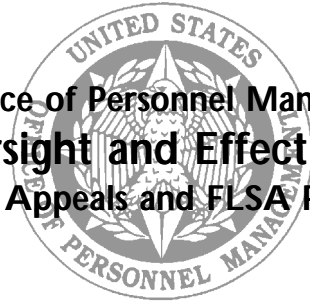


U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Merit Systems Oversight and Effectiveness
Classification Appeals and FLSA Programs



Atlanta Oversight Division
75 Spring Street, SW., Room 972
Atlanta, GA 30303

Classification Appeal Decision
Under Section 5112 of Title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [Appellant]

Agency classification: Printing Services Assistant
(Office Automation)
GS-303-6

Organization: Defense Automated Printing Service

OPM decision: GS-303-5
(Title at agency discretion)

OPM decision number: C-0303-05-06

_____/s/
Kathy W. Day
Classification Appeals Officer

_____/5/6/99
Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

Since this decision lowers the grade of the appealed position, it is to be effective no later than the beginning of the sixth pay period after the date of this decision, as permitted by 5 CFR 511.702. The servicing personnel office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description and a Standard Form 50 showing the personnel action taken. The report must be submitted within 30 days from the effective date of the personnel action.

The personnel office must also determine if the appellant is entitled to grade or pay retention, or both, under title 5, United States Code, sections 5362 and 5363, and 5 CFR 536. If the appellant is entitled to grade retention, the two-year retention period begins on the date this decision is implemented.

Decision sent to:

[Appellant]

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Introduction

On January 12, 1999, the Atlanta Oversight Division, U. S. Office of Personnel Management, accepted an appeal for the position of Printing Services Assistant {Office Automation (OA)}, GS-303-6, Defense Automated Printing Service (DAPS), [location]. The appellant is requesting that her position be classified as Production Controller, GS-1152-7.

The appeal has been accepted and processed under section 5112(b) of title 5, United States Code. This is the final administrative decision on the classification of the position subject to discretionary review only under the limited conditions and time outlined in part 511, subpart F, of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

General issues

The appellant contends that she has been performing duties that are more appropriately classified in the Production Controller Series, GS-1152, since November 1997, and that she has been unsuccessful in her attempts to have her position classified to that series. She believes that her activities in the programming, estimating, pricing, and routing of customer requests and requisitions for duplicating and reproduction services are equivalent to the work of a production controller, a position formerly used by the organization, and described in the GS-1152 series.

Information contained in the appeal packet indicates that production controller positions existed when the DAPS used traditional printing equipment (offset presses, ink, plates, etc.) to perform in-house printing. These positions were based on the technical knowledge and skills required for work involving the use of presses to produce printed materials. Their responsibilities included overall pricing, scheduling, staging, and coordinating the production cycle, and computing materials needed, customer cost, production time, etc., involved in production from receipt of the request to the finished product. These positions also determined which press to assign individual jobs; made up printing dummies; requisitioned necessary materials from the warehouse; determined the effect of various steps in the production process (printing, trimming, bindery, etc.) on customer deadlines; and established the material overage required to ensure the completion of each job. In 1995, the DAPS began phasing out printing presses and converting equipment at its facilities to high speed, high volume duplicating and reproduction equipment. Positions that had operated the printing presses and those of production controllers were eliminated or converted. Facilities such as the one at [location] had the duties associated with pricing, scheduling, etc., transferred to clerical positions within the organization.

The agency's position is that, since its production process now involves duplicating and reproduction rather than actually printing materials, the skills required are no longer at the level of the previous production controller positions.

The appellant does not believe her position description is accurate because it does not include the duties specifically related to pricing, programming, scheduling, and coordinating the duplication

and reproduction of printed materials by the Publishing Management Department. She believes that these duties warrant the classification of her position in the GS-1152 series at grade GS-7.

OPM considers a position description adequate for classification purposes when it is considered so by one knowledgeable of the occupational field involved and of the application of pertinent classification standards, principles, and policies; and it is supplemented by otherwise accurate, available, and current information on the organization, functions, programs, and procedures concerned. We find the current position description adequate. For purposes of this appeal, our decision will be based on the official position description of record, as well as the supplemental information furnished by the appellant, her supervisor, and the agency.

