

Harmonized selection process¹

*Longer-term positions for internationally
recruited staff in the professional and
higher-level categories*

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I. Introduction

SCOPE

1. The paramount consideration in the recruitment and selection of WHO staff members shall be “the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity”, as set forth in Staff Regulation 4.2.
2. The Harmonized Selection Process for longer-term positions for internationally recruited staff in the professional and higher-level categories is intended to provide WHO hiring units at the three levels of the Organization with the principles governing recruitment and selection and specific guidance for filling vacancies of longer-term positions in the international professional and higher level categories (hereinafter referred to as “international positions”). It does not apply to:
 - The selection of Heads of WHO Country Offices and their deputies;
 - The international posts that are filled through the annual mobility exercise;
 - International professional positions to be filled through a roster of pre-qualified candidates.
3. As far as possible, positions for WHO hosted partnerships will follow the same Harmonized Selection Process. However, there may be circumstances, such as for leadership positions, where participation of the governing bodies of the partnership may be required. In such cases, any deviation from the standard panel composition must be approved by the Director-General or Regional Director for selections in the Regions. The vacancy notice will indicate that special selection procedures apply.
4. In the event that a longer-term position is to be filled for emergency response, some deviation in process may be required in order to fill the position on an urgent basis. Any such deviation should be either documented in the emergency SOPs or would require a waiver from Director, HRD in headquarters or DAF in the regions.

II. Guiding principles

GENERAL

5. The guiding principles behind all recruitment and selection activities are the following:
6. Objectivity: Screening shall be conducted with professional rigour, with candidates measured, based on the information they provided on their applications, against clearly established criteria, including experience, competencies and skills, and corporate priorities as indicated on the vacancy notice/post description;
7. Transparency: The selection criteria and all phases of recruitment processes shall be transparent to staff and candidates;

8. Diversity: WHO's workforce shall reflect diversity and strive to include equal numbers of men and women, staff members representing as wide a geographic distribution as possible and individuals from under-represented groups and persons with disabilities¹.
9. Accountability: The Selection Panel is responsible and will be held accountable for their selection recommendations, and the integrity and outcome of the process, up to the final selection decision.

III. Priority Considerations

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

10. In filling an *ad hoc* vacancy, priority consideration will be given to the qualifications, relevant experience, demonstrated competencies and performance of the candidates in relation to the stated criteria of the post. Only candidates meeting the pre-defined essential requirements for a post as per the job description and the vacancy announcement can be selected. Other corporate priorities such as order of retention, mobility history, gender balance or national representation, as described below, may also come into consideration in the selection among qualified candidates.

FULL REGARD TO INTERNAL CANDIDATES

11. To strengthen internal capacity and develop a more versatile and mobile workforce at WHO and to provide career opportunities for staff, internal candidates who meet the essential requirements of the advertised posts are encouraged to apply. In line with the published mobility policy, the mobility history and length of service in the current duty station, will be factors to be taken into account in order to determine priority consideration. In accordance with Staff Regulation 4.4, without prejudice to the inflow of fresh talent at the various levels, vacancies shall be filled by persons already in the service of the Organization in preference to persons from outside.
12. In accordance with Staff Rule 1050.5.2, staff members shall be given due preference for vacancies during the reassignment period, within the context of Staff Rule 1050.4. Under e-Manual III.10.11.230, a staff member whose position has been abolished and who wishes to be considered for positions at a higher grade must apply and compete with other applicants in accordance with established selection procedures with due preference given to him or her during the reassignment period within the context of Staff Rule 1050.3. If assessed by the Selection Panel as meeting the essential requirements of the position, due preference requires that the staff member is included in the written test and/or presentation and interview. The Secretary of the Reassignment Committee ensures that the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist is made aware of such cases.

In addition, staff members whose appointments have been terminated in the context of a reassignment process, whose service has been satisfactory, are considered in preference to equally qualified external candidates for vacancies for

¹ See Article 27 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

which they have applied and are qualified during the 12 months following their separation.

