

STAFFING

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To establish Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) procedures for the development of qualification standards for VA positions filled under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3).
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This revision establishes the framework for the development of VA qualifications standards by VA Central Office program officials and occupation-specific subject matter experts, working with representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations. Authority is given to the Secretary of the VA under 38 U.S.C. § 7402 to prescribe qualifications for occupations identified in § 7401 (1) and § 7401(3). This change consists of the addition of Appendix G that provides guidance on the use of and development of VA qualification standards for Title 38 Hybrid positions. The pages in this revision are to be inserted at the corresponding page numbers in part II of VA Handbook 5005, dated April 15, 2002. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005 that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations Web site](#).
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management and Labor Relations.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005, Staffing.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** None.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

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*Use in conjunction with the OPM Standard.

**DEVELOPMENT OF QUALIFICATION STANDARDS
FOR VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (VHA) POSITIONS
FILLED UNDER 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3)**

1. SCOPE. This appendix provides VA procedures for the development of qualification standards by VHA Central Office program officials and occupation-specific subject matter experts, working with representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations, for VHA positions under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3). Authority is given to the Secretary under 38 U.S.C. § 7402 to prescribe qualifications for occupations identified in § 7401(3).

2. BACKGROUND. The following provides basic information about qualification standards and specific information about VA qualification standards.

a. A qualification standard is a statement of the minimum requirements that an individual must meet to be qualified for entry into and promotion in the occupation. This includes education, experience, citizenship, credentialing requirements (licensure, registration, certification), physical requirements and specific competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics).

b. The basic qualification requirements for individuals appointed under 38 U.S.C. § 74 in occupations identified in section 7401(3), are contained in VA qualification standards approved by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs upon recommendation of the Under Secretary for Health.

c. The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration is authorized to approve for the Secretary, qualification standards and examining guides that are established within the Department.

d. Qualification standards for individuals appointed under 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) are based primarily on the rank-in-person concept where the combination of individuals' accomplishments, performance and qualifications determine their grade level. This differs from the Title 5 rank-in-position concept where the grade level is based solely on the duties and responsibilities of the position held. For positions above the full-performance (journey level) the complexity of the assignment and scope of responsibility are considered in establishing grade levels.

e. The qualification standards will be used extensively by members of the occupation who are not human resources professionals. Therefore, the language of Title 38 Hybrid qualification standards must be plain and clear without excessive use of human resources references.

f. These standards apply to all appointments in Title 38 Hybrid occupations under authority of 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) regardless of the nature or tenure of the appointment.

g. Current VA qualification standards for Title 38 Hybrid positions are located in VA Handbook 5005, Part II, I-G1 through the last appendix.

3. IMPLICATION. Qualification standards are critically important documents necessary for the identification of candidates with the needed knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform VA's work.

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Qualification standards establish basic requirements which are predictive of successful performance. The application of qualification standards in VHA is an integral part of ensuring a fully qualified workforce is available to care for our patients.

4. INTERPRETING QUALIFICATION STANDARDS. The following information is pertinent to the interpretation of VA qualification standards:

a. VHA appointing officials and Professional Standards Boards act for the Under Secretary for Health in applying the qualification standards in a fair and consistent manner. Such decisions are made through an analysis of personal data and/or experience records.

b. When there is disagreement on the interpretation of a qualification standard, the appropriate HRM Officer may request an interpretation or decision from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (059). A courtesy copy of such request will be sent to the appropriate VHA Program Official in VA Central Office, and representatives of union organizations at the national level.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES. The following is an explanation of responsibilities associated with the development of VA qualification standards:

a. Qualification standards are developed by teams with representatives from the Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations and subject matter experts from VHA. At least 25% of the VHA team membership will be non-managerial members who are performing the work as a full time practitioner.

b. VHA Field facilities may be requested to review and comment on drafts of VA qualification standards.

c. Professional Standards Boards may recommend changes to qualification standards electronically to the Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (059) to improve the quality and clarity of the standards. The Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations (059) will consult with the appropriate VHA Program Officials before final proposed changes are submitted for consideration.

