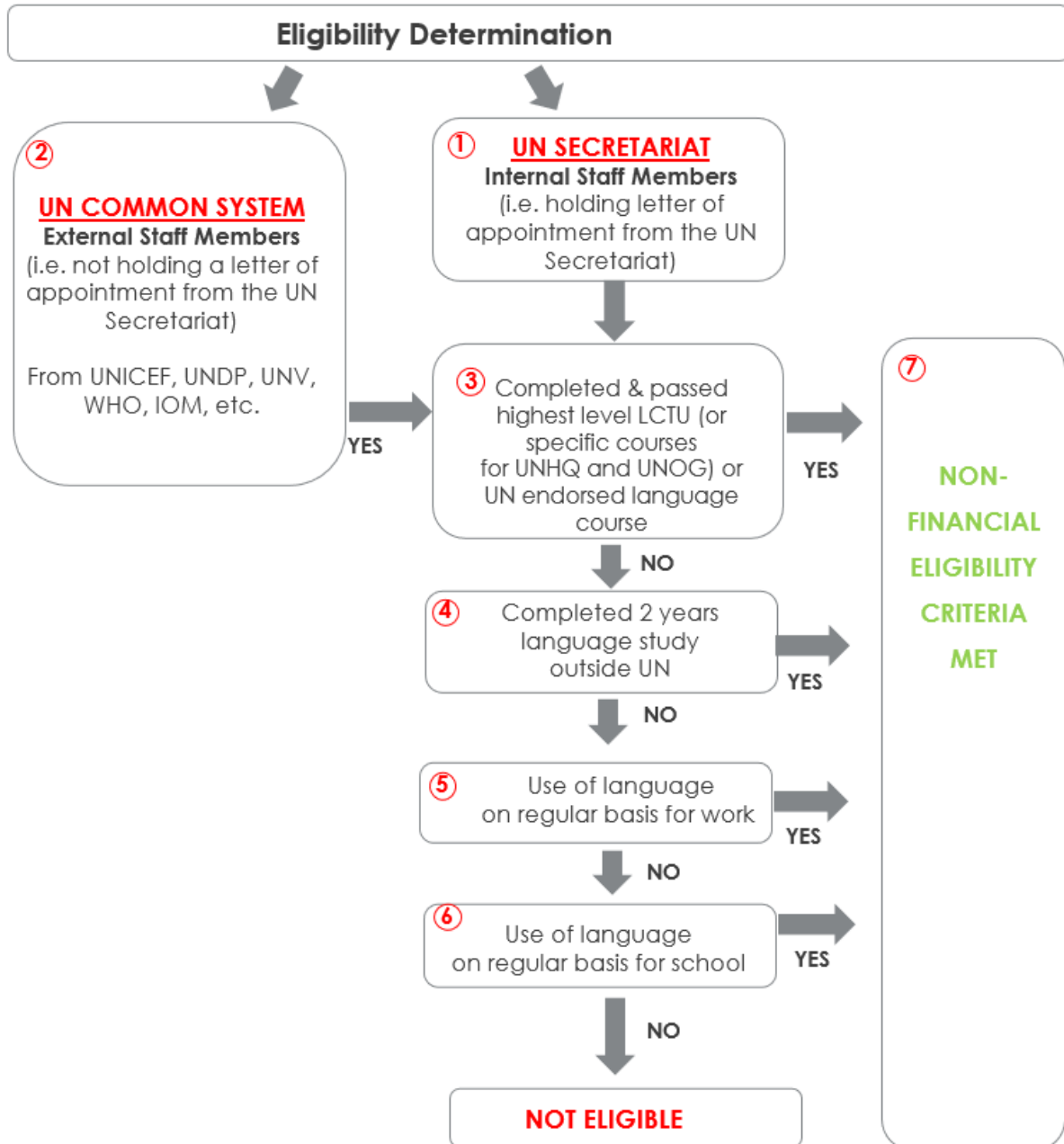# Language Proficiency Examination

Eligibility Determination
The eligibility criteria for the United Nations Language Proficiency Examination (LPE) are stipulated by ST/AI/2021/1. Please follow the steps below to determine your eligibility. Further explanation and the verification documents required for each step are outlined in the notes below.

Eligibility Determination

① **UN SECRETARIAT**
Internal Staff Members
(i.e. holding letter of appointment from the UN Secretariat)

② **UN COMMON SYSTEM**
External Staff Members
(i.e. not holding a letter of appointment from the UN Secretariat)

From UNICEF, UNDP, UNV, WHO, IOM, etc.

YES →

③ Completed & passed highest level LCTU (or specific courses for UNHQ and UNOG) or UN endorsed language course

YES →

NO ↓

④ Completed 2 years language study outside UN

YES →

NO ↓

⑤ Use of language on regular basis for work

YES →

NO ↓

⑥ Use of language on regular basis for school

YES →

NO ↓

NOT ELIGIBLE

⑦ **NON-FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA MET**

Notes:

1. UN SECRETARIAT (Internal staff members)

In accordance with the scope and purpose of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations, the term "United Nations Secretariat", "staff members or staff" refers to all the staff members of the United Nations Secretariat, within the meaning of Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations, whose employment and contractual relationship are defined by a letter of appointment subject to regulations promulgated by the General Assembly pursuant to Article 101, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

2. UN COMMON SYSTEM (Externals)
Staff Members, Contractors, UN Volunteers, Affiliates

The LPE is intended for staff members of the United Nations Secretariat at no cost. The examination is however open to other individuals who were admitted to participating in courses offered by United Nations programs, after they have completed the highest level of that program. This includes staff members of the United Nations common system (non-UN Secretariat) on a cost recovery basis.