Position information

The appellant is assigned to position description number[#].

The appellant serves as a Printing Services Assistant (OA), GS-303-6, in the Printing Management Department of DAPS, [location]. Her major responsibilities are to provide a variety of general clerical, administrative, and office automation support to the staff and Director of the organization. She acts as receptionist and receives and directs incoming telephone calls, visitors, and facsimile transmissions; prepares recurring reports regarding organizational activities; and functions as the contact person for customers using the organization's services. She provides information and answers customer questions on all aspects of the duplication and reproduction services offered. This involves reviewing incoming work requests and requisitions for accuracy and completeness; determining whether production can be completed in-house or requires commercial procurement to meet customer deadlines; providing cost estimates for the work requested; scheduling work requests into the facility's production cycle; and ensuring that requests are properly routed to production with complete specifications and supporting information regarding the specific product desired by the customer. She prepares specifications for requests that must be procured through commercial vendors due to the size of the order or some specific need of the customer. The appellant is also responsible for balancing the production workload to avoid operational peaks and valleys; providing customers with information regarding the status of their requests; and assisting in the resolution of production problems involving planning and scheduling. She enters, retrieves, maintains, and manages the organization's automated and manual databases used to track data specific to the requests received and processed; maintains cost and statistical information; and prepares monthly financial reports. She monitors and screens orders to ensure that the customer has adequate funding, and requests customer authorization and approval when funding is exceeded. The appellant serves as liaison between [location] and other DAPS facilities for services exceeding the capability of the local facility.

The appellant works under the general supervision of the Director who makes overall assignments and provides assistance on new or unusual problems which have no established precedents. She is allowed to deviate from planned work and routines within available schedules and follows accepted practices in resolving nonrecurring problems and meeting deadlines. The supervisor is

generally informed of orders which could potentially deplete the facility's materials inventory. Completed work is spot checked by the supervisor for results achieved and compliance with procedures.

Series determination

The agency placed the position in the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303. The appellant believes that her position should be classified in the Production Control Series, GS-1152.

The Production Control Series, GS-1152, includes positions involved in the supervision or performance of planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials in specific manufacturing or remanufacturing operations that employ mechanical or automated production systems and methods in the fabrication, rebuilding, overhaul, refurbishing, or repair of any type of Government-owned, controlled, or operated equipment, systems, facilities, and supplies. Some positions are involved in the preparation of contract bids that include the preproduction analysis of specific proposed work packages to determine workload capacity, labor, material, services, and machine requirements, etc., to arrive at the most competitive bid. Positions involved in such work are also covered by this series as they perform the same type of work as positions that are responsible for the preproduction planning for any assigned projects, since the source data used and knowledge applied are the same.

The GS-1152 standard further states that positions that include only some of the duties and responsibilities of the series should not be classified mechanically in this series. In order to include a position in this series, the production control work being performed must reflect the occupational definition as a whole and not just selected or fragmented portions of the duties and responsibilities of the occupation.

The appellant's activities are not appropriate for classification in the Production Control Series, GS-1152. She performs only some of the GS-1152 duties, such as planning, estimating, scheduling, and expediting the use of labor, machines, and materials involved in the organization's duplication and reproduction processes. She functions as a Printing Services Assistant responsible for providing a wide range of general clerical, administrative, office automation, and printing services support for the Publishing Management Department and its customers at [location].

The basic processes associated with the appellant's work are clerical procedures related to the internal administrative activities (typing, filing, copying, recurring reports, etc.) and the services provided by her organization. She functions as the contact person for organizations requiring duplication and reproduction services; performs quality control for service requests; maintains and tracks data related to service requests and status in production phase; prepares cost estimates, budget and financial reports for the organization and customers; prepares specifications for commercially procured services; and acts as a liaison.

The Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, includes positions the duties of which are to perform or supervise clerical, assistant, or technician work for which no other series is

appropriate. The work requires a knowledge of the procedures and techniques involved in carrying out the work of an organization and involves application of procedures and practices within the framework of established guidelines. We find the appellant's position is properly placed in the GS-303 series.