6. GENERAL GUIDELINES

a. **Education and Experience Requirements.** When developing VA qualification standards, the principle of equal pay for equal work will be followed. The framework for determining grade levels for positions is contained in 5 U.S.C. § 5104 and shall be used for Title 38 Hybrid positions. Other legal provisions providing guidance include: Equal Pay Act, 29 U.S.C. § 206; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e et seq.; Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq.; Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.

b. **Education and Grade Equivalents for one-grade interval positions.** The following table should be used as a guideline for determining appropriate grade levels based on education substitution alone. Specific education substitutions will be included in the individual occupation qualification standard.

Appropriate Grade Levels and Qualifying Education

Grade	Qualifying Education
GS-2	High school graduation or equivalent
GS-3	1 year above high school with courses related to the occupation (Completion of an intensive, specialized course of study of less than 1 year may meet in full the experience requirements for GS-3)
GS-4	2 years above high school with courses related to the occupation or associate's degree
GS-5	4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor's degree with courses related to the occupation, or Bachelor's degree
GS-6 and above	Graduate education or an internship may be used to substitute for specialized experience <i>only</i> in those instances where it is directly related to the position being filled.

c. **Education and Grade Equivalents for two-grade interval positions.** The following table should be used as a guideline for determining appropriate grade levels based on education substitution alone. Specific education substitutions will be included in the individual occupation qualification standard. In some VHA occupations graduate education leading to a degree may not be substituted for the full degree.

Appropriate Grade Levels and Qualifying Education

Grade	Qualifying Education
GS-5	4 academic years above high school leading to a bachelor's degree, or Bachelor's degree
GS-7	See Advanced Entry-Level Placement Criteria (for two-grade interval work)
GS-9	Master's degree (or equivalent graduate degree such as LL.B. or J.D.) or 2 academic years of progressively higher level graduate education in a related field
GS-11	Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree or 3 academic years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to a degree in a related field

NOTE: *Educational training programs, such as an internship, practicum, etc., that are included in, or supplemental to, an academic degree are not creditable for professional experience. Such programs are considered part of the basic requirements for professional practice in the field.*

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d. **Criteria for Advanced Entry-Level Placement.** Applicants who meet all qualification requirements for the GS-5 grade level of **two-grade** interval occupations may be appointed at the GS-7 grade level if they possess **one** of the following:

(1) Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a major field of study related to the Title 38 Hybrid occupation, including those occupations that have a positive education requirement.

(2) Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university unrelated to the Title 38 Hybrid occupation that included or was supplemented by at least one of the following:

(a) At least 30 semester hours (or at least the same number of hours required by the educational institution for a major field) of directly related, upper level undergraduate courses (e.g., at least 200-course level or higher, or as identified by the college or university) for the hybrid occupation, or one full year of graduate level coursework (typically at least 15-18 semester hours) for the hybrid occupation; or

(b) Directly related practicum/internship in the hybrid occupation, either included in the degree or post-degree; or

(c) Directly related certification/licensure/registration for the hybrid occupation.

(3) Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, with an exemplary academic record as demonstrated by at least one of the following:

(a) **Class Standing:** Applicants must be in the upper third of the graduating class in the college, university, or major subdivision, such as the College of Liberal Arts or the School of Business Administration, based on completed courses.

(b) **Grade-Point Average (GPA):** Applicants must have a grade-point average of:

1. 3.0 or higher out of a possible 4.0 ("B" or better) as recorded on their official transcript, or as computed based on 4 years of education, or as computed based on courses completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum; or

2. 3.5 or higher out of a possible 4.0 ("B+" or better) based on the average of the required courses completed in the major field or the required courses in the major field completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum.

(c) **Election to Membership in a National Scholastic Honor Society:** Applicants can be considered eligible based on membership in one of the national scholastic honor societies. These honor societies are listed in the *Association of College Honor Societies: Booklet of Information* (1992-95) and/or *Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities* (1991). Membership in a freshman honor society cannot be used to meet the requirements of this provision.

e. **Intervening Grade Levels.** In general, standards for two-grade interval work (e.g., professional/scientific) are written in a two-grade interval progression whereas standards for *technical/medical support* work are written in a one-grade interval progression. In writing qualification

standards, intervening grades in two-grade interval standards may be used to denote assignments of unusual responsibility/complexity, such as the sole practitioner, team leader, or other special circumstance unique to the occupation. In addition, intervening grade levels may be included in grandfather clauses for current employees. VHA Program Officials in VA Central Office who wish to include intervening grade levels in the qualification standard for a particular occupation must submit such request, with supporting documentation, through the Under Secretary for Health (10) to Human Resources and Administration (006). Final determination on all grade levels will be made during the job analysis process.

