

Global General Service Test (GGST)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the GGST?

GGST stands for the Global General Service Test. Developed in-house by the United Nations (UN) Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), the GGST is a computer-based, proctored global test, which has replaced the Administrative Services Assessment Test (ASAT). It is an entry level assessment requirement for recruiting into the positions in the General Service (GS) category.

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

The ASAT, developed in the 1980s and revised in the late 1990s, tested a basic set of aptitudes needed to perform satisfactorily in an office environment at the time. Until 2010, the ASAT was conducted in UN Headquarters (UNHQ) and also locally in UN Offices Away from Headquarters (OAHs), however, its results were not recognised globally across duty stations. Given the age of the ASAT, its non-uniform administration, and different versions in use across duty stations, the Staff Management Committee in its 30th session in 2010 decided that OHRM would develop a modern, global test globally recognised across the organization to fulfil the entry level assessment requirement for the GS and related category positions.

3. How would you describe the GGST?

The GGST is a completely new test built on the recommendations of UN hiring managers and assessment specialists to meet the Organization's staffing needs of today and the foreseeable future. It is a computer-based online test administered in a supervised/proctored environment. The GGST assesses job-relevant abilities and core competencies of the long-listed applicants for GS positions, through work-relevant scenarios and tasks, in an efficient, effective, and fair manner.

4. Where does the GGST fit in the assessment process for recruitment into GS positions?

The GGST is administered to candidates after the preliminary evaluation (Inspira automatic screening and Hiring Manager manual suitability review), preferably to those on the *longlist* and *before* the administration of written assessment, if any, and interview. Interested parties should apply first to a job opening and may be invited to take the GGST.

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

The GGST is a recruitment prerequisite for positions at all levels (1-7) in the GS and related categories (for candidates who do not have a valid ASAT/GGST record), with the exception of certain functions in related categories (e.g. Security Officers, Nurses, Gardeners, and other Trades and Crafts positions) for which the existing appropriate specialized tests will be given.



6. Who is not required to take the GGST?

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

- a. Serving staff members (irrespective of the type of appointment) in any UN Common System Organization who have passed the Clerical Test/ASAT, or GGST.
- b. Former staff members (irrespective of the type of appointment) who have passed the Clerical Test or ASAT in a duty station where the administration of ASAT is recognized and have been employed by a UN Common System organization for any duration within the last two years of applying for the JO or TJO.
- c. Candidates who have passed the GGST and have never been employed by the UN Common System Organization within the last five years of applying for the JO or TJO.
- d. Candidates who have passed the GGST in one of the official UN languages within the last five years of applying for the JO or TJO with a language requirement other than the one in which the candidate took the GGST in the past (HMs are advised to either ask for evidence for proficiency in the respective language (e.g., language certification) or have a language test in place in the selection process).
- e. Retirees from the UN Common System Organization who can provide evidence that they have passed the Clerical Test or ASAT.
- f. The Administrative Support Assessment Test (ASAT) is only recognised if administered at Headquarters, ECA, ESCWA, UNOG, UNOV, ICTR, or ICTY.
- g. Serving staff members who have been recruited to a specialised position that had no entry test requirement at the time and granted a permanent, continuous, or fixed-term contract could be exempt from the GGST requirement on a case by case basis. Specialised positions are the positions that do not require general office duties, such as drafting written documents, understanding basic data, and other general clerical duties.

7. How long is the GGST result valid for?

Candidates who pass the GGST but who are not employed by any UN System Organization will be put on the GGST database for a period of five years. If a candidate is not employed by any UN System Organization during that period, he/she will be required to retake the GGST. Candidates who had previously passed the GGST will remain on the GGST database for five years from the time of separation from the UN Common System.

8. How was the GGST developed?

The GGST was developed based on in-depth job analysis of the core functions in the GS and related categories, Hiring Manager interviews, and a review of the latest research in selection testing and was pilot-tested with the participation of the staff members across duty stations before it was officially rolled out at UNHQ and OAHs.

**9. What is the overall aim of the GGST?**

The test aims to determine suitable candidates for GS and related positions by assessing job-relevant abilities, core competencies through work-related scenarios and tasks.

10. What is the structure of the GGST?

The GGST consists of three sections which last in total 1 hour 45 minutes: Verbal Reasoning (40 minutes), Numerical Reasoning (45 minutes) and Situational Judgment (20 minutes).

11. What does the Verbal Reasoning section assess?

The Verbal Reasoning section tests the candidate's ability to work effectively with written communication. This involves identifying and interpreting relevant 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 assess?

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 assess?

The Situational Judgment section tests the candidate's ability to deal effectively with work-related situations, in line with the UN 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 did the GGST start to be administered?

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

15. What languages is the GGST available in?

The GGST is available in all official UN languages (i.e., Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish). However, it can only be administered to the eligible candidates in the language required by the Job Opening (JO) or Temporary Job Opening (TJO).

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 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 for six months after each subsequent test date before they can re-take the test.

The result letter sent to those who failed the test will include the earliest date at which a candidate may retake the test. This retest date is not an automatic invitation, candidates should continue to apply to job openings to be invited to retake the test.

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 examination 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.

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

An instruction video on how to navigate through the online testing platform and structure of the GGST along with a sample GGST test available in all official UN languages can be found on the GGST webpage: <https://hr.un.org/page/general-service-examinations>

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?

The GGST is a general ability test; therefore, no preparation is needed. 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.

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.