Title determination

The GS-303 series does not specify titles. Therefore, the agency may designate an appropriate title by following the guidance in the Introduction to the Position Classification Standards. The parenthetical title *Office Automation (OA)* must be added to the title to identify the requirements for typing and office automation skills.

Standard determination

Miscellaneous Clerical and Assistant Series, GS-303, January 1979.
Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work, June 1989.
Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide, November 1990.

Grade determination

The Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work provides general criteria for use in determining the grade level of nonsupervisory clerical and assistance work. Administrative support of the kind described in the guide is performed in offices, shops, laboratories, hospitals, and numerous other settings in all Federal agencies. The guide describes the general characteristics of each grade level from GS-1 through GS-7 and uses two criteria for grading purposes: *Nature of Assignment* (which includes knowledge required and complexity of the work) and *Level of Responsibility* (which includes supervisory controls, guidelines, and contacts).

The position is evaluated as follows:

CLERICAL AND ASSISTANCE DUTIES

Nature of the Assignment

At GS-5, work consists of performing a full range of standard and nonstandard clerical assignments and resolving a variety of nonrecurring problems. Work includes a variety of assignments involving different and unrelated steps, processes, or methods. The employee must identify and understand the issues involved in each assignment and determine what steps and procedures are necessary and the order of their performance. Completion of each transaction typically involves selecting a course of action from a number of possibilities. The work requires extensive knowledge of an organization's rules, procedures, operations, or business practices to perform the more complex, interrelated, or one-of-a kind clerical processing procedures.

At GS-6, work typically entails processing a wide variety of transactions for more than one type of assigned activity or functional specialization. Assignments are subject to different sets of rules, regulations, and procedures. The issues examined must lead to a course of action that has substantive impact on the outcome of the assignment. Additionally, the work requires comprehensive knowledge of rules, regulations, and other guidelines relating to completing assignments in the program area assigned. This knowledge is usually attained through extensive, increasingly difficult, and practical experience and training in the subject matter field. The work also requires ability to interpret and apply regulatory procedural requirements to process unusually difficult and complicated transactions.

The GS-5 level is met. The appellant is primarily involved in providing general office clerical and essential office automation support for the organization, as well as functioning as the initial contact for customers requiring the organization's duplicating and reproduction services. She is responsible for analyzing and processing a variety of requests for printing services; determining material requirements and pricing; scheduling the request into the production schedule; ensuring that any special features (watermarks, colors, digital conversion, etc.) required by customers are accounted for; entering customer order information into the automated system; and monitoring the status of orders for customers. The appellant maintains and tracks financial information and records related to services provided (cost posting, accounts payable, printing jobs, etc.) on the organization's automated system. She must identify and understand the issues involved in each assignment and make a determination of the necessary steps, procedures, and their proper sequence. The appellant must have an in-depth knowledge of the rules, procedures, and operations to handle orders with a number of special features or processing steps to ensure that the desired services can be provided within the customer's deadline. For example, the appellant must understand the differences in the procedures, requirements, and her organization's ability to provide special features, as well as the pricing criteria for in-house production, procurement from commercial sources, and special processing (downloading from the Internet, a computer diskette, or CD ROM, etc.). The appellant must provide this information to customers so that they clearly understand that additional processing steps and special features requested may have an unexpected effect on their costs and deadlines.

The GS-6 level is not met. The appellant's assignments do not involve processing a wide variety of transactions for more than one type of assigned activity or functional specialization, nor are they subject to different sets of rules, regulations, and procedures as found at this level. The appellant's area of specialization is the process involved in providing duplication and reproduction services from the initial customer order or request to the delivery of the finished product. Her assignments are not subject to the variety of different rules, regulations, and procedures expected when the work covers more than one function or area of specialization. The majority of the information required to carry out assignments is provided by customers, and the appellant selects the applicable processes involved in providing the required services. Her assignments do not normally require her to interpret regulations and procedures for unusually difficult or complex problems.

This factor is properly evaluated at the GS-5 level.