f. **Full Performance Levels.** For occupations covered by these guidelines, the full performance (journey) level may vary depending on the complexities of the assignment or the competencies possessed by the individual and is not dependent on the entry level grade of the occupation. In this rank-in-person system, the promotion potential of positions may not be limited to grades below the full performance level as identified in the qualification standard.

g. **Pay Determinations.** Grade levels should not be used to address pay issues or problems. Recruitment or retention incentives (e.g., special salary rates, recruitment bonuses, relocation bonuses, retention bonuses, etc.) may be used to address pay-related recruitment or retention issues.

7. EIGHT STEPS TO DEVELOPING A TITLE 38 HYBRID QUALIFICATION STANDARD

a. For the development of a Title 38 Hybrid qualification standard for which there is little to no current occupational information or no current and usable job analysis, all eight steps will need to be completed.

b. For the development of a Title 38 Hybrid qualification standard for which there is current occupational information and/or a current and usable job analysis, but some significant changes to the basic requirements for the profession are anticipated, some steps may not need to be completed.

c. If an existing Title 5 qualification standard is being converted to the Title 38 Hybrid system and there are no changes to the basic requirements for the profession, only half the steps will be needed. Steps 1 through 3 will need to be completed in order to identify the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities at each grade level that will be listed in the qualification standard. The product of Step 8 is the actual qualification standard itself, and will need to be completed.

d. Subject-matter experts should review this guide and identify which steps to complete in consultation with their Human Resources Advisor and the Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059) in the Office of Human Resources Management and Labor Relations. For each step, a required product is described.

(1) Step 1. Gather classified position descriptions (including signed OF-8) and/or task/job statements, as appropriate. These descriptions should represent the full range of assignments at different types and sizes of facilities, including outpatient clinics, small and large medical centers, etc. Identify representative assignments, duties, tasks, performance requirements/measurements, etc. for each grade level. Identify and describe special assignments at appropriate grade levels and the routine supervision/guidance received when performing these tasks.

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Product: Representative critical duties/task statements and performance requirements/measurements for all grade levels and special assignments.

(2) Step 2. Compare representative critical duties/task statements and performance requirements/measurements to statutory descriptions for each grade level.

Product: Analysis demonstrating how the grade levels assigned to representative critical duties/task statements meet the statutory descriptions for each grade level.

(3) Step 3. Conduct analysis to identify knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) required to perform the work of the position.

Product: A job analysis worksheet for each separate grade level that identifies the duties performed and the KSAOs required to perform each duty, and a list of the most important KSAOs required for each grade level.

(4) Step 4. Identify the source or means by which each KSAO is obtained, for example, through specific education, training, or experience.

Product: Itemized list of KSAOs and means by which they are obtained.

(5) Step 5. Gather information on private sector practices regarding licensure, certification, registration, and positive educational/training requirements.

Product: Summary of findings with supporting documents attached.

(6) Step 6. Compare findings of Step 5 with results of Step 4.

Product: List of duties with respective required KSAOs, and required certification, licensure, and registration, and positive education/training requirements identified.

(7) Step 7. Review product of Step 6 with statutory descriptions for grade levels.

Product: Analysis discussing results of comparison.

(8) Step 8. Write qualification standard in Title 38 Hybrid format.

Product: Qualification standard with all supporting documents from Steps 1 through 8.

8. NEW QUALIFICATION STANDARD PACKAGE SUBMISSIONS. VHA Program Officials must submit new qualification standard packages and supporting documentation through the Under Secretary for Health (10) to Human Resources and Administration (006). All qualification standard packages should contain:

a. The new qualification standard.