DIVERSITY

13. The selection process will pay particular attention to the decisions/resolutions of the World Health Assembly on diversity. Due regard shall be paid to the Organization's commitment to increasing the representation of women in the professional and higher categories, and to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.
14. WHO is committed to providing equality of access to employment, advancement and retention in the Organization, recognizing that it is in the Organization's interest to recruit and maintain a diverse and skilled workforce that is representative of the diverse nature of society, for example persons with disabilities.

IV. Eligibility Considerations

INTEGRITY

15. A staff member summarily dismissed or otherwise separated from WHO or another UN organization for disciplinary reasons shall be banned from being hired under any contractual modality with WHO. Furthermore, a staff member who has resigned from WHO or another UN organization while under investigation for allegations of misconduct or in the course of disciplinary action shall be banned from work with WHO under any contractual modality until he/she is fully cleared from these allegations.

FAMILY AND SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIPS

16. Pursuant to Staff Rule 410 on Family Relationships and in order to avoid real or perceived family influence or conflicts of interest, applicants are required to disclose any family relationship with serving WHO staff members in their Personal History Form (PHF). HR and the Panel members must duly note and consider such information.
17. Pursuant to Staff Rule 410.3, a candidate or person who bears any of the following relationships to serving WHO staff members: father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother, shall not be short-listed and appointed.
18. Selection Panels must be cognizant of other family relationships than the six prohibited by the Staff Rules, that may provide potential for family influence and conflict of interest. Therefore selection panels must exercise careful judgment before recommending a family member of a WHO staff member for selection, even if the family relationship is permitted under the Staff Rules.
19. The spouse of a staff member may be appointed provided that he/she is fully qualified for the position. In the context of the WHO Global Mobility Policy, as a support measure to spouse employment, hiring spouses of staff members who are rotating to another duty station is encouraged.

20. Should a staff member who is related to another staff member as a family member or a spouse be hired, he/she shall not:
- be assigned to serve in a position which is superior or subordinate in the line of authority to the position occupied by the staff member to whom he or she is related.
 - participate in the process of selection, assignment, reassignment or transfer of the related staff member.
21. Relatives of heads of offices (such as of a cluster, regional office or country office): Under no circumstances shall a relative, including a spouse, be assigned to or recruited under any other contractual modality in the same office as the staff member who heads it.

AGE LIMITATIONS

22. Pursuant to Staff Rule 410.2, candidates under 20 or over 62 years of age shall not normally be considered for appointment.

FORMER STAFF OTHER THAN RETIREES²

23. With due consideration to the circumstances under which an individual separated from WHO or the UN Common System (which must be verified through reference checks and without prejudice to paragraph 15), former WHO staff members may be recruited through re-employment or re-instatement depending on the period that has elapsed between the separation and the resumption of the new functions pursuant to Staff Rule 470 and the Separation on Mutual Agreement if applicable. Furthermore, the re-hired staff member may be required to reimburse in-part or in-full any monies received on separation.

RECRUITMENT OF GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL

24. Any candidate who is a government employee must disclose this relationship prior to recruitment. Candidates who are employed by a government or a government entity must either resign from said employment or must provide an official document to confirm that they are released from government service for the period of the WHO contract upon acceptance of a fixed-term appointment with WHO. This rule does not apply to government employees who are seconded to WHO by tripartite WHO secondment agreements.

NATIONALITY

25. In accordance with Staff Rule 460, WHO shall not recognize more than one nationality for each staff member. The applicant, whether external to WHO or already a WHO staff member, must disclose all the nationalities he/she has, even if only one nationality is recognized by the UN Common System for the purpose of Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

ELIGIBILITY OF CANDIDATES TO BE APPOINTED OR ASSIGNED TO A POST IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY IN THEIR COUNTRY OF NATIONALITY

² For retirees, please see Information Note 13/2014 'Conditions for early retirement and the employment of individuals who have either retired from the organizations of the UN common system, or who are aged 62 and above'

26. eManual section III.4.2 paragraph 30 applies.

