in the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-0303, an appropriate general classification guide or criteria in a standard or standards for related kinds of work should be applied. The standard selected for cross-series comparison should cover work as similar as possible to the work being evaluated with respect to the following:

- The kind of work processes, functions, or subject matter of work performed.
- The qualifications required to do the work.

- The level of difficulty and responsibility.
- The combination of classification factors which have the greatest influence on the grade level.

The Classifier's Handbook (August 1991), contains the following additional guidance with respect to the application of standards for cross series comparison:

Because of the differences in the nature of work and the qualifications required to do various kinds of work, you should use for comparison only standards or guides that are compatible with the work being evaluated Clerical positions should be evaluated by standards for related kinds of clerical work or by an appropriate guide.

Standards in the Business and Industry Group, GS-1100, cover positions which are assigned work pertaining to and requiring a knowledge of business and trade practices; characteristics and use of equipment, products, or property; or industrial production methods and processes. Within this broad context, production control work includes planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials in specific manufacturing operations that employ mechanical or automated production systems and methods in the fabrication, rebuilding, overhaul, refurbishing, or repair of equipment, systems, facilities, and supplies. This is administrative work.

The agency, in its evaluation of the position, concluded that an analogy could be drawn between refining raw materials into a finished product, and converting recruits and untrained soldiers into trained soldiers and units. The appellants' work, however, did not require the breadth or depth of knowledge akin to business or trade practices, characteristics of equipment, or the various methods and processes of industrial production work. In terms of assessing the appropriateness of the GS-1152 standard for use as a basis for grade evaluation, the key comparison was that the appealed position did not involve functions of planning (e.g., who is trained), estimating, or expediting the use of labor, machines, or materials, such as weapons and ammunition, in training operations. The planning for training, safety parameters, and priorities (i.e., functions that may have some similarity to production control), was carried out by other employees and was not a part of the duties of the appealed position.

In contrast, the appellants merely scheduled the use of the ranges within prescribed limitations. Theirs was a clerical function. The appellants' work was not similar to production control work in terms of the kind of work processes, functions, and subject matter, or in terms of any of the other criteria listed above for selecting a standard for cross-series comparison. The region applied the criteria in the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work and classified the position as GS-0303-4.