

Annex VI
Guidelines on Recruitment

Table of contents:

- I. Level of recruitment**
- II. Required qualifications**
 - Staff in the professional and higher categories (internationally recruited professional staff)
 - Staff in the national officers category
 - Staff in the general service category
- III. Local recruitment**
- IV. International recruitment**
- V. Diligence in recruitment**
 - Verifying academic credentials
 - Obtaining information from previous employer
 - Checking references
- VI. Step of appointment**
- VII. Offer of appointment**
- XIII. Length of initial appointment following recruitment**
- IX. Nationality**
- X. Nationality of NPOs**
- XI. Family relationships**
 - Parents, children and siblings
 - Spouses
 - Supervisory and similar relationships
 - Marriage of one staff member to another
- XII. Medical clearance**
- XIII. Government clearance**
- XIV. Effective date of appointment/starting date**
- XV. UNFPA Letters of Appointment**
 - General information
 - Officials authorized to issue the UNFPA Letter of Appointment
- XVI. Re-employment**
 - New appointment
 - Reinstatement
- XVII. Break in service for interns**
- XVIII. Previous termination, dismissal or resignation as a result of misconduct**

I. Level of recruitment:

1. Appointment following recruitment occurs at the classified and advertised grade level of the post (see section in this policy on principle of appointment at the level of the post and possible exceptions to that principle).

II. Required qualifications:

2. In addition to the core and functional competencies required for the post, persons subject to recruitment for service with UNFPA shall be qualified as follows:

Staff in the professional and higher categories (internationally recruited professional staff):

3. Recruitment requires an advanced degree from a properly accredited university. An exception may be authorized by the Director, DHR, if this is in the interest of UNFPA, *e.g.* in cases in which a candidate has extraordinary, demonstrated and relevant experience.
4. Internationally recruited professional staff should have proficiency in English and a working knowledge in at least one other of the official languages of the United Nations. Exceptions may be authorized by the Director, DHR.
5. In the case of internationally recruited project personnel recruited for a duty station where English is not the working language, English may be substituted by another official language. However, such project personnel should have at least a basic working knowledge of English.
6. UNFPA pursues a competency based recruitment process. Unless otherwise stated in the vacancy announcement, UNFPA does not normally establish minimum time frames for work-related, relevant experience as a prerequisite for recruitment at a specific grade level.

Staff in the National Officers category:

7. Recruitment typically requires an advanced degree from an accredited university. An exception may be authorized by the Director, DHR, if this is in the interest of UNFPA, *e.g.* in cases in which a candidate has extraordinary, demonstrated and relevant experience.

8. National Professional Officers should be proficient in the official language of the country in which their duty station is located. They should also have a working knowledge of English.
9. Staff Rule 4.4(b) provides that national officers must be of the nationality of the country where the office concerned is located.
10. UNFPA pursues a competency based recruitment process. Unless otherwise stated in the vacancy announcement, UNFPA does not normally establish minimum time frames for work-related, relevant experience as a prerequisite for recruitment at a specific grade level.

Staff in the general service category:

11. Members of the general service must be proficient in the United Nations working language at the duty station. They should have at least a basic working knowledge of English.
12. Staff in the general service category do not have to be nationals of the country where the office concerned is located. However, if they are not of the nationality of the country where the office concerned is located, they have to be authorized and permitted to work in that country.
13. UNFPA pursues a competency based recruitment process. Unless otherwise stated in the vacancy announcement, UNFPA does not normally establish minimum time frames for work-related, relevant experience as a prerequisite for recruitment at a specific grade level.

III. Local recruitment:

14. In accordance with Staff Rule 4.4(a), all staff in the general service and related categories, including the national officers category, shall be recruited locally. This means that they shall be recruited in the country or within commuting distance of each office.
15. Remuneration is based on a salary scale established for the country. The salary scale is determined by periodic salary surveys and is based on the best prevailing rates in the locality for nationals carrying out functions of the same level.

IV. International recruitment:

16. Staff members in the professional and higher categories are subject to international recruitment (Staff Rule 4.5(a)).

17. Staff Rule 4.5(a) further provides: “The allowances and benefits in general available to internationally recruited staff members include: payment of travel expenses upon initial appointment and on separation for themselves and their spouses and dependent children, removal of household effects, home leave, education grant and repatriation grant.” However, staff recruited at the duty station in the Professional and higher categories for posts at that specific duty station – while otherwise considered internationally recruited – will generally not be entitled to payment of travel expenses upon initial appointment and on separation for themselves and their spouses and dependent children, removal of household effects, home leave, education grant and repatriation grant (see Staff Rule 4.5(b)).