- b. A copy of the old qualification standard.
- c. Explanation of the need (if any) to tailor the standard grandfather provision set forth in paragraph 10.c.
- d. Required products of the Eight Steps to Developing a Qualification Standard, including the following documentation of the Job Analysis:
 - (1) Date and location of the job analysis;
 - (2) Names, series, grade, job titles and duty stations of all SMEs and HR Advisor;
 - (3) SME participants and demographic data;
 - (4) Task Statement/Inventory List (VA Form 5-4771);
 - (5) Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics (KSAO) List (VA Form 5-4772);
 - (6) Task/KSAO linkage sheet (any data sheet in the VA Form 7051 series); and
 - (7) Certifications from all subject-matter experts (SMEs): SMEs must indicate by their signatures that they concur in the results of the job analysis. This may be done by having them sign in the spaces provided on the Task Statement List and KSAO List and on the data sheet used to align tasks and KSAOs.
- e. OPM Issuances such as:
 - (1) Classification standards; and
 - (2) Qualification standards.
- f. VA Issuances/Data such as:
 - (1) Copies of classified position descriptions or functional statements, as appropriate;
 - (2) Organizational charts;
 - (3) Distribution of incumbents in the series by grade and job title (if applicable);
 - (4) Minority representation within series by grade;
 - (5) VHA Directives relating to the occupation scope of practice and positions functioning in the field.
 - (6) VA Human Resource Letters (HRMLs) relating to the use and proper classification of the position; and

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(7) Comparative data by grade level within VHA.

g. Published Materials such as:

(1) *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*; and

(2) Professional standards, ethics, and criteria for accreditation from professional associations.

h. Curricula review based on curricula and course catalogs from various colleges and universities around the country which offer degrees in the occupation

i. Employment Practices Survey derived from:

(1) Job descriptions and qualifications required by private sector facilities nationwide;

(2) Material from the occupation's professional organizations (i.e., occupational studies or job analysis); and

(3) Survey information (if a qualification standard already exists)

9. CHANGES TO EXISTING QUALIFICATION STANDARD PACKAGE SUBMISSIONS.

VHA Program Officials requesting changes to existing qualification standards must submit such changes through the Under Secretary for Health (10) to Human Resources and Administration (006). Such packages should contain:

a. The new qualification standard.

b. A copy of the old qualification standard.

c. Explanation of the reason for the change to the existing standard.

d. Certifications from all subject-matter experts (SMEs) regarding the rationale for the change as well as products of any of the Eight Steps to Developing a Qualification Standard that were necessary to demonstrate and support the change.

e. Any additional material described in paragraph 8, e. through i., which demonstrates and supports the need for the change.

f. Justification and impact statement for changes to the grade structure and/or qualifications. Documentation should address fiscal impact, changes in industry/professional standards, impact on recruitment and diversity, and consistency with grades for similar, comparable occupations.

10. MINIMUM ELEMENTS FOR QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

a. **Coverage.** Include a brief description of the occupation.

b. **Basic Requirements.** Include U.S. citizenship requirements, education and/or experience required, required credentials (licensure, certification, registration), physical requirements, and English language proficiency requirement.

c. **Grandfathering Provision Clauses.** Include, if applicable, the following standard statement. If the statement is tailored for the specific occupation, a supporting explanation must be included in the package submission described in paragraph 8 of this appendix:

Grandfathering Provision. The following is the standard grandfathering policy for all Title 38 hybrid qualification standards. Some of these provisions may not apply to this occupation. Please carefully review the qualification standard to determine the specific education and/or licensure/certification/registration requirements that apply to this occupation.

All persons employed in VHA in this occupation on the effective date of this qualification standard are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the title, series and grade held, including positive education and licensure/certification/registration that are part of the basic requirements of the occupation. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements required in this standard, but who met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed to it, the following provisions apply:

- Such employees in an occupation that does not require a licensure/certification/registration, may be reassigned, promoted, or demoted within the occupation.
- Such employees in an occupation that requires a licensure/certification/registration, may be reassigned, promoted up to and including the full performance (journey) level, or demoted within the occupation, but may not be promoted beyond the journey level or placed in supervisory or managerial positions.
- Such employees in an occupation that requires a licensure/certification/registration only at higher grade levels must meet the licensure/certification/registration requirement before they can be promoted to those higher grade levels.

Employees who are appointed on a temporary basis prior to the effective date of the qualification standard may not have their temporary appointment extended or be reappointed, on a temporary or permanent basis, until they fully meet the basic requirements of the standard.

Employees initially grandfathered into this occupation, who subsequently obtain additional education and/or licensure/certification/registration that meet all the basic requirements of this qualification standard must maintain the required credentials as a condition of employment in the occupation.

If an employee who was retained in an occupation listed in 38 U.S.C. § 7401(3) under this provision leaves that occupation, the employee loses protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry to the occupation.