V. Advertising vacancies

VACANCY NOTICE

27. Before initiating a request to issue a vacancy notice (VN), the Hiring Manager will ensure that a position description reflecting the duties and recruitment profile is duly approved and classified and is in line with the approved HR Plan. It is recommended that special care and attention are given to the recruitment profile as reflected in the essential and desirable requirements and competencies of the position, and that the advice and guidance of the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist is sought in this regard. The requirements and competencies indicated in the recruitment profile are crucial and will be reflected in the VN, and subsequently used as the basis for screening and assessing applicants. Since VNs reflect the content of a duly approved and classified position description, and are verified by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist, additional clearance of draft VNs is not required.
28. Screening questions are formulated by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist in consultation with the Hiring Manager, for each individual vacancy on the basis of the essential and desirable requirements reflected in the vacancy notice.
29. VNs will indicate the potential to fill multiple positions of a similar profile at the same grade level, including those of a temporary nature. In the course of a selection process, all recommended qualified candidates should be retained for consideration for similar positions at the same grade level, without the issuance of a further VN or candidate assessment. Pre-qualified candidates of this kind, who meet the essential requirements of a similar position, should be presented for consideration to the relevant Hiring Manager once the vacancy is identified and in advance of issuing a VN. In the event that the Hiring Manager does not select from among this pre-qualified pool of candidates, a VN will be issued. For this reason, candidates who are retained for consideration for similar positions should continue to apply for positions of interest where they meet the essential requirements. A candidate's profile will remain active in this category for a period of 12 months from the date of the approval of the Selection Panel's recommendation. A prequalification of this kind does not constitute any obligation or commitment on behalf of the Organization to appoint, reassign or promote a candidate to a similar position. The VN will include standard text to this effect.
30. VNs must be formatted according to the standard WHO template provided in Annex 1. VNs for positions from P1 up to and including D2 grade levels are published, using the corporate recruitment platform, internally and externally for a period of 3 weeks from the date of issuance. The publication period may be extended beyond 3 weeks when required. A publication period of less than 3 weeks must be approved by Director, HRD/DAF. All vacancy notices for professional positions are issued in English, other than in the Regional Office for Africa where they are issued in English and/or French. Issuance of VNs in other WHO official languages will depend on the target audience.

31. All persons who wish to apply to a published vacancy must complete or update the WHO Personal History Form (PHF). This form provides relevant information on a candidate's personal and professional background, including academic record, work history, language skills, reasons for leaving their previous employers, residence status, nationality, family relationships and other elements that are essential in making an informed selection decision. Applications received from persons who are unable to complete the WHO PHF due to a disability will be given due consideration.
32. Applications received after the VN has closed are not accepted.
33. While the VN is published, the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist will develop a timeline for the selection process (in keeping with the target 15-week timeline set out in Annex 2) and identify Panel Members, it being understood that the composition of the Selection Panel cannot be confirmed until the list of candidates is known, and an opportunity has been provided to raise any conflict of interest. During this period, the Hiring Manager will be responsible for developing a written test and/or presentation topic and interview questions for consideration by the Selection Panel later in the process.
34. Advertised VNs will be reviewed for continued need and appropriateness if there is a change in structure and may be cancelled. The same applies during the course of the VN if there is a change in Hiring Manager.
35. In the event that a Hiring Manager wishes to withdraw a VN, a written justification will be submitted to the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist who may, if required, refer the request for decision to Director, HRD at headquarters, or to DAF in the regions. If the selection is already underway, i.e., a Selection Panel has been formed and met for the first time, the Selection Panel must be involved in the decision to withdraw the VN. Candidates will be informed of the withdrawal of a VN.

OUTREACH

36. The Hiring Manager and HR, wherever possible, are responsible for ensuring wide dissemination of the VN through technical channels and networks, and various media (journals, social networks, job sites, etc.) In consultation with the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist, the Hiring Manager considers the options available. Related costs are borne by the hiring unit. HRD is responsible for sending the Permanent Missions in Geneva a weekly email with *ad hoc* global vacancies for internationally recruited positions across WHO.

EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRMS

37. Executive search firms may be engaged, at the hiring department's expense, to identify high-caliber candidates for senior positions or for very specific technical functions, and to then encourage these candidates to apply through the recruitment platform. The firms may also provide expert guidance and input in the selection process. In such cases, the VN will include text (see Annex 1) to the effect that the selection process, while adhering to WHO standard procedures, may also include certain additional steps undertaken by the external firm, for example,

preliminary interviews, psychometric testing, and preparation of capability assessments for consideration by the Selection Panel when establishing a final short list. The engagement of an executive search firm does not have any impact on the priority given to WHO staff.

VI. Selection Panel

38. Diversity among the members of the Selection Panel in terms of geographical origin is desirable. Insofar as possible, selection panels should include representation of both genders. The participation of the Staff Representative (designated by the Staff Association) and of the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist is not restricted by grade, however, every effort must be made for these Panel Members to be as close as possible to the grade of the vacant position, and ideally not more than two grade levels below. The remaining Panel Members shall be at a grade not lower than that of the position to be filled. The Independent Panel Member and Staff Representative are identified from departments other than the department in which the vacant position is located.
39. All Selection Panel members will receive a comprehensive briefing, by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist, on the selection process including on the importance of confidentiality, and must be familiar with competency-based interview techniques.
40. Joint recruitments across the Organization are encouraged in order to reduce the number of global selection processes and ensure that candidates are assessed against the same criteria and in a consistent manner. Regional and HQ HR Managers and HR Specialists across the Organization will work together to identify positions for which joint recruitment is feasible. Once such positions are identified, the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist is responsible for proposing the joint recruitment to the respective Hiring Managers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

41. The confidentiality of the selection process is of paramount importance and must be fully respected by all parties. The selection process, from publishing the VN through to the offer of appointment, is strictly confidential and should not be disclosed outside the Selection Panel at any stage. A breach of confidentiality may lead to the imposition of disciplinary measures. Once a selection report (see paragraph 83) is finalized and signed by all Selection Panel Members, the report is submitted to the decision maker. It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to inform their first level supervisor and Director of the outcome of the selection. Under no circumstances can the selection report be modified after being signed by the Selection Panel Members. The integrity of the selection report reflecting the deliberations and the recommendations of the selection panel must be maintained.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

42. “A conflict of interest occurs when, for example, a staff member's financial, personal or other non-WHO interest or commitment could reasonably interfere – or appear to interfere – with the staff member's ability to act impartially and to discharge their functions and to regulate their conduct with the interests of WHO

only in view.”³ Where upon receipt of the background materials for a selection or at any stage of the selection process, a Selection Panel Member becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest with regard to a candidate under consideration, another Selection Panel Member, or any aspect of the process where the Panel Member’s ability to be entirely objective may be compromised, the issue must be immediately brought to the attention of the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist. At the first panel meeting, the HR representative will use a checklist (see Annex 3) to ensure the Selection Panel is aware and briefed on all aspects of the selection process. This checklist includes asking Selection Panel Members to disclose any conflict of interest. When required, the issue may be referred for decision to Director, HRD at headquarters and to DAF in the Regions.

43. If at any point during the process, a Selection Panel Member becomes aware that he/she or another Selection Panel Member has a relationship with any of the short-listed candidates that could be construed as grounds for partiality (that is, blood relation, partnership, marriage or any other family or personal relationship that may impede impartial judgment), he/she should immediately inform the Regional or HQ HR Manager/ HR Specialist. The same applies to any Selection Panel Member who has a family or personal relationship with any other Selection Panel Member. When required, the issue may be referred for decision to Director, HRD at headquarters and to DAF in the Regions.
44. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may lead to the imposition of disciplinary measures.
45. For transparency, short-listed candidates are informed of the names of Selection Panel members as soon as the short list is confirmed. With reference to paragraph 42, any perceived conflict of interest should be raised by the candidate with HR within 48 hours. The Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist will discuss the perceived conflict of interest with the other Selection Panel Members and take the necessary steps to find a replacement, if required. Any attempt by a candidate to influence a panel member will lead to their disqualification from the selection process.