V. Diligence in recruitment:

18. The recruiting officer, be it the relevant officer in the Division for Human Resources at headquarters or the UNFPA manager at a field duty station, shall act diligently in the course of the recruitment process. The diligence required includes the following:

Verifying academic credentials:

19. It is important to verify a candidate’s principal academic credentials. This may be done by any formal or informal means, such as telephone call, e-mail exchange or letter to the academic institution.
20. In the event that the academic institution cannot be contacted, the local UNFPA manager, UNDP Resident Representative, a human resources or administrative officer in a peacekeeping mission or a similar person may be requested to assist, for example by investigating locally the credentials of the institution and of the degree in question. Should the credentials of an academic institution or of the degree appear questionable or the institution cannot be contacted or located, a search of Internet data should also be conducted.
21. Finally, if none of these steps yield any evidence, the applicant him/herself may be requested to facilitate a contact between UNFPA and the institution.

Obtaining information from previous employers/supervisors:

22. An applicant’s previous employers/supervisors have been able to observe his/her competencies and conduct over an extended period of time. Therefore, it is important to contact previous employers/supervisors for an assessment of the candidate. Such contact may be made by any form, formal or informal. Typically, contact by telephone is the fastest way to do so.

23. In addition, if the applicant is a staff member of another United Nations system organization, copies of the two most recent performance appraisals should be obtained.

Checking references:

24. Typically, a candidate for recruitment is required to identify references in favor his/her application. While these references are suggested by the applicant, they, nevertheless, may yield important information relevant for the recruitment.

Documenting steps taken:

25. Any of the above steps concerning diligence in recruitment should be briefly documented.

Point in time:

26. The above steps should be taken before the CRB meets, but at the latest before the offer letter is sent to the selected applicant.

VI. Step of appointment following recruitment:

27. As a rule, in accordance with Staff Rule 3.4, on appointment following recruitment the staff member shall be placed in the first step of the level of his/her post.
28. As an exception to the rule, Staff Rule 3.4 makes it possible that such person may be placed in a higher step. This exception may be authorized by the Chief Human Resources Business Partner (CHRB) for staff members in the International Professional and higher categories and by the respective Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) of the region for staff members in the National Professional Officer and General Service categories . The reasons for the higher step should be fully explained in writing and added to the file.
29. If a successful applicant is recruited from another organization using the UN common system of salaries and allowances and he/she was appointed by the releasing organization at the same grade level as the post for which he/she is being recruited, the candidate will receive the step according to normal step increment.

VII. Offer of appointment:

30. A letter making an “offer of appointment” may be sent to the selected candidate. The letter conveying the offer is distinguished from the Letter of Appointment.

Given that recruitment proceedings are expensive, the offer is intended to inform the selected applicant of the specifics of the envisioned appointment and to permit that person, on the basis of the information provided, to inform UNFPA whether he/she is committed and intent on joining UNFPA. On the basis of this information, UNFPA will invest time and effort in the recruitment process.

31. The offer of appointment brings to the attention of the selected applicant the terms, conditions and salary that apply to the envisioned appointment. The letter should state that it is conditional and subject to a number of administrative clearances, including, but not limited to, medical clearance and government clearance where applicable.
32. Furthermore, the offer should emphasize that the selected applicant should not resign from his/her present employment or take any other action that may result in financial loss or personal inconvenience until UNFPA has notified the applicant in a separate communication.
33. Such offer should not be issued prior to the completion of the steps concerning diligence in recruitment.

XIII. Length of initial appointment following recruitment:

34. The initial fixed-term appointment of a staff member shall normally be for a period of *one year*.
35. The Director, DHR, may authorize a shorter or longer period of appointment following his/her determination that such shorter or longer appointment is in the interest of UNFPA.

IX. Nationality:

36. Staff Rule 4.3(a) provides: "In the application of Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, the United Nations shall not recognize more than one nationality for each staff member."
37. In accordance with Staff Rule 4.3(b), if a candidate for recruitment has been legally accorded nationality status by more than one State, the candidate's nationality for the purposes of the Staff Regulations and Rules shall be the nationality of the state with which the staff member is, in the opinion of Director, DHR, most closely associated. In arriving at a determination, the Director, DHR should consider all known circumstances to determine the nationality with which the candidate is most closely associated. The candidate may be required to provide additional information to permit the Director, DHR to arrive at a reasoned determination.

