



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Director for Human Resources

Vienna, 5 December 2012

Staff Instruction No. 28

Subject: Standards for Appointment at a Step Higher than Step One

1. Reference

Staff Regulations 3.03, 3.04 and 3.05; Staff Rule 3.11.3
Staff Regulation 5.04 and respective Staff Rules

2. Purpose

Staff Regulation 5.04 (a) stipulates that fixed-term staff/mission members shall, as a rule, be appointed at step one of the salary scale. Under the conditions specified in Staff Rule 5.04.1, the competent authority for appointment under Regulations 3.03, 3.04 and 3.05 may exceptionally approve the appointment at a higher step provided that the candidate has more than the required years of relevant experience specified in the vacancy notice or that the candidate's remuneration with the previous employer was higher than the one offered by the OSCE.

For cost containment purposes in the context of budgetary constraints, the purpose of this Staff Instruction is to provide standard and transparent provisions for granting of a step higher than step one, **to a maximum of step three**, at the time of initial appointment for fixed-term staff/mission members.

3. Applicability

The Staff Instruction applies to all OSCE Officials upon initial appointment on a fixed-term contracted post in the professional and general service category (D, P, NPO, GS). In accordance with Staff Instruction No.26/2009, short term appointments are always appointed at step one.

4. Effective Date

This Staff Instruction shall take effect on 5 December 2012 and shall cancel and supersede paragraph 12.2 in Staff Instruction No.17/2004. Administrative guidelines issued by the Institutions and Field Operations on the same subject shall be adjusted in accordance with this instruction. In the meantime, in case of inconsistency between this Staff Instruction and any administrative guidance in the Institutions or Field Operations, this Staff Instruction shall prevail.

5. Provisions for granting steps higher than step one within the step three limit

Taking into consideration budgetary concerns, the maximum step that may be granted upon initial appointment shall be **step three**. The provisions below provide the possible grounds for granting a step higher than step one within the limit of step three.

5.1 Provisions for granting steps for more years of required experience

In accordance with Staff Rule 5.04.1 (a) (i), a step higher than step one may be granted when the selected candidate has more than the required years of relevant experience as specified in the vacancy notice.

The following grounds may be used to determine the number of steps that may be granted within the step three limit¹:

- (i) Candidates whose remuneration by his/her most recent employer was based on a system similar to that of the OSCE, and who are appointed by the OSCE at the same grade as his/her current/previous post, will be appointed at the same step or an additional step (if there are six months or less remaining until the candidate's next step increment date as stated on a recent payslip);
- (ii) Candidates whose remuneration by his/her most recent employer was based on a system similar to that of the OSCE and who are appointed to a higher grade may be granted a higher step in accordance with Staff Rule 5.04.3 under which he/she would be given an increase in salary equal to at least the amount that would have resulted from granting of two steps at the lower grade appointment based on the relevant salary scale applicable to the duty station where the candidate is appointed;
- (iii) Candidates who come from a classification and remuneration system not similar to that of the OSCE and who meet all the requirements specified in the vacancy notice may be granted an additional step for every two years of directly relevant and practical experience above the required years specified in the Vacancy Notice. As a general guideline, relevant experience may include:
 - Full-time work experience in the respective field of expertise or other relevant professional area; such as, being employed, self-employed, or elected to a public office on a long term or short term basis.
 - Part-time work experience in the respective field of expertise or other relevant professional area, however, prorated according to the actual working hours.
 - Consultancies carried out in the respective field of expertise or using skills directly relevant to the post, however, only the actual time worked under the contract shall be credited (as opposed to the contract period).²

¹ To ensure transparency with candidates, the OSCE website will clearly state that if selected their appointment shall not be made at a step higher than step three.

² For example, if the contract period is for six months but the actual number of days to be worked under the contract is 20 days, then only 20 days will be considered as part of the calculation for additional steps on appointment.

