**Experience and academic qualifications**

1. In accordance with Staff Regulation 4.4 that allows for the setting of recruitment standards, this policy details the minimum educational requirements and relevant years of work experience for recruitment of external candidates (including staff joining UNDP on secondment, inter-agency transfer or exchange) and selection of internal staff for vacant positions in UNDP. It also provides guidance on the determination of step-in-grade upon initial recruitment into UNDP.
2. This policy is applicable for all new recruitments in UNDP including General Service (GS) staff moving into the Professional category.
3. The e-Recruit online submission and/or Personal History form (P.11) signed by the applicant (including electronic signature) is the official document by which HR practitioners will establish the academic qualifications and determine the number of years of relevant working experience for the purposes of selection and recruitment and for the determination of the step and grade of the selected candidate.

## ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS AND RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

1. Combined with academic qualifications are the number of years of relevant work experience required for the grade level of the post. Relevant work experience and minimum academic qualifications form the basis for UNDP’s standard of a professional workforce.
2. The minimum academic standard for all recruitments and selections to Professional and higher level category posts (IP, and National Officer (NO) is normally a completed, advanced university degree (Masters or equivalent, and also inclusive of professional certifications (CPA etc.) and military/police rank equivalents).
3. In some instances, where specialized job requirements do not require a Masters’ degree or the local labour market makes it impracticable, UNDP jobs may be advertised without the Masters requirement. In these scenarios, candidates holding a completed Bachelors’ degree with two additional years of relevant work experience may be considered. **This determination must be made prior to advertising the vacancy announcement**. There is no longer any possibility to request a waiver of the minimum academic requirements after the vacancy has been advertised with the Masters’ degree or equivalent requirement.
4. Hiring Managers are accountable for ensuring that similar posts are advertised with similar requirements. It is important to avoid any inconsistencies in the approach to filling posts in order to respect the guiding principles of competition and transparency.
5. The minimum standard for all support GS is completion of high school (secondary school) combined with a number of years relevant work experience. Selection to GS Fixed-Term Appointment (FTA) positions at Headquarter locations requires passing a UN administered Global General Service Test (GGST), unless conditions are met allowing the waiver of such a requirement.
6. For GS positions in New York and D.C, the UN GGST test will be waived for current UNDP staff members on FTA/CA/PA appointments and external applicants who have a Bachelor’s degree (or equivalent) from a recognized educational institution.
7. Applicants under serious consideration for posts requiring accountancy and finance skills must take the UNDP Accountancy and Finance Test (UNDP AFT) ***prior to short-listing***. For recruitment guidance and standards applicable to UNDP finance functions please refer to the [Supplemental Recruitment Guidance for UNDP Finance Functions](https://undp.sharepoint.com/teams/OFM/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fteams%2FOFM%2FShared%20Documents%2FStandard%20Operating%20Procedures%20Assessment%20of%20Accounting%20Qualifications%2Epdf&parent=%2Fteams%2FOFM%2FShared%20Documents).

## DETERMINING RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

1. In determining the number of years of relevant work experience, HR practitioners must take into account any relevant experience gained after completion of the first university degree (Bachelors or equivalent) unless the candidate has undertaken ‘mid-career’ studies, in which case some flexibility may be exercised. Compulsory Military Service completed prior to a first university degree may also be taken into account provided that it is directly relevant to the position being recruited for and may be counted as 50% Full Time Equivalent (FTE). Determination of relevance of Military Service will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. In determining the ‘relevancy’ of experience, HR practitioners will make a determination based on the nature of the functions and the competencies required for the position as articulated in the vacancy announcement, or more generally on experience in the UN Common System.
3. Full-time consulting experience in the UN Common System, or like-institutions, may be counted at ‘one-for-one’ or 100% Full Time Equivalent (FTE). Formal volunteer work (for example UNV) may also be counted one-for-one. Non-UN Common System independent consulting, non-formal volunteer work, and remunerated teaching while pursuing academic study, in most cases, may not be counted at greater than 50% FTE. Internships are not counted when determining months of relevant experience.