38. If a determination as to which nationality a candidate is most closely associated with has been made previously by another Organization of the UN common system of salaries and allowances, the Director, DHR will defer to this determination.

X. Nationality of National Professional Officers:

39. Staff Rule 4.4(b) provides that national officers must be of the nationality of the country where the office concerned is located.
40. If an applicant who is considered for appointment as a national officer has citizenship of more than one state, the nationality corresponding to the country where the duty station is located shall be designated as the nationality for purposes of the Staff Regulations and Rules.

XI. Family relationships:

41. The rules governing the appointment of more than one member of the same family are established in Staff Rule 4.7.

Parents, children and siblings:

42. As a general rule, appointment shall not be granted to a person who bears any of the following relationships to a staff member of UNFPA: father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister. An exception may be made only where another person equally well qualified cannot be recruited.

Spouses:

43. The Director, DHR may appoint a husband or wife of a staff member to a vacant position provided that he or she is fully qualified for the post for which he or she is being considered and that the spouse is not given any preference by virtue of the relationship to the staff member.

Supervisory and similar relationships:

44. In any event, a staff member who bears to another staff member any of the relationships specified above (parent, child, sibling or spouse) shall not be assigned to serve in a post which is superior or subordinate in the line of authority to the staff member to whom he or she is related and shall disqualify himself or herself from participating in the process of reaching or reviewing an administrative decision affecting the status or entitlements of the staff member to whom he or she is related.

The marriage of one staff member to another:

45. The marriage of one staff member to another shall not affect the contractual status of either spouse, but their entitlements and other benefits shall be modified as provided in the relevant Staff Regulations and Rules. The same modifications shall apply in the case of a staff member whose spouse is a staff member of another organization participating in the United Nations common system. Where both husband and wife are staff members and maintain separate households because they are assigned to different duty stations, the Secretary-General may decide to maintain such separate entitlements and benefits, provided that this is not inconsistent with any staff regulation or other decision of the General Assembly.

XII. Medical clearance:

46. Staff Regulation 4.6 provides: “The Secretary-General shall establish appropriate medical standards that staff members shall be required to meet before appointment.”
47. The initial purpose of medical clearance of candidates selected for employment is to ensure, as far as possible, that their medical status meets the United Nations standards of physical and mental fitness for employment. The purpose of medical clearance of staff members subsequent to their appointment is to ensure that they continue to maintain such fitness in a manner that enables them to perform the functions assigned when they are redeployed to other duty stations, requested to travel on mission, detailed or assigned to peacekeeping, humanitarian and political missions.
48. Medical clearance of both candidates for recruitment and of staff members is determined with reference to their medical status and occupation, as well as to the general conditions at the duty station at which they are expected to serve. Aspects such as epidemiological factors and medical facilities at the duty station are particularly important in this respect.
49. Candidates for recruitment will not be screened for HIV prior to their employment, nor will staff be screened during the course of their service. Furthermore, staff members will not be required to undergo HIV testing as a condition for obtaining health insurance coverage following appointment.
50. Should time be of the essence, the medical examination has been completed but medical clearance is pending, applicants may be appointed for up to three months, subject to the express provision that the appointment is made under the additional condition that the staff member is medically cleared and that medical clearance is required for any renewal of the appointment. This should remain an exception and

requires the approval of the Director, DHR. The person concerned should be informed in writing that he/she is not yet medically cleared and that, as a result, medical insurance coverage has not been obtained.

51. UNFPA applies the terms of the United Nations Secretariat policy on medical clearance.¹

XIII. Release by government:

52. In case an applicant intends to take leave of absence from a government for the time of service with UNFPA, the applicant shall obtain the agreement from his/her Government for his/her release. The same shall apply in the case of extension of appointment of a staff member who is on leave of absence from his/her Government. UNFPA may, if considered appropriate under the circumstances, provide a written request for (extension of) leave of absence from the government either to the applicant/staff member or directly to the government.

