



## Appointment Above the Minimum Step based on Superior Qualifications

The OIG seeks to recruit, select and retain the best-qualified individuals for our positions. The Superior Qualifications authority allows management to offer a salary above the first step of the GS-Schedule based on the superior qualifications of the applicant. The Superior Qualification Appointment is intended to improve the OIG's ability to compete with non-Federal employers for the caliber of employees needed to carry out the mission in the face of ever-increasing complexity in a competitive labor market.

### Who is covered by this policy?

Individuals entering the Federal civilian service for the first time or individuals returning to Federal employment after a break in service of 90 days or more.

### Who is excluded by this policy?

Current federal employees moving between agencies or to a different position within the same agency, unless that person is currently working as an expert or consultant as determined by law or regulation.

### When is it appropriate to use a Superior Qualifications Appointment?

In evaluating the appropriateness of using the Superior Qualifications authority, the following factors must be considered by management officials.

- When the applicant has unusually high qualifications which are demonstrably superior to what would be expected from a well qualified candidate for the position being filled; or
- When the applicant has a unique combination of education and experience that meets a special need for the Office of the Inspector General and would bring exceptional value to the OIG.

### What other factors should be considered when using this appointment authority?

- When exercised in a way that ensures equity and fairness throughout the OIG;
- When carefully considered along with other forms of available compensation to ensure that the most appropriate vehicle is utilized; and
- Where used to provide appropriate compensation in special situations when other means may not be available.

### Who is responsible for requesting and approving this authority?

The immediate supervisor is responsible for making the initial request and submitting the request in writing with approval from the respective Assistant Inspector General or Counsel. The Office of Management will review submitted requests and corresponding documentation and process the request accordingly.

The Office of Management has responsibility for ensuring that all documentation is complete.

### How is the appropriate pay level determined?

The appropriate pay level can be determined through:

**Existing Pay** – The Office of Inspector General will match the existing pay of the applicant, however, higher levels may be necessary depending on the circumstances of an individual case. Factors to consider include actual basic pay, bonuses or fringe benefits that are substantially above those offered by the Federal government. The applicant must provide salary verification in order to use existing pay as a basis for setting pay.

**Bona Fide Offer** – When the request is made based on a bona fide offer of employment from another prospective employer, the pay should be set at the closest step which matches or slightly exceeds the offer. Bona fide offers must be in writing and clearly offer current employment with suggested reporting date and starting salary.

**Special Need** – When requesting this authority based on the special needs of the agency, the pay should be set on the basis of “market realities” for pay given the nature of the position, the duties involved and the skills needed. Supervisors should provide a justification of what makes the position a special need.

**Who is considered a supervisor?**

Employees who plan and establish work schedules, deadlines, and standards for acceptable work; approve leave; direct work; evaluate work performance of subordinates; effect disciplinary action; identify training and development needs of subordinates; interview applicants for positions; and who are responsible for the overall work product of the section are considered “supervisors.”

**What documentation needs to be submitted to the Office of Management?**

A justification written by the supervisor and approved by the respective AIG or Counsel outlining the work experience of the candidate, the superior qualifications of the individual, the skills developed while gaining the experience, and any related education which enhances the candidate’s qualifications; or the special need of the agency for particular skills or knowledge possessed by the individual. The justification should include:

- A reference to current earning, and if applicable, potential loss of income from accepting the position as the first step of the grade.
- A statement that a recruitment bonus was considered instead of, or, in addition to the advance rate, and the reason for using the Superior Qualifications instead of the recruitment bonus and
- A recommendation of the step and salary to be offered.

In addition all requests must have a copy of a recent earnings statement, which verifies annual salary and if applicable, a copy of any bona fide written offer of employment from other sources, which is being used to justify the advanced rate of pay.

**Who do I call?**

For questions about this policy, please contact the Office of Management at (202) 927-5200 or [OIG-OM@oig.treas.gov](mailto:OIG-OM@oig.treas.gov).