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d. **Grade Requirements.** Include definitions and determinations (education and/or experience requirements; required KSAOs; and typical assignments). Identify all grade levels covered within the occupation to include the full performance level (FPL) and KSAOs at each grade level. Provide specific examples of all assignments above the FPL (both supervisory and/or non-supervisory) that are necessary at each of those grades, including the specific KSAOs appropriate to each assignment. For assignments above the FPL, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity (difficulty), and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

e. **Deviations.** Include, if applicable, the following standard statement. If the statement is tailored for the specific occupation, a supporting explanation must be included in the package submission.

“The appointing official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for an employee whose composite record of accomplishments, performance, and qualifications, as well as current assignment warrants such action. The placement of individuals in grade levels not described in the qualification standard must be approved by the Under Secretary for Health or designee in VA Central Office, pursuant to delegated authority from the Secretary. Under no circumstances will the educational or credential requirement be waived for those occupations with a positive education requirement, or when specific credentials are identified as necessary to meet minimum requirements.”

f. **Loss of Credential.** The qualification standard for an occupation that requires a license, certification, and/or registration must include the following statement regarding the loss of that credential:

“An employee in this occupation who fails to obtain licensure/certification/registration within the required time frame, or who fails to maintain the required licensure/certification/registration must be removed from the occupation, which may also result in termination of employment. For occupations which require an active credential (licensure/certification/registration) at all grade levels, at the discretion of the appointing official, an employee may be reassigned to another occupation for which he/she qualifies if a placement opportunity exists. For occupations which require an active credential (licensure/certification/registration) in assignments above the full-performance level only, at the discretion of the appointing official, an employee may remain at an appropriate lower grade level in the occupation when both of the following apply: the credential is not a requirement and a placement opportunity exists.”

11. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accredited college or university	An educational institution, beyond the high school level, which has been accredited by an accrediting institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
Certification	See Credentials

Complex ¹	Complex may refer to a program within a service (such as Rehabilitation Medicine Service) that offers the full range of available services (for example, in regard to Audiology, hearing conservation, advanced audiologic and electrophysiologic assessment and interpretation, comprehensive tinnitus evaluation, treatment, and retraining therapies, advanced central auditory function assessment and treatment, assessment and treatment of patients with surgically-implanted bio-electric or cochlear implants, intraoperative (surgical) monitoring, advanced vestibular assessment and rehabilitation, and analysis and fitting of advanced amplification technology involving acoustic signal processing algorithms). This is compared to a program which offers a limited range of available services.
Complex ²	Complex may refer to an individual assignment that has a range of variety and technical difficulty that covers at least the full range of professional practice of the occupation and may include assignments of greater difficulty, scope, and variety.
Credentials (Certification, Registration, Licensure)	<p>Evidence of successful competence by an individual in a specific occupation which has been awarded by professional organizations with responsibility for establishing the guidelines necessary to acquire, and maintain, professional credentials appropriate to a career field.</p> <p>Licensure refers to a specific license which has been issued by a state to an individual to perform a specified function.</p>

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Full Performance Level	This is also called the journey level. The independent level of operation for a particular type of work. This is not necessarily the highest level of non-supervisory work, but does represent the typical level for an independent worker. All individuals who perform successfully and acquire the required competencies may progress without competition to the full performance level.
Grandfather clause	A provision which allows for individuals who are officially assigned to a given occupation at the time of an approved change in the qualification requirements for that occupation to remain in that occupation at their current grade whether or not they meet the revised/new qualification requirements.
Intervening grades	This term applies to occupations which normally progress in two grade intervals from GS-5 through GS-11. It means the even numbered grade levels (that is, GS-6, GS-8, GS-10) which are between the usual progression of grades, would generally not exist. However, specific exceptions to this general rule may appear in some two-grade interval standards to cover unique circumstances.

Job Analysis	<p>A job review to identify the tasks involved in any job and the associated knowledge, skill, ability, or other characteristics required to successfully perform the identified tasks and succeed in the job. Job analysis is conducted by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with a Human Resources advisor. Job analysis is done to guard against possible discrimination in employee selection.</p> <p>A systematic method for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about the content, context, and requirements of a job. It demonstrates that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed on the job and the competencies/KSAs required to perform the tasks. Job analysis information is used to develop employee selection procedures, identify training needs, define performance standards, and for other uses.</p>
KSAs/Competencies	This acronym stands for Knowledge, Skill, and Ability. Sometimes the letter “O” is added to indicate other characteristics.