PANEL COMPOSITION FOR POSITIONS UP TO AND INCLUDING P5 GRADE

46. The Selection Panel for positions up to and including P5 is composed of four members, as follows:
 - the Hiring Manager, normally the first level supervisor as indicated in the position description of the vacant position, and normally responsible for chairing the Panel;
 - a representative of the staff designated by the relevant Major Office’s Staff Association;
 - an Independent Panel Member, preferably with technical experience relevant to the post to provide professional assessment of candidates, including advice on the development and scoring of the various elements of the assessment process, from another cluster or department identified by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist;
 - Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist.

³ Ethical principles and conduct of staff at <http://intranet.who.int/homes/eth/documents/compilation%20en%20final.pdf>

47. Each of the above has full voting panel member status and is required to sign the Selection Report. The roles and responsibilities of the Selection Panel Members are detailed in Annex 4. In exceptional cases and upon unanimous approval of the Panel Members, observers may be allowed to sit in on a Selection Panel. Observers must not participate in any way on the Selection Panel nor influence Panel Members at any time.
48. For joint recruitments, there may be more than one Hiring Manager on the selection panel.

PANEL COMPOSITION FOR POSITIONS AT P6/D1 AND D2 GRADES

49. For positions at the P6/D1 and D2 levels, the Selection Panel is composed as follows:

Headquarters

- Hiring Manager: ADG of the cluster in which the position is located or a staff member from the same cluster designated by him/her;
- another ADG or a Regional Director, or a staff member designated by him/her;
- Director, HRD or a staff member designated by him/her;
- a representative of the staff designated by the HQ Staff Committee;
- Secretary to the Panel (a representative from HRD)

Regions

- Hiring Manager: Regional Director or a staff member designated by him/her;
- ADG responsible for the area of work or a Regional Director from another region, or a staff member designated by him/her;
- DAF, or a staff member designated by him/her;
- A representative of the staff designated by the Regional Staff Association.
- Secretary to the Panel (a representative from Human Resources)

50. A Panel Member who is designated to participate in the selection process is empowered to participate as a fully-fledged panel member and does not report back to the designator.
51. Each of the above, with the exception of the Secretary of the Panel, has full voting panel member status and is required to sign the Selection Report. The roles and responsibilities of the Selection Panel Members are detailed in Annex 4.
52. For joint recruitments, there may be more than one Hiring Manager on the selection panel.

SELECTION PANEL MEETINGS

53. In the event that the Staff Association, having been invited to participate in the Selection Panel, cannot be represented in the Panel, this should be clearly documented in the Selection Report.
54. All Panel Members should be available to attend all Panel meetings. Only in very exceptional circumstances, such as an unforeseen long absence, should a Panel Member be replaced once the process is under way. If the representative of the Staff Association needs to be replaced, every effort should be made to find a

replacement within 48 working hours. All candidates should be interviewed by the same selection panel. Any Panel Member absence should be clearly documented in the Selection Report.

VII. Screening

55. **Only candidates meeting the essential requirements (education, language and experience) of the post, as per the position description and VN, can be shortlisted and therefore selected.** Internal candidates who meet the essential requirements are not automatically granted advancement in the process. Consideration of the desirable requirements will play a decisive role where there is a significant pool of candidates meeting the essential requirements. The Selection Panel will have the latitude to decide at which point to limit the number of candidates who will be retained for assessment.

PRELIMINARY SCREENING

56. The Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist conducts a preliminary screening of the applicants who applied during the defined posting period, based on responses provided by applicants to vacancy-specific screening questions. The authorship of any comments submitted at this stage by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist should be clearly identified.

IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF PRE-SCREENED CANDIDATES

57. The results of the preliminary screening are made available to the Hiring Manager, together with the profiles of all applicants. Hiring Managers are required to verify that the pre-screened candidates meet the essential requirements of the position, and have the ability to rank them in order of suitability for short-listing (see Annex 5 WHO Hiring Manager's Guide to Screening Candidates). The Hiring Manager proposes a short list of normally a maximum of five candidates. In proposing a short list, the Hiring Manager should highlight where candidates have education or experience beyond the essential requirements, or any other asset that increases their suitability for the role. In particular, reference should be made to the mobility history of the candidates and attention of the panel drawn to candidates who are currently based in hardship duty stations as long as they are about to complete 2 years of service in their current position. Further details are provided in paragraph 82.
58. WHO candidates whose responses to the screening questions indicate that they do not meet the essential requirements are also reviewed by the Hiring Manager in order to ensure that they have not mistakenly disqualified themselves.
59. Where a larger pool of suitably qualified candidates is identified, it is advisable to use an eliminatory written test (to be conducted through the recruitment platform) to further screen candidates.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS – COMPENSATION AND EQUIVALENCY

60. Please refer to Annex 6 for guidelines on standard minimum experience and educational requirements.

VIII. Selection process

CONFIRMATION OF SHORT LIST OF CANDIDATES AND NEXT STEPS

61. The Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist convenes a meeting of the Selection Panel through the most efficient medium available, in advance of which is made available relevant background material relevant to the selection, including a list of applicants, the outcome of the screening process, an overview of both the Organization's and hiring Cluster's (headquarters) or Department's (Regions) current gender balance and geographical distribution among its staff occupying fixed-term international positions. The objective of the meeting is to establish a final short list and to agree on how to best assess the short-listed candidates' suitability for the position. Decisions taken at this stage of the process are recorded (see Annex 3) by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist and will be included in the final Selection Report.
62. If after reviewing the Hiring Manager's evaluation of candidates, the Selection Panel is satisfied that a viable pool of candidates exists, the selection process will proceed on this basis. If only one candidate meets the minimum requirements, the Panel should secure approval of the approving authority (ADG of the cluster at headquarters, and the Regional Director in the regions) before proceeding with the selection process. In such cases, the Panel should make a recommendation to either (i) recommend one candidate, (ii) extend the vacancy notice, or (iii) re-advertise with different terms of reference.
63. Once the Selection Panel is satisfied that the above-steps, the overriding spirit of transparency and equality, and the applicable Staff Regulations have been respected, the short list is agreed.

GENDER BALANCE AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

64. Without compromising on the quality of staff selected, every effort will be made to ensure that decision makers are presented with a diverse set of qualified candidates. When establishing a short list, due diligence must be observed with a view to ensuring that at least one qualified woman is being included. In cases where, after the Hiring Manager has completed an in-depth evaluation of the pre-screened pool, the top-scoring candidates are all men, the highest-scoring qualified woman will be included in the short list, on the condition that she fully meets the essential requirements for the position. Where the short list does not reflect such diversity, justification will be required in the Selection Report.

CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT METHODS

65. Once a short list is established, the Selection Panel agrees on the position-related competency-based questions and technical areas to be assessed in the selection process, in line with the competencies and requirements set out in the VN. A written test or a presentation must be included in addition to the mandatory interview, with the Selection Panel deciding on which method to administer.
66. Written test, presentation and interview questions and/or topics, as applicable, are normally developed by the Hiring Manager; however, they must be shared with all Panel Members for their endorsement. Where there is a risk of a breach of confidentiality, Panel Members may be provided with the test, presentation and

interview questions just before these take place. In all cases, the Hiring Manager will also prepare expected answers to facilitate the Selection Panel's assessment of candidates. The Panel may also decide that certain elements are eliminatory.

WRITTEN TEST

67. The written test may be used as an eliminatory or complementary assessment tool. Written tests are normally administered to examine technical/functional competence and/or to assess writing skills in the languages specified in the VN.
68. Written tests are conducted blind normally using the e-testing facility; written tests may be invigilated. Any costs incurred of invigilation will be borne by the hiring department.
69. The test must be relevant to the functions of the position as reflected in the VN and objectively designed. Should any person outside the Panel develop or score written tests, their identification must be revealed to all Panel Members, and any such person must sign a Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality form. A minimum of two scorers is required, at least one of which would normally and as far as possible, be a Panel Member and who must score independently. Only after interview can the individual written test score of interviewees be revealed to Panel Members.
70. Candidates will be informed that failure to reference material from any source, including the internet, intranet, WHO publications and academic material (including that to which they have contributed), will lead to the disqualification of their application and, in the case of WHO staff members, may lead to the imposition of disciplinary measures. In all cases, the papers are submitted through a programme to detect plagiarism.