Level of Responsibility

At GS-5, the supervisor assigns work by defining objectives, priorities, and deadlines and provides guidance on assignments which do not have clear precedents. The employee works in accordance with accepted practices and completed work is evaluated for technical soundness, appropriateness, and effectiveness in meeting goals. Extensive guides in the form of instructions, manuals, regulations, and precedents apply to the work. The number and similarity of guidelines and work situations require the employee to use judgment in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines for application and adapting them according to circumstances of the specific case or transaction. A number of procedural problems may arise which also require interpretation and adaptation of established guides. Often, the employee must determine which of several alternative guidelines to use. If existing guidelines cannot be applied, the employee refers the matter to the supervisor. Contacts are with a variety of persons within and outside the agency for the purpose of receiving or providing information relating to the work or for the purpose of resolving problems in connection with recurring responsibilities.

At GS-6, the supervisor reviews completed work for conformance with policy and requirements. The clerical employee is recognized as an authority on processing transactions or completing assignments within a complicated framework of established procedures and guidelines, often where there are no clear precedents. This recognition typically extends beyond the immediate office or work unit to the overall organization or, in some cases, outside the organization. The employee is regarded as an expert source of information on regulatory requirements for the various transactions, and is frequently called upon to provide accurate information on short notice. Guidelines for the work are numerous and varied, making it difficult for the employee to choose the most appropriate instruction and decide how the various transactions are to be completed. Guidelines often do not apply directly, requiring the employee to make adaptations to cover new and unusual work situations. This may involve deviating from established procedures to process transactions which cannot be completed through regular channels or involve actions where guidelines are conflicting or unusable. Contacts are with employees in the agency, in other agencies, or with management or users or providers of agency services. The employee provides information, explains the application of regulations, or resolves problems relating to the assignment.

The GS-5 level is met. The appellant works independently in carrying out the majority of assignments with only general supervision from the Director, and is responsible for resolving nonrecurring problems and meeting deadlines. Completed work is not subject to detailed review. The supervisor is required to be notified in instances where an order is for quantities that could exhaust available supplies of materials. The supervisor stated that the appellant seldom requires his assistance in resolving production problems involving planning and scheduling. These are typically handled by the appellant and the organization's general foreman. Deviations from planned work and procedures are permitted with the production schedule the only factor having

to be considered. There are a number of published instructions, manuals, and procedures available that are applicable to the work. These materials are agency produced and provide guidance on matters specifically related to the customers' requests. Contacts are with coworkers in the organization, customers for whom services are provided, and vendors who supply materials and equipment. These contacts are made to obtain or provide information and to resolve problems that arise.

The GS-6 level is not met. The established procedures and guidelines or precedent decisions typically apply to the appellant's assignments and are not of a number or variety to present difficulties in determining how to complete assignments. While the appellant is the individual whom customers most frequently contact and talk with on matters related to their duplication and reproduction needs, there are no indications that she is the primary source of information regarding the regulatory aspects of the work she performs. The appellant's contacts do not typically involve personnel in other agencies or agency management officials, nor do they require explaining the application of regulations.

This factor is properly evaluated at the GS-5 level.

Since both factors are evaluated at GS-5, the overall evaluation of the clerical functions is GS-5.

OFFICE AUTOMATION DUTIES

The Office Automation duties are in support of the primary and grade controlling work of the position. A summary evaluation of the office automation work is as follows:

SUMMARY		
FACTOR	LEVEL	POINTS
1. Knowledge Required By The Position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory Controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and Effect	5-1	25
6. Personal Contacts and 7. Purpose of Contacts	1a	30
8. Physical Demands	8-1	5
9. Work Environment	9-1	5
	TOTAL	890

A total of 890 points falls within the range for a GS-5, 855 to 1100 points, according to the Grade Conversion Table in the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide.

Summary

The highest level of substantive work performed is evaluated at the GS-5 level. The Office Automation work is evaluated at GS-5. The position is properly evaluated at the GS-5 level.

Decision

This position is properly classified as GS-303-5, with the title at the discretion of the agency. The parenthetical title *Office Automation* is to be added to the title.