

USA Staffing ACWA User Guide

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U.S. Office of Personnel Management 1900 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20415

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Background

On November 19, 1981 the United States District Court for the District of Columbia resolved a class-action suit that was filed in 1979. The resolution of the suit was known as the "Luevano consent decree" and it required the use of alternative assessments for occupations at the GS-5 and GS-7 grade levels that were once subject to the Professional and Administrative Career Exam.

The Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) rating schedules are assessment tools that were developed as a result of the lawsuit resolution that comply with the requirement to use validated (i.e., job-related) assessment tools when examining applicants for competitive service positions. The ACWA rating schedules are validated for use with the professional and administrative positions found on Appendix D in the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH). <u>https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/competitive-hiring/deo_handbook.pdf</u>.

Assessment Content

Each ACWA assessment system template will contain a minimum qualifications assessment which will need to be modified by the agency prior to releasing the vacancy. Each template will also contain a rating assessment. The amount of assessment rating questions will vary by series. However, applicants may complete anywhere between 80-120 questions. Additionally, because USA Staffing hides all scoring content from HR Users, there is no need for HR users to complete and track test security training every two years. The average time to complete the assessment is about 12 minutes.

Available Series

Rather than requesting approval for a specific set of series, agencies will automatically be granted access to all available USA Staffing ACWA assessment templates.

0018	0020	0023	0025	0028	
0080	0101	0105	0107	0110	
0130	0132	0140	0150	0170	
0180	0187	0190	0193	0201	
0301	0341	0343	0346	0391	
0501	0560	0570	0673	0685	
0901	0950	0965	0967	0993	
0996	1001	1015	1035	1082	
1083	1101	1102	1103	1104	
1130	1146	1147	1150	1160	
1163	1165	1170	1171	1173	
1176	1412	1420	1421	1654	
1701	1720	1801	1810	1811	
1849	1910	2001	2003	2010	
2030	2032	2101	2130	2150	
2210					

The following series are available:

Additional series may be added per request. To request an additional series, submit an enhancement request with the occupational series and target date of need to your USA Staffing Account Manager.

Alternative Assessments

Agencies are free to use any valid alternative assessment. USA Hire is a valid OPM alternative to ACWA, and many of the ACWA series are covered by standard USA Hire assessments. A full list of available series can be found here: https://help.usastaffing.gov/ResourceCenter/images/3/3b/USA_Hire_ACWA_-9.4.19.pdf. Agencies are also able to develop their own ACWA alternative assessments. We encourage you to consult your Office of General Counsel before using an agency developed ACWA alternative.

Combining ACWA and non-ACWA Grades

There are many implications with combining ACWA templates with non-ACWA grades that may produce adverse impacts to your desired results as well as the validity of your assessments. ACWA assessments were developed with a unique scoring mechanism that cannot be combined with other rating assessments. In order to avoid unintended issues that could result in the cancellation of a posted announcement, this type of recruitment is best captured when ACWA and Non-ACWA vacancies are announced as two separate recruitments.

Add an ACWA template

There are currently 76 system-level templates for some of the most commonly used occupational series available to be added for ACWA recruitments.

Adding an ACWA Template from the Assessment Package

• From the Assessment Package Overview Page, click the gear icon and choose Select Template from the dropdown.

🚆 Vacancy 10063888 🛛 👔 Assessment Package	🛷 Announcement 🛛 🔞 Re	iews +
USAJOBS Job Title Pay Plan-Series-Grade Contract Specialist GS-1102-5/7	Status Source Incomplete	
① This Vacancy is open to the public but does not conta	n any Categories!	
Overview Job Analysis Assessment Plan	Categories Test Plan	🗘 🖺 Documents 💿 🗬 Notes 💿 🖷 History
Assessment Package Checklist		Create Review No Assessment Required Assessment Package Complete Solert Template
S Assessment Package must have at least one ▲	sessment.	Save as Template

• The search criteria will default based on the vacancy's series and grade. Select the corresponding ACWA Template to copy it into the vacancy.

USA	\ Staffing [®]	٨	Staffing	Recruit	. A	dmin Repo	rts	Search		GRO	9	2 ¹ 2	Jennil	fer Demarais (STG)	opm 🗸
VAC	Assessment Pa	ackage Sea	rch											۵	g 0
	Field				Ope	rator		Value							
Cor	Grade			٠	ls		٣	× 5 × 7					0		
0	Series			×	ls.		٣	x 1102 - Contracti	ng				0		0
0	Add new search f	ield													
As															lete
6		1									_	Search		Clear Form	
	Search Result	s (2)						\$							
	Name	e Position Title	e e R C	ating ombination	e Pe	osition Description umber		Office Name	٠	ls Complete	ls External	Last Edited	0		
Ra	ACWA 1102	Contract Specialist	1	102-5 / 1102-7	A	CWA		ASMG ACWA Access Office		×		4/20/20	18	Preview	L
Used		s Ser	6			t Spec	salty				a Grade				
		-11	02								s				

Adding an ACWA template to your assessment package will automatically override any pre-existing vacancy settings as follows:

- Application Processing: Override individual announcement and assessment question requirement indicators to set all *questionnaire items as required* to **Disabled**
- Case File Retention: Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) position Do not archive as Enabled
- Vacancy Tags: ACWA appointing authority tag will be added

Updating the Minimum Qualifications Assessment

- System-level ACWA templates <u>must</u> be edited before they can be used, because they do not contain full minimum qualifications questions. For information on creating agency-level versions of templates which contain agency desired minimum qualifications questions, see the **Appendix A: Create Agency-specific ACWA Templates** section of this guide.
- The template will copy into the vacancy in a **Complete** status. Uncheck the **Complete Assessment Package** checkbox and go to the Assessment tab's Assessment Questionnaire page.

