

FAQs: Global General Services Test (GGST)

1. What is the GGST?

GGST stands for the Global General Services Test. Developed in-house by the United Nations Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), the GGST is a new supervised/proctored, computer-based global test, which will replace the previous Administrative Services Assessment Test (ASAT). It is used to assess candidates during the selection process for positions in the General Service (GS) category of staff.

2. Why was it decided to replace the former clerical test, the ASAT?

The ASAT was developed in the 1980s and updated in the 1990s. Until 2010, the ASAT was conducted in UN Headquarters and also locally in UN Offices Away from Headquarters but results were not recognized evenly across all duty stations. In 2010, at the 30th session of the Staff Management Coordination Committee (SMCC), it was agreed that OHRM would develop a modern, relevant global GS test that is consistent across the organization.

3. How would you describe the GGST?

The GGST is a completely new test built on the recommendations of United Nations hiring managers and assessment specialists to meet the Organization's staffing needs of today and the foreseeable future. It is computer-based and will be administered online in a supervised/proctored environment.

4. Where does it fit in the assessment process for recruitment?

While the former GS-level test (ASAT) was administered as the first step in the recruitment process, the GGST is administered to candidates who have been successfully screened and long- or short-listed. Candidates who pass the GGST will be invited to the Competency-based Interview.

5. Which positions require an applicant to pass the GGST?

The GGST is required for candidates applying to positions at all levels (1-7) in the General Service category.

6. Who is not required to take the GGST?

The following do **not** need to take or retake the GGST:

- a. Serving staff members (irrespective of the type of appointment) in any UN System Organization who have previously passed the ASAT (or prior Clerical Test) or GGST;
- b. Former staff members (irrespective of the type of appointment) who have separated from any of the UN System Organizations for up to a maximum period of two continuous years (24 months) at the time of application to a regular JO or TJO and who had previously passed the ASAT (or prior Clerical Test) or GGST. Former staff members who have not been employed by any of the UN System Organizations during a continuous 24 month period following separation will be required to take the GGST;
- c. Candidates who are on the GGST roster and who have never been employed by any UN System Organization for up to a maximum period of two continuous years following the passing of the Test. Candidates who are not employed as a staff member by any of the UN

System Organizations during a continuous 24 month period following the passing of the GGST will be required to retake it;

- d. Starting 15 July 2015, candidates who are on the ASAT (or prior Clerical Test) roster and have never been employed as a staff member by any of the UN System Organizations will be required to take the GGST.

7. How long is the GGST roster valid for?

Candidates who pass the GGST will be placed on the GGST roster against the language in which they passed the test. Therefore, candidates who passed the test in English will only be eligible to apply for future JOs with English as at least one of the required languages. This means that if a candidate passed the GGST in French, he/she will not be GGST-exempt for GS JOs with only an English or Spanish requirement and vice versa. In the event the required language of a JO differs from the language a candidate has already passed the GGST in, he/she will have to re-take the GGST in the language required by the JO.

GGST-rostered candidates who do not secure a GS position will remain on the GGST roster for a period of 5 years against the language in which they passed.

8. How was the GGST developed?

The GGST was developed through job analysis, i.e., the review of GS level job descriptions, as well as hiring manager interviews and a review of the latest research in selection testing.

9. What is the overall aim of the GGST?

The test aims to identify suitable candidates for the job through assessment of a sample of the relevant abilities of the General Services category. It was designed to avoid culture- and gender based biases.

10. What does the GGST consist of?

The GGST consists of three sections: Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning and Situational Judgment. The GGST lasts 105 minutes (1h 45 minutes). The Verbal Reasoning section lasts 40 minutes, the Numerical Reasoning section 45 minutes and the Situational Judgment section 20 minutes.

11. What does the Verbal Reasoning section consist of?

The Verbal Reasoning section tests the candidate's ability to work effectively with written communication. This involves identifying and interpreting relevant written information from the kinds of texts that GS staff is likely to deal with at work, e.g., proposals, emails, letters and reports.

12. What does the Numerical Reasoning section consist of?

The Numerical Reasoning section tests the candidate's ability to work effectively with numerical information. This involves identifying and interpreting relevant numerical data from the kinds of non-verbal texts that GS staff is likely to deal with, e.g., charts, maps, calendars and tables.

13. What does the Situational Judgment section consist of?

The Situational Judgment section tests the candidate's ability to work effectively in line with the United Nations core values and competencies. This involves identifying the most and least appropriate actions to take in the kinds of realistic, hypothetical situations that GS staff are likely to face in their day-to-day work.

14. When will the GGST be administered?

Job Openings and Temporary Job Openings will be posted with the GGST or ASAT (or former Clerical Test) requirement beginning 15 July 2014 for NY-based positions. There will be a progressive roll-out to other duty stations from September 2014 onwards.

15. What languages will the GGST be available in?

The GGST is available in English, French and Spanish. Chinese, Russian and Arabic versions are currently under development.

16. What happens if I take the GGST and I fail?

Candidates can take the test up to five times in their lifetime. If a candidate fails the GGST the first time that they take it, the earliest possible date that they can retake the test is three months after the first test date. If a candidate fails the GGST two or more times, they must wait at least six months after each subsequent test date before they can take the test again.

17. How will candidates be notified about the GGST?

Candidates will receive an email telling them which UN Office to report to on the day of the test, how to get there, what to take with them and what to expect on the day of the test.

18. What will happen on the GGST test day?

On the day, candidates report to the UN Office where the GGST is administered as per the instructions they have received. Upon arrival and before the test, candidates will receive full instructions and be given an opportunity to answer sample questions.

19. Is there a sample test that I can review before I take the GGST?

There is no sample test available for review. Regarding how to prepare for the GGST, please see the answer to question 21.

20. How do I get my GGST results?

You will receive an email communication from the local GGST administrator containing your results and any other relevant information.

21. Can I prepare for the GGST?

As the GGST is a general skills test, there is no need to prepare in advance. You can brush up on your basic arithmetic skills for the Numerical Reasoning section (e.g. calculating percentages, etc.) and practice reading in the language in which you are going to take the test for the Verbal Reasoning section. For the Situational Judgment section, you can become more familiar with the UN's core values and competencies. However, this is **not** a requirement.

Before starting the test, you will have the opportunity to attempt a number of sample questions, which provide automatic feedback and are not scored. This will give you a clearer indication of what you will have to do in the evaluated test.

22. Who can I contact if I have any questions regarding the GGST?

For information regarding test venues, times and dates of test administration please contact your local GGST administrator. For any other GGST related questions, you can send an email to: ggst@un.org.