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<p>Leader</p>	<p>Leadership and supervision may be thought of as points along a continuum from nonsupervisory to managerial work.</p> <p>Team Leaders usually also perform work that is of the same kind and level as the highest level of work accomplished by the team led.</p> <p>For occupations classified in one-grade intervals work leaders as a regular and recurring part of their assignment lead three or more employees in accomplishing work by performing a range of duties such as distributing workload, instructing employees in specific tasks and job techniques, giving on the job training to new employees, checking on work in progress, resolving simple informal complaints, monitoring working conditions, and amending or rejecting work.</p> <p>For occupations classified in two-grade intervals leaders as a regular and recurring part of their assignment and at least 25% of their duty time lead a team of employees in accomplishing two-grade interval work. They work with team members to achieve specific tasks, produce work products and services, and meet program and production goals. Typically they assist the team through knowledge and application of leadership and team building skills and techniques such as group facilitation, coordination, coaching, problem solving, interpersonal communication, integration of work processes and products, obtaining resources, and liaison with the supervisor.</p>
<p>Licensure</p>	<p>See Credentials</p>
<p>Loss of Credential</p>	<p>A situation which exists when a specific certification, registration, or license is suspended or revoked by the issuing organization or when allowed to expire by the individual holding the credential.</p>

One-grade interval positions	One grade interval occupations progress by single grade increments, for example, GS-4 to GS-5. These include technical occupations.
Organizational Title	A title commonly given to a position by the employing organization which is not an official title established by the classification and/or qualification standard applicable to the position. For example the official title might be Supervisory Orthotist but the organizational title could be Chief, Orthotics Laboratory.
Positive Educational Requirement	<p>This generally refers to a professional occupation requiring education and training in the principles, concepts, and theories of the occupation that typically can only be gained through completion of a specified curriculum at a recognized college or university.</p> <p>A specific educational requirement that all individuals in a given occupation have completed in order to enter the occupation. This may be defined in terms of a specific degree (associate, bachelors, masters, or doctoral) or in terms of specific coursework.</p>
Post-doctoral experience	This refers to any work experience in the occupation which is gained AFTER the Ph.D or similar doctoral degree has been awarded by a university.
Post-master's experience	This refers to any work experience in the occupation which is gained AFTER the master's degree has been awarded by a university.
Program Coordinator/Program Manager	A supervisory or non-supervisory assignment that includes professional and highly technical work including responsibility for development, evaluation, and promotion of a program. Such programs may vary in scope and complexity.

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Progressively higher level graduate education	Education beyond the bachelor's degree level which involves more difficult and specialized coursework. This education is generally leading to an advanced degree. For example, coursework for a second master's degree in a different field would not be progressively higher level graduate coursework.
Qualification Standard	A statement of the minimum requirements that an individual must meet to be qualified for entry into and promotion in an occupation.
Registration	See Credentials
Signatory Authority	Delegated authority to sign documents obligating the VA to pay for provided services and products.
Statutory descriptions	Title 5, United States Code, governs the classification of positions in the Federal Service. This law provides that positions shall be classified based on the duties and responsibilities assigned and the qualifications required to do the work. Section 5104 of Title 5 provides definitions for the grade levels of the General Schedule. These grade levels are the foundation upon which the classification standards are built.
Subject Matter Expert (SME)	A person with bona fide expert knowledge about what it takes to do a particular job. First-level supervisors are normally good SMEs. Superior incumbents in the same or very similar positions and other individuals may also be used as SMEs if they have a current and thorough knowledge of the job's requirements.
Substitution of education	A provision within a specific qualification standard which allows an individual to qualify for a grade level based on identified education rather than experience.

<p>Supervisory position</p>	<p>Supervisory work, at a minimum, includes responsibility for planning and scheduling work; assigning work to employees; accepting, amending, or rejecting completed work; assuring that production and accuracy requirements are met; appraising performance and recommending performance standards and ratings; approving leave; and effecting disciplinary measures. Additionally, the duties of a supervisor typically include prioritizing and scheduling work and finding ways to improve the quality and/or quantity of the work directed.</p>
<p>Two-grade interval positions</p>	<p>Two-grade interval occupations progress by two grade increments from GS-5 to GS-11 and include professional and administrative occupations defined by the Office of Personnel Management.</p>