🞬 Vacancy 10063888 🐧 Assessment Package 🛷 Announcement 👍 Reviews 🗸 Assessment: ACWA Min Quals 1102 +											
USAJOBS Announcement Title Pay Plan-Series-Grade Contract Specialist GS-1102-5/7											
Assessment Information Competencies Assessment Questionnaire Screen-Out Criteria Rating Criteria	0	History									
Assessment Questionnaire (2 Items)	Add to Que	stionnaire 🝷									
Select All											
- I. From the descriptions below, select the letter that describes the education or experience you have that demonstrates your ability to perform GS-5 Contracting work. If your highest level of education is not described below, choose the letter that describes experience or lower level education that you do have.											
Response Option											
A RESPONSE TO BE ENTERED BY SERVICE CENTER											
B RESPONSE TO BE ENTERED BY SERVICE CENTER											
Add Response											
2. From the descriptions below, select the letter that describes the education or experience you have that demonstrates your ability to perform GS-7, Contracting work. If your highest level of education is not described below, choose the letter that describes experience or lower level education that you do have.											
Response Option											
A RESPONSE TO BE EDITED BY SERVICE CENTER											
B RESPONSE TO BE EDITED BY SERVICE CENTER 🖸 🔕											
Add Response											
	Save	Cancel									

• Replace the **RESPONSE TO BE EDITED BY SERVICE CENTER** response options with responses that meet the requirements of your position. Be sure to include a null response, such as "My education and/or experience is not reflected in any of the above statements."

• Navigate to the Screen-Out Criteria page and create a screen-out for the grade 5 as you normally would for a twograde vacancy.

me *			Apply Screen-Out to Rating Combinations *	Ineligibility Code *								
lin Quals GS-!	6		№ 1102-5□ 1102-7	IQID - You are ineligible because you do not meet the	h v							
Add all Iten Remember	ns that should be conside that the selected Items a	red in this Screen-Oc and Response Option	it. Then, select all Response Options that should disqualify s should be specific to the Rating Combinations selected a	applicants for the selected Rating Combinations. sbove.								
	Item											
	1. From the descriptions below, select the letter that describes the education or experience you have that demonstrates your ability to perform GS-5, Con 🔻											
	Response Options											
A A I have completed a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree or I possess a bachelor's degree that would equip me to perform the work of the position. OR At least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management:												
	🛛 🥥 в	I have education etc. My field on accounting, but or organization	on beyond the bachelor's degree, e.g., one full year of grac fstudy for at least one year of my postgraduate education siness, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, ind a and management. (Refer to the instructions on how to d	Juate study or more, master's degree, Ph.D., LL.B., J.D., was in one or a combination of the following fields: subrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, efine 1 academic year of graduate level study)								
	🗷 🙁 c	My education	and/or experience is not reflected in any of the above stat	ements.								
	e 🙁	Failed to respo	ind									
			Or									
3	1.00		Or	-								
	Item	riptions below select t	to letter that describes the education or experience you have th	at demonstrates your shills to perform CS-7. Con								
	2.11011 Cite desc	inputitis betow, select t	in least the destricts the equation of experience you have th	ac demonstrates your ability to perform darty contra								
	Response Optio	A I have a bas	helor's degree in a field that would equip me to perform the w	ork of the position, and I have superior academic								
	. •	I have at le- presenting contract m B administeri performan evaluating and evaluation	as one year of experience performing work of the type listed in terms and conditions in bids or proposals related to the award oldifications, and subcontracts; or in legal practice involving the ng the terms and conditions of contracts, including such aspect exunder the contract, and contract terminations or analyzing pr technical and awdit reports, forecasting price trends, evaluating sing methods of allocating costs through various types of overh-	the following examples: developing, preparing, and of contracts; or negotishing and awarding contracts, analysis of procurement policies and procedures; or as preparing contract modifications, evaluation of oposed prices or costs, including such aspects as economic factor, estimating production efficiencies, ead and general administrative expense.								
	•	C I have less I but I have a	han the full amount of graduate education described in "B" and combination of the type of graduate education described in "B	less than the amount of experience described in "C," " and the type of experience described in "C."								
	× 8	D My educati	on and/or experience is not reflected in any of the above staten	nents.								
		Failed to re	soond									

• Next, create a screen-out for the grade 7 as you normally would for a two-grade vacancy.

