

# State of New Hampshire

PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD  
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1987-C-000

## PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD DECISION

In the Matter Of:

LEE RONECKER

June 29, 1987

On November 18, 1986, the Personnel Appeals Board, Commissioners Platt and Beaulieu sitting, heard the appeal of Lee Ronecker, an Account Clerk III at New Hampshire Vocational Technical College at Stratham. The appellant was represented by Dennis Martino, SEA Field Representative. Edward J. McCann, Classification and Compensation Administrator, represented the Division of Personnel.

Both the appellant and the Division of Personnel made written submissions for the Board's consideration prior to the hearing. Because certain of the submissions by the appellant contained confidential student financial information, those materials were returned to the appellant so that confidential information could be sealed and/or student names deleted. Upon completion of same, these materials were returned to the Board. The appellant also requested that the Board defer decision in the matter pending completion of position reviews for Accounting Technicians and Accountants throughout the Vocational-Technical College system. The Board granted the appellant's request and held the matter in abeyance pending notification from the State Employees' Association. On March 30, 1987, the Board received a letter from the SEA advising the Board that, "...the Division has elevated the current account technician to Senior Account Technician... [and] that a decision is now appropriate."

In her appeal, the appellant contended that she was performing duties outside the scope of those outlined in the specification for Account Clerk III. Further, she argued that she received no supervision from the Accounting Technician and reported directly to the Accountant, Mr. Lincoln. The Board noted, however, that while Mr. Lincoln supported the appeal, the Department of Postsecondary Education did not support the upgrading. Further, the Board found that the Account Clerk III specification calls for work, "...under the general supervision of a superior." The fact that Ms. Ronecker claims to report directly to Mr. Lincoln rather than to an Accounting Technician has no bearing upon the appropriate classification of the position.

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The appellant requested that the following job attributes be allocated to a higher level::

Complexity of Duties, from the 3rd to the 4th degree

Experience, from the 4th to the 5th degree

Errors, from the 3rd to the 4th degree

Supervision, from the 2nd to the 3rd degree

Upon review of the record, the Board made the following findings:

Complexity of Duties: The appellant's position is currently rated at the 3rd degree, describing work which is generally routine or standardized, but involving choice of action within limits defined by standard practice and instructions. The appellant, in her Position Classification Questionnaire referred solely to additional duties being transferred from the Registrar's office, student billing and trust accounts. She went on to cite her, "...ability to computerize this job" as justifying the upgrading. The Board found this description insufficient to warrant upgrading this attribute to the 4th degree, which addresses work requiring judgment in application of broader aspects of established practices and procedures to problems and situations not falling clearly or concisely within the limitations of accepted standards or modifying methods and standards to meet variations in controlling conditions. The Board found that the appellant's apparent ability to simplify her work assignments through computerization of certain tasks has no bearing upon the requirements for the position itself.

Experience: The appellant requested upgrading this attribute from the 4th to the 5th degree. The rationale set forth by the appellant in her Position Classification Questionnaire was, "The computer ability I have attained and the initiative I have shown in applying this new knowledge to more and more of my work justifies this increase." The Board found that, while the agency might profit from appellant's skills, that fact was insufficient to warrant increasing the experience requirement from 1 to 2 years for entry level into this position.

Errors: The appellant attempted to justify upgrading this attribute to the 4th degree by stating, "By streamlining many jobs for entry on the computer, I have been able to check errors before they are made." The 4th degree in the Evaluation Manual outlines this factor as, "Errors very difficult to detect, work not being subject to verification, audit or check." Neither the written materials submitted nor appellant's testimony persuaded the Board that any adjustment in this attribute was warranted.

Supervision: The appellant requested adjustment of this attribute from the 2nd to the 3rd degree. To justify such an increase, the appellant would need to demonstrate responsibility for "...direct supervision over

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groups requiring advisory responsibility for instructing and directing subordinates, such as assigning work, explaining methods and maintaining flow of work." The appellant indicated that she briefed receptionists on cash receipts and cash transactions, as well as new policies regarding receipts and associated transactions. The Board found no indication that the appellant had any direct supervisory responsibility for assigning work to subordinates or maintaining the flow of work. The appellant's position is currently rated at the 2nd degree for this attribute. The Board found, however, it might more appropriately be allocated at the 1st degree in that both written submissions and oral testimony by the appellant would indicate she only supervised or instructed "a small group on repetitive and routine work."

While the Board appreciates that many classified employees feel under-compensated for their particular skills or talents, the Board's responsibility in making classification decisions lies with assessing the requirements and responsibilities inherent in the position, not the talents of the particular individual occupying that position. In the case of Ms. Ronecker, there was nothing in the written or oral presentation to persuade the Board that this position should be reclassified.

Further, upon review of the specifications for the job titles of Account Clerk III and Accounting Technician, the Board found that the appellant's position responsibilities, as described through written documentation and oral testimony, can not support a request for upgrading to the title Accounting Technician. The Board found the appellant's position best described by the specification for Account Clerk III, salary grade 8, and therefore voted unanimously to deny the appeal.

FOR THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD



MARY ANN STEELE  
Executive Secretary

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cc: Dennis Martino, Field Representative  
State Employees' Association

Charles Green, President  
Stratham Vocational-Technical College

Virginia Vogel  
Director of Personnel