

## U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

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QUALIFICATION STANDARDS FOR GENERAL SCHEDULE POSITIONS  
STANDARDS

# Information Technology Management Series, 2210 — Questions and Answers

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1. **Question:** Why did OPM revise the qualifications for the Information Technology (IT) Management Series, 2210?

**Answer:** OPM revised the qualification standard to update the occupational requirements and to align the standard with the job family classification standard *Job Family Standard for Administrative Work in the Information Technology Group*.

2. **Question:** Do agencies have to continue using either Alternative A or Alternative B?

**Answer:** Yes, agencies must continue using one of two alternative qualification requirements, Alternative A or Alternative B.

3. **Question:** What is the difference between Alternative A and Alternative B?

**Answer:** *Alternative A* covers GS-5 through GS-15 (or equivalent) and must be used for GS-5 and GS-7 positions requiring IT-related education and/or IT-related experience. *Alternative B* covers only positions at the GS-5 or GS-7 (or equivalent) that do not require IT-related education or IT-related experience upon entry.

4. **Question:** Why are the qualification requirements for the IT Management Series, 2210 covered under two separate individual qualification standards?

**Answer:** Previously Alternative A and B requirements were in one document, titled *Individual Occupational Requirements for GS-2210: Information Technology Management Series*, which had to be used in conjunction with the *Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Administrative and Management Positions*. In an effort to streamline and improve usability, all Alternative A requirements were combined into an individual qualification standard, *Information Technology Management Series, 2210 (Alternative A)*. All qualification requirements for Alternative B were combined into a separate individual qualification standard, *Information Technology Management Series, 2210 (Alternative B)*.

5. **Question:** How were the experience requirements in the qualification standard identified?

**Answer:** The experience requirements were identified based on a Governmentwide occupational analysis of IT positions, input from subject matter experts from the Federal IT community, and comments from agencies, including the Federal Chief Information Officers Council.

6. **Question:** Do agencies have to assess candidates on all the experience requirements?

**Answer:** If a candidate's eligibility is based on experience rather than education the agency must assess on all of the experience requirements.

7. **Question:** Can agencies supplement the minimum qualifications?

**Answer:** Yes, this has not changed. Agencies may continue to supplement minimum qualifications with additional requirements (i.e., selective factors) identified through job analysis. Selective factors become part of the minimum requirements for a position.

8. **Question:** What is a selective factor?

**Answer:** A selective factor is a "screen-out" (i.e., if an applicant does not meet a selective factor, he/she is ineligible for further consideration).

Selective factors:

- are essential for successful performance on the job (i.e., if individuals do not have the selective factor, they cannot perform the job)
- are almost always geared toward a specific technical competency/knowledge, skill, or ability
- require extensive training or experience to develop and
- cannot be learned on the job in a reasonable amount of time.

9. **Question:** What else can an agency do to supplement the qualification standard?

**Answer:** Additionally, agencies may continue to use quality ranking factors, if supported by job analysis. Quality ranking factors significantly enhance performance in a position, but, unlike selective factors, are not essential for satisfactory performance. Applicants with higher proficiency levels on a quality ranking factor are ranked above those with lower proficiency levels. Agencies may not rate qualified candidates ineligible solely for failure to possess a quality ranking factor. With quality ranking factors, the focus is on the level of proficiency the candidate brings to the job. This flexibility continues to ensure managers can specify the competencies/KSAs that enhance significantly performance in a given position.

10. **Question:** Must agencies evaluate current employees in the 2210 series using this qualification standard for the position they currently hold?

**Answer:** Agencies are not required to re-evaluate individuals who currently occupy a position in this series. Also, agencies are not required to re-evaluate employees for promotion when they are in a career ladder position where competition is not required for promotion. Agencies must use this qualification standard when evaluating the qualifications of candidates applying for positions in the IT Management Series, 2210, including situations where employees apply to be promoted.

11. **Question:** Is the employing agency responsible for determining proficiency levels?

**Answer:** Yes, the employing agency must determine proficiency levels based on a job analysis of the position to be filled.

12. **Question:** How will agencies assess the experience requirements?

**Answer:** Agencies are required to use validated (i.e., job-related) assessment procedures when examining applicants for competitive service positions. These assessment procedures must comply with the requirements in 5 CFR part 300, and the *Delegated Examining Operations Handbook, 2007 (DEOH, 2007)* (Chapter 2, Section C), and be consistent with the technical standards in the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (Uniform Guidelines)* (see 29 CFR Part 1607).

Examples of assessment procedures include:

- job knowledge tests
- rating schedules
- ability tests
- work samples
- situational judgment tests
- structured interviews

For more information refer to the [Delegated Examining Operations Handbook \(DEOH\)](#) and the [Assessment Decision Guide](#).

13. **Question:** Must agencies continue to use either the Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) written tests or the ACWA rating schedules when using *Alternative B*?

**Answer:** The ACWA written tests and the ACWA rating schedules are two assessment tools that comply with the requirements stated in Question & Answer #12 and are validated for use with the professional and administrative positions found at Appendix D in the *DEOH, 2007*. Agencies are not required to use ACWA and may use an alternative assessment tool, as long as that alternative(s) complies with the requirements stated in Question & Answer #12, with respect to the position(s) for which it is being used. If an agency has not developed alternative procedures for those positions identified in Appendix D, *DEOH, 2007*, OPM recommends continued use of ACWA.

Agencies may not replace validated assessments with education requirements because they do not constitute an assessment tool. Rather, they are part of the qualification standard and do not comply with the applicable requirements for a valid assessment tool. If an agency chooses to develop its own assessment tool, we recommend the agency consult with its legal counsel regarding whether the tool complies with all applicable requirements.

This page can be found on the web at the following url: <http://www.opm.gov/Qualifications/standards/IORs/gs2200/2210-FAQ.asp>