The United Nations common system consists of the United Nations Secretariat, its subsidiary organs (including the separately administered funds and programs), the specialized agencies, and affiliated entities.[1] The participating United Nations system entities may vary each year. Participating entities are those which have agreed to the cost recovery mechanism. Please go to LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION (LPE) | HR Portal (un.org) for the list of participating non-UN Secretariat entities for the current examination year.

Serving UN Volunteers may register for the UNLPE for 1 UN official language per year, provided the eligibility criteria contained in this document are met. The enrolment of UN Volunteers (UNV) serving with missions mandated by the UN Security Council is subject to confirmation of funds from the respective UN missions, UN Community Volunteers and UN University Volunteers are not eligible. UNV will validate the list of applicants.

Regardless of meeting the qualification criteria to apply for an LPE, applicants are strongly encouraged to make an informed decision and learn more about the LPE expected language proficiency by consulting the description for UN Level III - Advanced language level of competence at UN Language Framework, and about the exam structure through the practice exams (Fr and En) at LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION (LPE), point 9.

> (a) During registration, applicants are required to upload a document to prove their employment status with a specific UN system entity. The supporting document(s) should state the applicant's name (which should match the name in Inspira – Inspira is the online UN LPE application system), type of appointment, entity issuing the appointment and expiry date of appointment (which must be beyond the date of the examination).
>
> (b) Below are some examples of valid proof of employment status that should be submitted during registration, along with a valid United Nations grounds pass:
>
> - *UN Secretariat staff* member. A valid Letter of Appointment or Personnel Action *staff employed by UN Specialized Agency/Fund/Program:* A valid Letter of Appointment or Contract
> - *UN Volunteers: UN ID card; UNV Personal Action Form (PAF); UNV Letter of extension of contract*

(b) If an applicant has an appointment that expires prior to the date of the LPE written examination, a letter from the Executive Officer, or the head of administration at offices away from Headquarters and field duty stations, expressing the intent to extend the contract beyond the written exam date is required.

3. Use of language on a regular basis for work

Applicants may demonstrate that they currently use the language on a regular basis for work. If the applicant decides to apply for the language that s/he is currently working in, the applicant must provide supporting documentation in the form of a letter, signed by both the applicant's immediate work supervisor and Head of Office, stating the language is used by the applicant on a regular basis at work. For a letter template, please go to Certification of Language Use at Work

4. Completion of the LCTU/LCP highest course or endorsed equivalent

(a) Applicants based in **New York or Geneva** must have completed and passed a qualifying course in the target language at the highest-level offered by the Language and Communications Training Unit (LCTU) or the Language Training Program (LTP), respectively, at the time of registration. Please refer to this document for the Qualifying Courses for the 2024 LPE.pdf

(b) **At duty stations other than New York and Geneva,** the applicant must have completed and passed the highest level of a language course endorsed by the duty station. A language course is considered UN-endorsed if the duty station recognizes that the course meets the standards, requirements and objectives set out by the Organization. The Local Administrator has the responsibility and delegated authority of determining whether a language course is endorsed by his/her duty station. For instance, at a mission duty station where there is limited staff development budget to set up a language and communications program (LCP), a local public language school may be recognized by the mission.

(c) During registration, applicants are required to upload a certificate or document which states their name (which must match the name in Inspira), the language and date of completion of a language programme.

5. Study of the language or regular use in school

For those eligible applicants who have not fulfilled the criteria under No.3 above (Use of language on a regular basis for work), language competence possessed must be equivalent to that achieved at the highest course level of the LCTU or any LCP (as described under No 3 above), unless the applicant meets the criteria under No. 4 or No. 5 below - level of language competence achieved either after two years of study outside the UN or during school attendance is equivalent to the highest language course level at LCTU or any LCP.

6. Study of the language outside UN

(a) The two years of language study outside UN cannot be acquired from LCTU or a UN endorsed language course.

(b) During registration, applicants are required to upload a document (certificate, transcript) which states their name (which must match the name in Inspira), the language and duration of the language course. This document must enable the Local Administrator to determine if the language competence achieved during the two years of study outside the UN is equivalent to (or exceeds) the level of the highest course level offered by the LCTU, LTP or any LCP.

7. Regular use in school

During registration, applicants are required to upload the school curriculum or certificate which states their name (which must match the name in Inspira), the name of the school, the language of instruction, and dates of school attendance. This document must enable the Local Administrator to determine if the language knowledge achieved during regular use in school is equivalent to (or exceeds) the level of the highest course level offered by the LCTU, LTP or any LCP.

8. Eligibility established

Internal staff members of United Nations Secretariat be invited to the LPE if all non-financial eligibility criteria are fulfilled.

External applicants (i.e. non-UN Secretariat staff members) who are part of fee-paying UN common system entities/organizations and who fulfilled all non-financial eligibility criteria, will be invited to the LPE only after their parent UN organization has endorsed payment of their registration fee to the UN Secretariat. The Special Assessments Section (SAS)/DOS will obtain financial endorsement of the LPE registration fee at Headquarters level.

Applicants who have questions regarding non-financial eligibility or required supporting documents should contact their Local Administrator. The list of Local Administrators and their contact details is posted on the LPE website, https://hr.un.org/page/language-proficiency-examination-lpe. Local Administrators will contact SAS/DOS if necessary.

Applicants who have questions regarding financial eligibility should contact their parent organization or parent office. Please note that some agencies do not financially endorse participation of certain categories of staff. Please check with your parent organization.

For FAQs regarding the LPE, please visit our LPE website at:
https://hr.un.org/page/language-proficiency-examination-lpe.
They are located at the bottom of the timeline.

(or specific courses for UNHQ and UNOG) or UN endorsed language course