PRESENTATION

71. Presentations are recommended for higher-level positions and can be used in addition to or instead of a written test. In other instances, whenever a presentation is administered it must be relevant to an integral part of the functions of the position. The Selection Panel agrees on preparatory and delivery time, target audience, and maximum slides, if permitted.

INTERVIEW (MANDATORY)

72. Interviews are subject to the receipt of copies of certificates of candidates' formal higher education qualifications from accredited educational institutions. In the invitation to interview, candidates must be asked to provide, if they have not done so already, copies of their educational certificates; they must also be reminded that they will only be interviewed if their certificates prove they have the education they claim in their PHF and their qualifications are from a certified educational institution. Candidates for positions at the P.5 grade and above are required to sign a declaration of interest form prior to interview confirming that they do not have a current or past connection to the tobacco industry as defined in the form.
73. The Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist arranges the interviews. The interview includes technical and competency-based questions. The technical

component may be a presentation. Where a presentation is not included in the interview, at least one technical question must be included. Interviews may also assess aspects such as general attitude, and overall suitability for the position and international service. It is limited to a maximum of five competency areas as reflected in the vacancy notice⁴. Follow-up and probing questions are encouraged to elicit more information from the candidate. The same technical skills and competencies will be explored for all candidates competing for a particular position.

74. Competency-based interviews will, insofar as is possible, include question(s) in all languages specified in the essential requirements of the position description, in order to ascertain whether the candidates meet the language requirements set out in the VN. If knowledge of a second language is an essential requirement, this must be assessed at the interview stage either through a competency-based question or a general question in that language. To this end, it is important that the Selection Panel has the capacity to assess these languages.
75. All candidates must be interviewed through the same medium whether candidates are present in the duty station or not. Interviews may be conducted face-to-face, by video telephony or other telecommunications application software, or if no other option is viable, by telephone. Video telephony or other telecommunications application software includes, but is not limited to, videoconference, Skype and FaceTime. The method for interviewing candidates by video telephony or other telecommunications application software for one selection may vary for technical reasons. In the event that an internal or external candidate elects or agrees to deviate from the standard medium used by the other candidates in order not to hold back the process, this will be deemed acceptable and should be documented accordingly.
76. Face-to-face interviews that require travel should be kept to a minimum. Examples when face-to-face interviews may be warranted are: for senior positions, specific profiles, to judge best fit when there are two or more candidates considered equally qualified or if the location of the post warrants a hands-on visit due to country conditions.
77. The Selection Panel will interview all shortlisted candidates, with the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist completing an individual Candidate Assessment Form (Annex 7) for each candidate, reflecting the Panel's collective assessment. Where an eliminatory written test or eliminatory presentation have been part of the shortlisting process, then all remaining candidates on the final shortlist are interviewed.

IX. PMDS and reference checks

78. The three most recent PMDS reports of WHO candidates who are included in the final short list are consulted by the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist and are made available to Panel Members at the Panel meeting once the interviews have been conducted and are to be discussed as part of the deliberations.

⁴ The Enhanced WHO Global Competency Model can be found at https://intranet.who.int/homes/pml/documents/enhanced%20who%20global%20competency%20model_february%202015.pdf

79. In the case of external candidates, reference checks will be initiated and for UN staff members, performance appraisals will be requested, preferably before candidates are invited for interview. Although time constraints or other factors may require this step to be completed after the interview, references must be collected at the very latest before the final selection decision is made. Ideally, references are discussed as part of the Panel deliberations once interviews have been conducted. The Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist will request references. For very technical positions, the Hiring Manager may have the network required for the reference checks and therefore request references together with the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist. In all cases, references must be carefully documented.
80. At least two references must be taken from previous employers, using the standard WHO Reference Request Form (Annex 8). Guidelines on How to Take References (Annex 9) should be consulted.