## RECOGNITION OF UN COMMON SYSTEM PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

1. In recognition of a candidate currently in, or having previously had a Professional post for more than one year in the UN Common System, UNDP will recognize that service and the candidate will be eligible for consideration for Professional and higher level posts.

## SUPPORT TO CAREER PROGRESSION OF LOCALLY RECRUITED STAFF

1. In support of National Staff career progression, a UNDP GS staff in Country Offices with a first level university degree in combination with at least 10 years of continuous service with a FTA /CA/PA may be considered for NO posts that have been advertised with the Masters’ degree or equivalent requirement, provided they meet all other selection criteria.
2. In support of career progression of UNDP GS staff in Headquarters locations, staff possessing a first level university degree in combination with at least 10 years of continuous service with a FTA/CA/PA, may be considered for Professional posts that have been advertised with the Masters’ degree or equivalent requirement, provided they meet all other selection criteria.

## ACADEMIC REFERENCE CHECKS

1. All selected candidates will be required to submit evidence of their academic qualifications and may be subject to academic reference checks. Candidates found to have falsified their academic credentials, or to have submitted qualifications from non-accredited academic institutions (sometimes referred to as ‘*diploma mills*’) is a basis for withdrawing the offer of employment, or, if the employment has started, to terminate it without notice or indemnity.
2. The authority to determine whether degrees presented to UNDP by staff members and applicants constitute recognized academic qualifications lies with the Director, OHR. In making such determinations, the Director, OHR, is normally guided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) listing (referred to as “the UNESCO list” of higher education institutions recognized or otherwise approved by competent authorities in participating countries.
3. UNDP will normally recognize only degrees obtained from institutions on the UNESCO list, except where the Director, OHR, has explicitly, in writing, confirmed the degree as acceptable. Degrees requiring little or no actual course work, degrees awarded for payment of fees only, and degrees granting substantial credits for “lifetime achievements” or “life/work experience” will not be recognized.
4. Incomplete degrees are unacceptable to UNDP as proof of academic qualification, regardless of whether they are associated with a recognized higher education institution.
5. If an academic degree was obtained from an institution that is not in the UNESCO list, the candidates, including internal candidates are obliged to provide supporting evidence that the degree is legitimate. Hiring managers or staff members may request a review by the Director, OHR, who will confirm, explicitly and in writing, whether the degree is recognized. Without proper documentation and until this confirmation is received, no offer of appointment cannot be made to the candidate.
6. Staff members who, in their P.11 and other application documents, misrepresent their qualifications or present a degree that is determined to be illegitimate, are subject to disciplinary proceedings or any other appropriate administrative action.

# FTA AND TA PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

**Academic Qualifications and Minimum Years of Relevant Work Experience**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of Appointment** | **Masters or Higher + Years of Experience** | **“License” + Years of Experience** | **Bachelors + Years of Experience** |
| **P-1/NO-A (ICS-8)** | **0** | **1** | **2** |
| **P-2/NO-B (ICS-9)** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **P-3/NO-C (ICS-10)** | **5** | **6** | **7** |
| **P-4/NO-D (ICS-11)** | **7** | **8** | **9** |
| **P-5/ (ICS-12)** | **10** | **11** | **12** |
| **D-1/P-6 (ICS-13)** | **15** | **16** | **17** |
| **D-2/P-7 (ICS-14)** | **>15** | **>15** | **>15** |

**FTA AND TA GS RECRUITMENT STANDARDS**

**Academic Qualifications and Minimum Years of Relevant Work Experience**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of Appointment** | **High School +Years of Experience** | **Bachelors + Years of Experience** |
| **GS-1 (ICS-1)** | **0** | **0** |
| **GS-2 (ICS-2)** | **2** | **0** |
| **GS-3 (ICS-3)** | **3** | **0** |
| **GS-4 (ICS-4)** | **4** | **1** |
| **GS-5 (ICS-5)** | **5** | **2** |
| **GS-6 (ICS-6)** | **6** | **3** |
| **GS-7 (ICS-7)** | **7** | **4** |