- Full-time internships at the post-graduate level.
- (iv) Additional educational qualifications shall not substitute for years of experience. Therefore, no additional steps shall be granted for education qualifications that exceed the required level as outlined in the vacancy notice.

5.2 Provisions for granting steps based on remuneration at current/previous place of employment

In accordance with Staff Rule 5.04.1 (a) (ii) a step higher than step one may be granted when the selected candidate's remuneration is higher than that offered by the OSCE and the qualifications in the vacancy notice are fully met. The OSCE shall not necessarily match the complete remuneration package that the candidate may be receiving from his/her current/previous employer, but it may take into consideration such emoluments as performance and other bonuses, car and other allowances, and retirement/social security benefits when comparing it to the overall applicable remuneration package from the OSCE.

The following grounds may be used to determine the number of steps that may be granted within the three step limit³:

- (i) For international Professional contracted positions in the Secretariat and Institutions, the base net remuneration (after taxes) shall be compared to the OSCE remuneration plus post adjustment as outlined in Appendix 3/Table A of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.
- (ii) For international Professional contracted positions in the Field Operations, the base net remuneration (after taxes) shall be compared to the OSCE net remuneration as outlined in Appendix 3/Table B of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules plus the applicable Board and Lodging Allowance.
- (iii) For local general services and national professional contracted positions, the base gross salary shall be compared to the relevant local salary scale as outlined in Appendix 4 of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

5.3 Provisions for granting steps for former OSCE staff being re-employed after a break in service

- (a) When a former contracted OSCE staff/mission member is re-employed within twelve months of being separated⁴, he/she shall be granted:
 - (i) the same step he/she had reached when leaving the Organization if he/she is appointed on a post of the same grade as prior to separation;
 - (ii) the step determined in accordance with Staff Rule 5.04.3 or 5.04.4 if he/she is appointed on a higher or lower grade post than the one they had at the time of separation on a fixed-term appointment from the Organization.

³ The respective Personnel/Administration office shall advise short-listed candidates that if selected their step will not be higher than step three.

⁴ Without prejudice to the application of Staff Rule 3.11.3 on Re-employment

- (b) When a former contracted OSCE staff/mission member is re-employed after a break in service of more than twelve months of being separated, his/her step shall be determined in accordance with paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 above, irrespective of the step he/she had reached at the time of separation from the Organization.

5.4 Provisions for granting steps based on prior secondment experience with the OSCE

When receiving an initial appointment on a fixed-term contracted post in the professional and general service category, secondment experience with the OSCE may be taken into account in accordance with paragraph 5.1 above. However, Board and Lodging Allowance payments shall not serve as a basis for granting additional steps.

6. Procedure

If a candidate requests additional steps up to step three on the ground that he/she has additional years of relevant professional experience as indicated in the relevant job description and vacancy notice, the respective Personnel/Administration Office shall verify the supporting documentation to determine the appropriate corresponding step.

If a candidate requests additional steps up to step three on the grounds that he/she had a higher previous remuneration, the relevant Personnel/Administration Office shall compare the amount indicated on the submitted documentation of former remuneration with the applicable OSCE remuneration package in order to determine the number of possible steps that may be granted at the time of initial appointment.

Candidates whose remuneration by his/her most recent employer was based on a system similar to that of the OSCE will demonstrate his/her base net remuneration with two consecutive payslips which are no older than six months. A candidate who comes from a classification and remuneration system not similar to that of the OSCE will provide official tax statements to demonstrate his/her base net remuneration.

In cases of uncertainty or disagreement, the relevant Personnel/Administration Office shall provide all relevant documents and an explanation regarding the area of uncertainty to the Secretariat Chief, Recruitment Section/DHR for advice and clarification.

The appointing authority shall be accountable for the granting of the initial step within the parameters of the present Staff Instruction. In the case of international staff/mission members, the appointing authority shall consult with the Secretary General prior to exceptionally granting an initial step beyond step three.

7. No Retroactive step determination

Under no circumstances shall additional steps be granted after the signing of a letter of appointment or after the start date of an appointment.