X. Recommendation and decision

RECOMMENDATION

81. The Selection Panel discusses the overall results of the candidate assessment and identifies the most suitable candidates. In its deliberations, the Panel must be mindful of the priority, preference and consideration to be shown to different categories of staff members (see sections III and IV).
82. Through the ranking of candidates in different ranges, the Panel is responsible for finding suitably qualified candidates for the position. It is at this point that the Panel must take into consideration any additional assets of the suitable candidates that were identified during shortlisting. Candidates in the same range are considered of equal merit. Among candidates falling in the same range of merit, the internal candidate will have priority. Gender or geographical distribution will then be taken into account as subsidiary criteria, as applicable and subject to any other priority considerations which may be applied between internal candidates. Other elements such as field experience, mobility profile, whether they are currently based in a hardship duty station and whether or not they have completed at least half of the Standard Duration of Assignment (SDA) and have served a minimum of two years in their current position, balance of knowledge within the team and team fit may also be considered. The Panel must explain the reasons for their recommendation.
83. On this basis, the Selection Panel submits a final recommendation in a Selection Report (Annex 10) to the appropriate decision maker, recommending, where possible, the three most suitable candidates. The Selection Report must contain relevant documentation supporting the selection recommendation. This is particularly important as Selection Reports are not privileged documents and may be disclosed when an internal candidate asks to be informed of the reasons underlying the decision following the completion of the selection process.
84. Selection Reports will contain the gender and geographical diversity of staff occupying fixed-term international positions in the relevant HQ cluster or WHO region.

85. If consensus is not reached, the differing views are fully documented in the Selection Report for consideration by the decision-maker who will make the final selection. All Panel Members sign the Selection Report.

DECISION

86. In the case of positions up to and including P6/D1 levels, the Selection Panel makes its recommendation in writing to the ADG of the cluster at headquarters, and to the Regional Director in the regions. For positions at the D2 level, recommendations are submitted in writing through the Regional Director in the regions or the ADG of the cluster at headquarters to the Director-General.
87. Where recommended candidates are of equal merit, the priority considerations set out in Paragraphs 10 to 14 will be applied.
88. Decision-makers have the same flexibility as the Selection Panel with reference to paragraph 82, and their decision may differ to that of the Selection Panel. Their decision must be fully documented and they will be accountable for that decision.

AFTER DECISION

89. After the relevant decision-maker has selected a candidate, the Regional or HQ HR Manager/ HR Specialist communicates the outcome to the Hiring Manager who is given the opportunity to personally inform the selected candidate. Once the selected candidate has been notified, the Regional or HQ HR Manager/HR Specialist confirms to the candidate his/her selection in writing, stipulating that a formal offer of appointment will be subject to prerequisites, including a medical examination. Upon the selected candidate's acceptance of a formal offer of appointment, regrets are issued to the other candidates. In the event that the selected candidate declines the offer, the position will be offered to the second recommended candidate, if this was specifically mentioned in the Selection Report. If the Selection Report did not list the candidates found suitable in order of preference, the Selection Report will be referred back to the decision maker to decide on a second candidate. If no other suitable candidates had been identified in the Selection Report, the position should normally be re-advertised.
90. The original Selection Report and supporting documentation, including marked test paper results, are confidential documents and are retained in HR, in accordance with the Recruitment Records Retention Schedule, for five years after the selection process has been completed.
91. Feedback can be provided to candidates, insofar as is possible, upon request of the candidate to HR.

XI. List of annexes

1. Vacancy notice template
2. Timeline for completion of selection process
3. Checklist and Record of decisions taken at 1st meeting of the selection panel
4. Selection panel composition
5. WHO hiring manager's guide to screening candidates
6. Guidelines on Standard Minimum Experience and Educational Requirements for International and National Professional Positions
7. Candidate assessment form
8. Reference request form
9. Guidelines on how to take references
10. Selection report template

The above annexes are available to HR staff in their respective offices