XIV. Effective date of appointment/starting date:

53. Staff in the professional and higher categories (*i.e.* internationally recruited staff): In accordance with Staff Rule 4.2, the appointment shall take effect from the date on which the staff member enters into official travel status to assume his or her duties. If the staff member concerned is recruited at the duty station in the professional or higher categories for a post at that specific duty station and does not need to enter into official travel status to assume his duties, the appointment shall take effect from the date on which the staff member starts to perform his or her duties
54. Staff in the general service and related categories (*i.e.* locally recruited staff): In accordance with Staff Rule 4.2, the appointment shall take effect from the date on which the staff member starts to perform his or her duties.
55. After a person has been selected for a post and offered an appointment by UNFPA, the date of assumption of duties must be determined. While in some cases the assumption of work by the selected candidate may not be urgent, it may be so in other cases. The appropriateness of any starting date, thus, clearly depends on the operational requirements of the substantive unit and the views of its substantive manager.
56. To provide for a direct line of communication in cases in which the starting date is subject to discussion, in cases in which DHR conducts the recruitment, the

¹ U.N. Doc. ST/AI/2000/7 of 15 August 2000 or any subsequent policy.

responsible officer in DHR is authorized to delegate the negotiation and determination of the starting date to the substantive manager. In cases in which the manager of a UNFPA field duty station conducts the recruitment, he/she shall negotiate the starting date.

XV. UNFPA Letters of Appointment:

General information:

57. Effective 1 July 2004, the Secretary-General delegated appointment authority to the Executive Director of UNFPA.² The scope of this delegation includes that the Executive Director of UNFPA shall, in accordance with the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, appoint staff members of UNFPA through the issuance of UNFPA Letters of Appointment. Furthermore, the Secretary-General authorized the Executive Director of UNFPA to further delegate such authority to UNFPA personnel.
58. Staff members serving with UNFPA shall be appointed under UNFPA Letters of Appointment for service with UNFPA and issued on behalf of the Executive Director.

UNFPA officials authorized to issue UNFPA Letters of Appointment on behalf of the Executive Director:

59. Subject to other provisions in this policy, Letters of Appointment shall be issued and signed *on behalf of* the Executive Director by the following officials:

For internationally recruited staff:

60. For staff members who are internationally recruited (staff in the professional and higher categories), the Director, DHR, and his/her designee(s) are delegated the authority to issue the Letter of Appointment.

For locally recruited staff:

61. For staff members who are locally recruited at UNFPA field duty stations (staff in the national officers category and in the general service category at field duty stations), the respective HRBP is delegated the authority to issue the Letter of Appointment.

² See U.N. Doc. ST/SGB/2004/10 of 28 May 2004, available on PPM, Human Resources, Personnel Policies and Procedures.

62. For staff members who are locally recruited (staff in the general service category) at headquarters, the Director, DHR, and his/her designee(s) are delegated the authority to issue the Letter of Appointment.

Accountability:

63. The officials authorized herein to issue UNFPA Letters of Appointment are accountable to the Executive Director for the exercise of the authority delegated to them in this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, abidance by the terms of this policy.

XVI. Re-employment and Reinstatement:

Re-employment under a new appointment:

64. Staff Rule 4.17 provides: “A former staff member who is re-employed shall be given a new appointment unless he or she is reinstated.” See further Staff Rule 4.17(b).

Reinstatement:

65. In accordance with Staff Rule 4.18, a former staff member who held a fixed term or continuing appointment and who is re-employed under a fixed term or continuing appointment within twelve months of separation from service may be reinstated.
66. If the former staff member is reinstated, it shall be so stipulated in his or her Letter of Appointment.
67. Upon reinstatement, the staff member’s service shall be considered as having been continuous. The staff member is required to return to UNFPA any monies he/she received on account of separation, including termination indemnity under Rule 9.8, repatriation grant under Rule 3.19 and payment for accrued annual leave under Rule 9.9.
68. The interval between separation and reinstatement shall be charged, to the extent possible to annual leave, with any further period charged to special leave without pay. The staff member’s sick leave credit under Staff Rule 6.2 at the time of separation shall be re-established; the staff member’s participation, if any, in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) shall be governed by the Regulations of that Fund. (See article 24 of the Regulations of the UNJSPF).

XVII. Break in service for interns:

69. Interns with UNFPA shall not be eligible for recruitment within a 3 month period following the conclusion of their internship.

XVIII. Previous termination, summary dismissal or resignation as a result of misconduct:

70. Applicants whose appointment with the United Nations or another international organization applying the United Nations common system of salaries and allowances was terminated for misconduct, or applicants who were summarily dismissed for misconduct, shall not be eligible for recruitment for service with UNFPA. The same shall apply in those cases in which an applicant previously resigned from service with the United Nations or another international organization of the United Nations common system following or in connection with allegations of misconduct.