

## **Jo Marchant FNASBM, School Business Manager and NASBM Fellow**

When the NASBM Professional Standards were published in 2015, Jo wanted to review how she might use them to benchmark her role, and show to the rest of the SLT, the roles evolving scope and responsibilities. As a result, she developed some resources she is now sharing with you which can help you to leverage your worth as a school business management professional. This can help ensure that you gain recognition and potentially, advise others in your school on your salary, as a result of benchmarking against the [NASBM Professional Standards](#) and research on job roles in the sector.

The document hereafter provides the resource which Jo developed based on her research on factors which determine pay and on the [NASBM Professional Standards](#).

## USING THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TO LEVERAGE YOUR WORTH

### 1) What's your objective?

Before you start this process, be clear about what your objective is. Are you a School Business Manager looking for a salary uplift commensurate with your current responsibilities or you really working at the level of a Strategic Business Leader equivalent in status and responsibilities to a Deputy Principal? Essentially, the difference here is would you describe yourself as a manager or a leader? I used the [NASBM Professional Standards](#) to prove the latter after my Principal asked me if I would like to join our school's Executive Team consisting of the Principal and 2 Deputy Principals. Her motivation was the fact that every time the Executive Team wanted to make a strategic decision, they needed my input and she felt that this promotion would simply reflect the level at which I had been working for the last year or so. Despite having this support, it was still up to me to prove to our governors that I really was working at this level and deserved the commensurate increase in recognition and remuneration.

### 2) Where do you start?

The place to start is to use the [NASBM Professional Standards self-assessment tool](#) to ascertain at which level you're working. My self-assessment proved to me that I was working at the Tier 4 level in all areas except Marketing. As a foundation special school our pupil intake is directed by the local authority and we are always oversubscribed due to the specialist nature of the education we deliver and the increasing numbers of children with high level special educational needs. Therefore, marketing of the school is not an area that is currently focussed upon.

In addition to using the self-assessment tool, I also looked on the [NASBM jobs page](#) at the highest paid vacancies and printed out the job descriptions and person specifications in order to benchmark my abilities against roles paying considerably higher salaries that I was currently earning. (In the past, this is something that I have done at regular intervals in order to ascertain gaps in my skills and experience and then I have proactively looked for opportunities to bridge those gaps). I found that it was very helpful to have evidence from the marketplace when it came to discussing my remuneration with my Principal, governors and our external education consultant who was also asked for her views on my new role.

### 3) Factors that determine the level of pay

I found it helpful to be very clear about the factors that determine the level of pay as follows:

- The size of the school and its complexity.
- The breadth and depth of the role.

- The level of qualifications of the post holder.
- The complexity of the role.
- The diversity of the role.
- The knowledge and experience required to discharge the duties of the role.
- The levels of responsibility for the role – it is equivalent to the role of Deputy Principal?
- The levels of accountability for the role.
- The importance of the role.
- The level of financial responsibility.

In addition, you need to know who has the ability to determine your pay. For example, foundation school staff are employed by the school's governing body not the local authority so it is the governing body that has the right to determine staff pay. In its document entitled "School Business Manager Pay and Grading" published in February 2016, the National Association of Head Teachers stated that:

*"Voluntary aided and foundation schools, and academies and free schools, are all able to determine pay for SBMs that is commensurate with other leadership group members in their schools."*

It can be helpful to be able to quote from such papers when making your case. If your school is still a local authority maintained school, you may find it much harder to have your pay level reassessed if the local authority has capped pay for your role at a specific level. Other quotes that you may find useful include:

*"In the last 12 to 18 months, ASCL has moved to describing the SBM roles as "School Business Leader", echoing the terminology within the SBM Competency Framework and reinforcing that this role is integral to school leadership."*

*"SBMs routinely take on the core roles which a Director of Finance & Resources might undertake in a similar sized business. SBMs are usually responsible for budgets, income generation, procurement, human resources, site management, office administration and resource allocation. In brief, SBMs are as important in keeping the school running as other senior leaders are in keeping teaching and learning on track." – Secretary for Education, 2014*

Both quotes are taken from "The Age of the School Business Manager" report published by Every (previously TES Foundation) in September 2015 (the date of which explains the reference to the SBM Competency Framework in the first quote which has now been superseded by the Professional Standards).

#### **4) Using audit tools**

The next step is to carry out a personal audit of your qualifications, what roles you hold and the impact you have. For example, I have a Masters in Business Administration, the National General Certificate in Health & Safety (NEBOSH), a Certificate in Accounting, and the Certificate and Diploma in School Business Management. In terms of roles, I am Chair of the Kent Association of Special Schools School Business Managers Group, a NASBM Fellow and the NASBM Special School Lead. I am also a Specialist Leader of Education in School Business Management and Financial Management for the Collaborative Learning Alliance of Special Schools. The impact I have through these roles is very wide ranging from county to national level.

The capacity audit tool (see the School Leaders Hub on the NASBM website) is a very simple but powerful way of showing at a glance the influence and weight of responsibility you have in your school as demonstrated by my example below.

