

Draft Job Quality Framework Definitions

Draft definition for job quality: Job quality encompasses a continuum of job characteristics that shape worker preferences and well-being while providing employers with the foundation to attract, retain, and fully engage their workforce. Characteristics are grouped into three foundational features: stability, opportunity and belonging.

The framework:

- **Stability**
 - Compensation (Self-Sufficiency Income)
 - Comprehensive Benefits (includes balance)
 - Job Safety and Job Security (includes schedule predictability)
 - Flexible Work Arrangements
- **Opportunity**
 - Accessible Recruitment and Hiring and Onboarding Practices
 - Career Advancement & Professional Development
 - Technology & AI in the Workplace
- **Belonging**
 - Worker Rights, Voice, Empowerment & Representation
 - Workplace Culture & Engagement
 - Universal Participation

Stability refers to the foundational elements of a job that provide workers with consistent and secure conditions, enabling them to maintain their livelihood and plan for the future with confidence. A stable job supports an individual's overall well-being through four interconnected components:

- **Compensation at or above Self-Sufficiency Income:** Wages should meet or exceed the local self-sufficiency standard as determined by the [UW Self Sufficiency Standard](#), ensuring that workers can afford basic needs such as housing, food, transportation, childcare, and healthcare without relying on public assistance.
- **Comprehensive Benefits, Including Work-Life Balance:** Stability is enhanced when employers offer a robust benefits package that includes health insurance, paid leave, retirement plans, and wellness programs. Equally important is

supporting work-life balance through policies that allow employees to manage personal and family responsibilities alongside work commitments.

- **Job Safety and Security, Including Schedule Predictability:** A stable job is one where workers feel physically safe and protected from workplace hazards, and where their employment is not precarious. This includes protections against unfair dismissal and access to grievance mechanisms. Predictable and reliable work schedules are also essential, allowing workers to plan their lives and manage other responsibilities with consistency.
- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** The ability to adjust when, where, and how work is performed adds to job stability by accommodating the diverse needs of the workforce. This includes options such as remote work, adjustable hours, or compressed workweeks, which help employees remain in the workforce during life changes or challenges.

Opportunity refers to the extent to which a job offers equitable access to growth, learning, and long-term career success. It emphasizes removing barriers and creating pathways that allow all workers—regardless of background or starting point—to thrive, adapt, and advance in a changing workforce. Core components of opportunity include:

- **Accessible Recruitment, Hiring, and Onboarding Practices:** A quality job begins with fair and inclusive entry points. Recruitment and hiring processes should be transparent, equitable, and designed to reach diverse candidate pools. This includes reducing bias, providing accommodations for individuals with disabilities, recognizing nontraditional qualifications, and ensuring clear communication. Onboarding practices should orient workers effectively, build confidence, and support early engagement and retention.
- **Career Advancement and Professional Development:** Jobs should offer clear pathways for upward mobility and skill-building. This includes regular access to training, mentorship, and promotion opportunities that are available and attainable for all employees. Quality jobs invest in employee growth, recognize and reward contributions, and help workers progress in their careers through internal mobility, certification programs, or education support.

- **Technology and AI in the Workplace:** As digital tools and automation reshape the nature of work, quality jobs provide employees with access to technology and the skills needed to use it effectively. Employers should ensure that the integration of technology and artificial intelligence enhances—not displaces—workers' roles. This includes offering training, involving employees in tech-related decisions, and using technology to improve job quality rather than increase surveillance or reduce autonomy.

Belonging refers to the extent to which workers feel valued, respected, and included in the workplace. It emphasizes the human and relational aspects of job quality—ensuring that employees are not just present, but are heard, empowered, and able to fully participate in shaping their work experience. Belonging is created through three interconnected elements:

- **Worker Rights, Voice, Empowerment, and Representation:** A sense of belonging begins with the assurance that workers have protected rights and meaningful ways to express their perspectives. Quality jobs uphold labor rights, support worker organizing and collective bargaining, and provide channels for feedback and participation in decision-making. Workers should feel empowered to raise concerns, contribute ideas, and influence the policies and practices that affect their day-to-day work.
- **Workplace Culture and Engagement:** Belonging is strengthened in workplaces that foster trust, collaboration, and psychological safety. A strong workplace culture promotes open communication, mutual respect, and recognition of employee contributions. Engaged workers are more productive, loyal, and innovative when they feel connected to their coworkers and aligned with the organization's mission and values.
- **Universal Participation:** Universal Participation means building workplaces where everyone has a real chance and the freedom to do their job well and move forward. It's not just about who's hired; it's about where rules, expectations, and workplace practices allow people to fully-participate, be treated fairly, and succeed. When obstacles are addressed, everyone benefits.