lame *				Apply Screen-Out to Rating Combinations *	Ineligibility Code *
Min Quals GS-7				□ 1102-5 ☞ 1102-7	IQID - You are ineligible because you do not meet th
Add all Remen	Items that she ber that the s	ould be co elected it	nsidered ems and	d in this Screen-Out. Then, select all Response Options that should disquali Response Options should be specific to the Rating Combinations selected	ify applicants for the selected Rating Combinations. Add I
	Item				0
	2. From	the desci	riptions l	below, select the letter that describes the education or experience you have	ve that demonstrates your ability to perform GS-7, Con *
	Respo	nse Optio	ns		
	0	0	А	I have a bachelor's degree in a field that would equip me to perform th achievement. (Refer to the instructions for information on the Superio	e work of the position, and I have superior academic r Academic Achievement provision)
	٥	0	В	I have at least one year of experience performing work of the type liste presenting terms and conditions in hids or proposals related to the awa contract modifications, and subcontracts; or i legal practice involving administering the terms and conditions of contracts, including such asg performance under the contract, and contract termination; or analyzin evaluating technical and audit reports, forecasting price trends, evalua and evaluating methods of allocating costs through various types of or	ed in the following examples: developing, preparing, and ard of contracts, or negotiating and awarding contracts, the analysis of procurement policies and procedures; or pects as preparing contract modifications, evaluation of g proposed prices or costs, including such aspects as ting economic factors, estimating production efficiencies, erthead and general administrative expense.
	۵	0	c	I have less than the full amount of graduate education described in "B" but I have a combination of the type of graduate education described i	and less than the amount of experience described in "C," n "B" and the type of experience described in "C."
	8	0	D	My education and/or experience is not reflected in any of the above sta	atements.
		0		Failed to respond	

• When you have finished customizing the minimum qualifications questions and built screen-outs for each grade, navigate to the Assessment Package tab's Categories page to ensure your agency's category rating policy is being applied. You will likely need to add categories before testing your assessment package. Do not check any of the **Category Settings** options.

🗃 Vacancy 10063888 🚯 Assessment Package 🛹 Announcement 👍	Reviews +		
USAJOBS Job Title Pay Plan-Series-Grade Status St Contract Specialist GS-1102-5/7 Incomplete A	ACWA 1102		
Overview Job Analysis Assessment Plan Categories Test	Plan	Documents	🗬 Notes 💿 🔮 History
Categories Final Score Cutpoint *			Add Category
Category Name		Final Rating Cutpoint	
Best Qualified	8	90	0
Well Qualified		80	0
Qualified		70	۵
Category Settings			
Assign Categories based on 'CS-9+ Professional/Scientific' rules 1102-5 1007	Assign Categories based on Augr	mented Rating (Only use with Demo Proje	ects that do not use Category Rating)
= 11024	₩ 1102+ <i>1</i>		
			Save Cancel

- Navigate to the Test Plan page. Create test scenarios as you would for any two-grade assessment. Follow your
 agency's business process for testing assessments; we recommend one test scenario per screen-out and at least
 one eligible scenario.
- When your ACWA minimum qualifications assessment has been successfully tested, click **Complete Assessment Package.**

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^{USA.} Co	JOBS Job Title Pay Plan Intract Specialist GS-11	-Series-Grade Status 102-5/7 Incor	nplete A	CWA 1102					
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.0	Ineligible both grades	C, D		1102-5 1102-7	IQID IQID			IQID IQID	
0	EL 5, IN 7	A, D		1102-5 1102-7	ELTE IQID			S ELTE - 7 IQID	0

Appendix A: Create Agency-specific ACWA Templates

USA Staffing allows HR users with the **Create/Edit Assessment Package Templates** permission enabled to copy ACWA templates and build agency-specific minimum qualifications questions. Doing so shortens the process for traditional HR users because they are no longer required to edit the minimum qualification response options for every variation. It also reduces the risk of error and ensures consistent terminology for applicants. We highly recommend creating agency-specific templates for the most commonly filled series within your agency.

- To create an agency specific ACWA Assessment Package Template, open the Manage Templates tab and click Create Template.
- Do not enter any information into the blank template. Click the gear icon and select **Copy from Template** from the dropdown.

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		Å

- Enter ACWA [series] into the Template Name search box and click Search. Click on the name of the corresponding ACWA template. This will copy the system-level template into your newly created template. The template name will default to "ACWA [series] (Copy)" and may be customized according to your agency's naming conventions.
- If you have access to multiple offices, select the appropriate **Owning Office** from the dropdown.

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ADMINISTRATION ~									
🏟 Admin Home 🛞 🚓 Template Admin 🔺 Assessm	ment Package Template 🗼 Assessment Package	Template: ACWA S	ocial Insurance Specialist - 0105 (Copy)						
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									Save

- Once the copied template has been saved with an appropriate name and owning office, complete the template according to the instructions in the Add an ACWA Template section of this user guide. This should include:
 - Customizing the minimum qualifications response options according to the specialized experience language commonly used in your organization.
 - Building screen-outs for the GS-5 and GS-7 grades.
 - Adding categories according to your agency's category rating policy.
 - Creating test scenarios to thoroughly test your assessment.