

**ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE
FOR UNDP GS POSITIONS IN HQS ON
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ASSESSMENT TEST**

Purpose:

The purpose of this administrative note is to provide the necessary background and clarity for determining the applicability of the UN Administrative Support Assessment Test (ASAT), (previously known as the UN Clerical Test), as it pertains to the recruitment of General Service (GS) staff in UNDP New York. The present guidance note is without prejudice of any specialized or technical tests that the hiring unit may require for the selection to a GS post (e.g. Finance and Accounting technical assessment), as specified in the vacancy announcement.

Background:

The United Nations has used the ASAT for HQ locations to assess the general aptitude of applicants for General Service (GS) positions for several decades. The test measures not only arithmetic problem solving skills but also basic cognitive, reasoning, analytical skills and time management skills. This test has been a hallmark of GS recruitment at HQ for decades.

The relevance of this test in terms of our current support staff needs and present day labour market is now in question. The test was designed for a labour market where university degrees were largely absent among applicants for support staff positions. However, four year bachelor's degrees, or their equivalent, are now common in the New York labour market.

Context:

Virtually all graduates with bachelor degrees have demonstrated the intellectual competencies and relevant technical skills (computing) that are assessed in the current UN ASAT. Moreover, with the requisite years of work experience of our recruitment standards, basic office skills and competencies can be determined from work experience. Indeed, many of the assessed competencies in the ASAT may no longer be relevant to our work requirements and our workforce is now populated by many colleagues who have demonstrated satisfactory (or even excellent) performance in support jobs in 100 series GS positions but have not passed the test.

Proposal:

As a consequence, the UN ASAT will be waived for all applicants to New York GS positions who possess a fully completed Bachelors degree or an equivalent four-year academic degree beyond high school, and/or whose work experience while under a 100-series appointment in a country office and in HQ locations with the UN common system (current or in the work experience) have demonstrated the necessary technical skills for our work environment.

To be specific, for GS positions in NY the UN clerical test will be waived for UNDP staff members holding 100-series appointments:

- who have a Bachelors degree or equivalent from a recognized educational institution, for at least 3 years education after high school; or
- who do not have a Bachelors degree or equivalent from a recognized educational institution but have demonstrated satisfactory performance in GS posts in country offices, Regional Centres or HQ locations for at least five years under a 100-series appointment.

The same applies to staff members who are holding, or held, a 100-series appointment with the UN common system in their work history.

All external candidates (whether they are ALDs or SSAs, Service Contract holders, UNVs) need to go through the clerical exam for HQ GS positions.

This new directive will be incorporated into the new Recruitment and Selection policy and will be monitored to ensure the objectives of the recruitment standards are fully met. It is stressed that while applying this procedure, due consideration will continue to be given to the order of retention as per staff rule 109.1. This administrative directive is effective from the date of signature (8 August 2008) when consultations with Staff Council and APP members began.