**Who else can perform the duties of the Strategic Business Leader?**

	<b>Leadership &amp; Strategy</b>	<b>Financial Management &amp; Compliance</b>	<b>Premises &amp; Facilities Management</b>	<b>HR Management</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	<b>Risk Management</b>	<b>ICT</b>
<b>Principal</b>	√						
<b>Deputy Principal 1</b>	√						
<b>Deputy Principal 2</b>	√			√			
<b>Strategic Business Leader</b>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Senior Site Manager</b>			√		√		
<b>ICT Network Manager</b>							√

**5) How to evidence the level at which you're currently working**

Having completed the [NASBM Professional Standards self-assessment tool](#), I found that it was helpful to use the [NASBM Professional Standards Behaviours](#) to demonstrate the level at which I am currently working rather than presenting the whole of the self-assessment tool. In my view, using the self-assessment tool is your due diligence to prove to yourself the level at which you are working whilst evidencing how you perform in terms of the Behaviours is a succinct way of summarising your abilities for your head/governors as shown in my example below.

<b>Behaviour</b>	<b>Tier 4</b>	<b>Evidenced by</b>
<b>Change catalyst</b>	Connects with the education sector communities and networks to debate and shape SBM practice and develop leading-edge insights for the school/trust.	My work at county and national levels through the roles that I hold.
<b>Decision maker</b>	Identifies key questions to ask in complex situations, providing overall direction for the appropriate course of action.	Work on the STLS HR Sub-Group regarding the TUPE transfer of staff.
<b>Skilled negotiator</b>	Secures consensus across a range of complex issues, in sensitive and challenging situations with a range of stakeholders.	Managing capital build projects.
<b>Collaborative</b>	Builds active strategic partnerships with stakeholders.	My regular attendance at the Schools' Funding Forum.
<b>Resilient</b>	Re-prioritises objectives in line with the school's/trust's changing needs.	This is something I do constantly as objectives change e.g. increase in number of classes.
<b>Challenger</b>	Leads training in-house and/or externally to ensure the school's/trust's culture supports an EI approach.	Delivery of presentations on NPQML and NPQSL courses.

## 6) Parity of esteem between pedagogy, governance and business management

The diagram below (taken from the [School Leaders Hub on the NASBM website](#)) demonstrates the equality of importance between pedagogy, governance and business management.



When I discussed this concept with my Principal, she likened it to sitting on a three legged stool - if one of the legs wasn't there then the stool couldn't be effective in carrying out its function. It is very important that heads and governors recognise this fact and it is our role to prove it to them.

## 7) Utilise the research that is already available on pay determination for School Business Managers

In compiling my business case, I read and/or referenced the following research:

- 'Professional Standards and how these support change management' published by Stephen Morales, Chief Executive of NASBM in 2016.
- 'School Business Manager Pay and Grading' published by the National Association of Head Teachers in February 2016.
- 'Charity Finance Salary Survey' published by TPP Recruitment in 2015.
- 'The Age of the School Business Manager' published by Every in September 2015.
- 'Pay Principles for School Business Managers' published by the National Association of Head Teachers in January 2015.
- 'NAHT School Business Manager Survey' published by the National Association of Head Teachers in Spring 2014.

Utilise the research that is most helpful to your individual situation.

## 8) Re-writing your job description and person specification

This is a time consuming process but essential if you want to be able to demonstrate what your current responsibilities actually are rather than what it says they are on your current job description. This is where it is helpful to refer to other high level job descriptions that you have previously accessed in this process. Also, take the time to re-write your person specification as this is where you can evidence what the minimum requirements are in terms of qualifications, experience, skills and abilities and, of course, the fact that you have everything on the list!

## 9) How to benchmark your pay

You need to be able to present clear evidence that you are not being remunerated at a level commensurate with your responsibilities. I found the easiest way to do this was to refer back to the high level vacancies that I found on the NASBM website jobs page and to summarise the details in a table as follows:

<b>Role</b>	<b>School Details</b>	<b>Closing Date*</b>	<b>Remuneration</b>
Strategic Director of Business & Operations	A Secondary & 6th Form converter academy in inner London	15.4.16	£64,689 - £71,026
Director of Finance	A newly formed multi-academy trust in Middlesex	3.3.16	£75,000
Academy Business Manager (Vice Principal)	A Secondary & 6th Form academy in outer London	29.1.16	£62,742 - £67,776

\* Included to show how current the vacancy was

## **10) Let your evidence determine your remuneration**

In my discussions about my level of pay, I made it clear that the above roles attracted inner or outer London weighting which obviously increased the salary and that my school's location would not attract either weighting element. That said, the table does give a very clear indication of the level of remuneration being offered in the marketplace. I also included a table showing the remuneration levels of our 2 Deputy Principals and my current salary to show the inequality in remuneration. In terms of strategy, I didn't ask my Principal/governors for a given salary level because I was confident that the evidence I presented would lead them to the conclusion that my responsibilities were commensurate with those of the other Deputy Principals. Equality of remuneration according to responsibilities is also emphasised by the National Association of Head Teachers in their "Pay Principals for School Business Managers" published in January 2015 which states,

*"The determination of whether their [an SBM's] salary should be at the level of an assistant or deputy head would be down to the governing body and employer to consider based on the level of accountability and responsibility in the role but generally, a SBM performing at the National College competency level for a 'School Business Leader' should be remunerated at the same level as a deputy head in a school."*

Make no mistake that this will be a time consuming and arduous process to go through in order to achieve remuneration commensurate with your responsibilities. But if you don't invest the time in putting together your business case, why would you expect anyone else to?

**Jo Marchant, NASBM Fellow  
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