



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

Employee Services

Monday, November 16, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: DENNIS DEAN KIRK, ESQ., EMPLOYEE SERVICES, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Subject: Draft General Schedule Qualifications Policy - EO 13932; Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates

Executive Order 13932 - [Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates](#), issued on June 26, 2020, directs important, merit-based reforms to expand the use of valid, competency-based assessments and narrow the use of educational qualifications in the Federal hiring process. Currently, candidates for Federal employment may qualify for employment by holding formal educational credentials or through relevant experience (e.g., training). In accordance with EO 13932 Sec.2(a)(i)(ii), OPM is updating General Schedule Qualifications Policy so that candidates will now be able to qualify for employment on the basis of competency-based assessments when there are no legal educational requirements to perform a job. While many agencies already use skills and competency-based assessments once a list of certified candidates is developed, education and experience are currently the most common considerations when putting together a list of certified candidates. Upon implementation of EO 13932, agencies must use assessments at the pre-certification stage as a third, and co-equal, mode of establishing minimum qualification (in addition to education and experience), absent OPM requirements for positive education and/or license. Developing competency-based assessments will benefit the Federal workforce by generating larger pools of highly skilled job candidates from which agencies may choose their employees, thereby enabling highly skilled workers with non-traditional educational paths to serve the American public.

OPM is issuing for agency review and comment the following updates to general qualifications draft policy. Please find attached for your review our proposed revisions to the following:

General Schedule (GS) Qualifications Operating Manual (see 508-conformant PDF below)

Group Coverage Qualifications Standard for Administrative and Management Positions (see 508-conformant PDF below)

Group Coverage Qualifications Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions (see 508-conformant PDF below)

The GS Qualifications Operating Manual provides Federal agencies overarching policy for qualifying applicants for Federal jobs. OPM updated the Operating Manual to expand the use of skills and competencies to qualify talent.

Qualifications policy includes individual qualification standards and group coverage qualifications standards. The Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Administrative and Management Positions covers the majority of the General Schedule Occupational Series. Professional and scientific work is covered by specific qualifications requirements as well as the Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions. Both Group Coverage Qualification Standards were updated to include guidance on qualifying talent using skills and competencies in addition to education or experience.

We are providing this draft of our anticipated changes for agencies' review and comments. OPM is requesting that Federal agencies Human Capital Offices review the attached draft policy and provide comments by **Monday, November 30, 2020**.

To assure a quick and comprehensive review of agency comments, we ask that each submission cover your entire agency. Therefore, departments and independent agencies must consolidate information from all of their components or bureaus before sending your electronic comments. Please use the survey link below to submit your comments. A list of the survey questions is provided below. Please prepare your comments to the questions prior to submitting your agency's consolidated comments.

Your comments will inform the development of policy, tools and guidance to assist Federal agencies in implementing the EO and improving hiring across the Federal government.

If you have questions regarding the draft qualification policy and standards, please contact April Davis at fedclass@opm.gov.

Cc: Deputy Chief Human Capital Officers, HR Directors and Chief Executive Officer Councils

Attachments (see 508-conformant PDFs below):

1. General Schedule (GS) Qualifications Operating Manual
2. Group Coverage Qualifications Standard for Administrative and Management Positions
3. Group Coverage Qualifications Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions
4. Request for Comments