SES in USA Staffing: Quick Start Guide

PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

The Senior Executive Service (SES) includes nearly all managerial, supervisory, and policy positions classified above General Schedule (GS) grade 15 or equivalent in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. Visit the Office of Personnel Management SES website at http://www.opm.gov/ses for additional information.

This guide outlines an automated approach to facilitate the posting of SES position through USA Staffing.

PART 2: ANNOUNCING AN SES POSITION THROUGH USA STAFFING

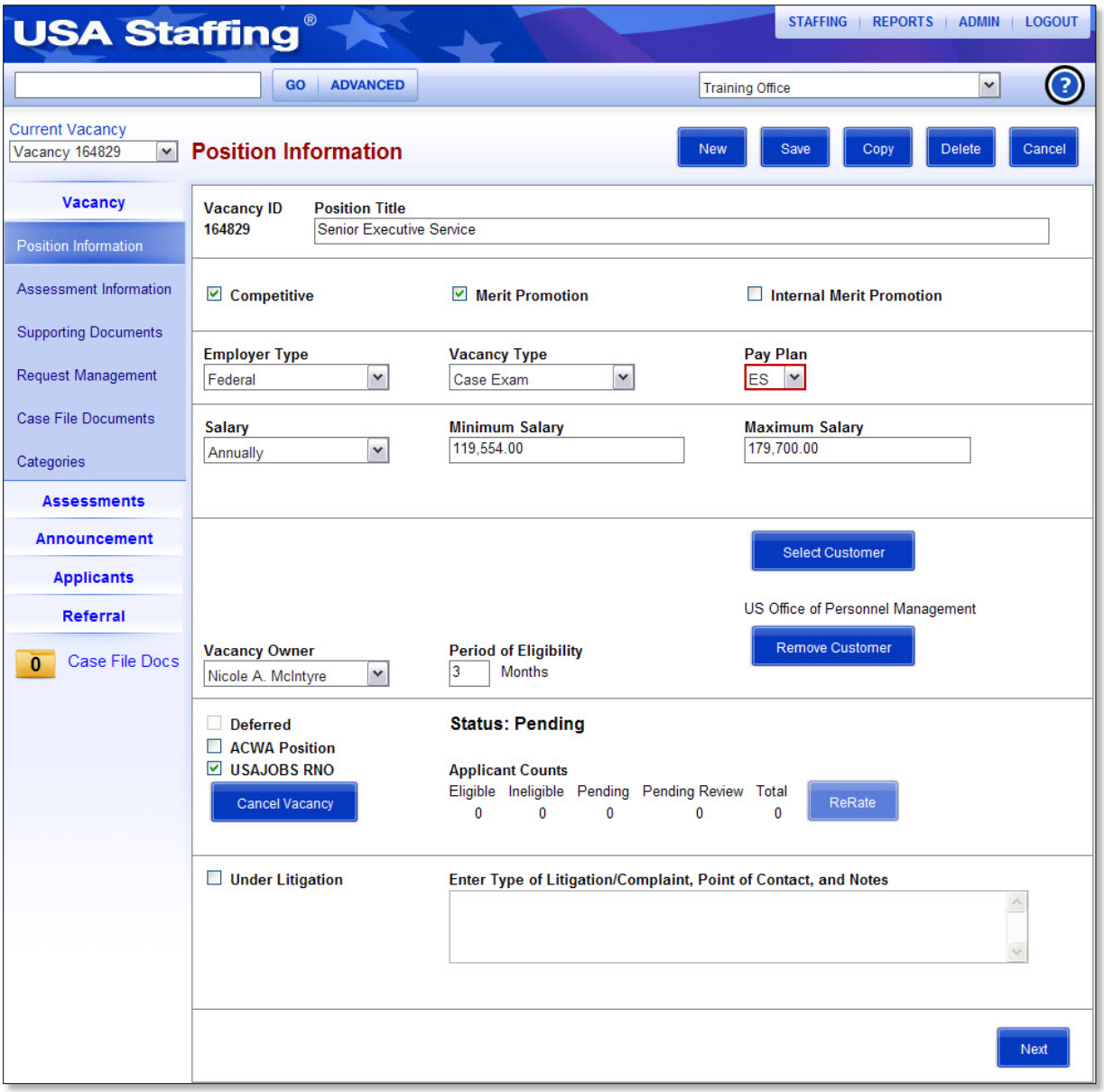
This section outlines the steps for posting a vacancy announcement to USAJOBS, accepting online applications, assessing applicants for minimum qualifications, and referring candidates through USA Staffing. The process is automated (except the panel evaluations and rating) to include applicant notifications and reporting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1: General Information 1
PART 2: Announcing an SES Position Through USA Staffing 1
Creating the Vacancy 2
Setting up the Assessments 4
Creating the Announcement 7
Reviewing Applicant Records 8
Notifying Applicants Pre-Certification 8
Issuing a Ranking List 9
Activating the Manual Assessment 11
Entering Applicants Ratings Manually 11
Creating a Certificate of Eligibles 13
Notifying Applicants Post-Certification 14

Creating the Vacancy

The process of creating a Vacancy for SES positions does not vary from other positions. Users must input the appropriate information, including the correct ***Pay Plan*** on the Position Information page.



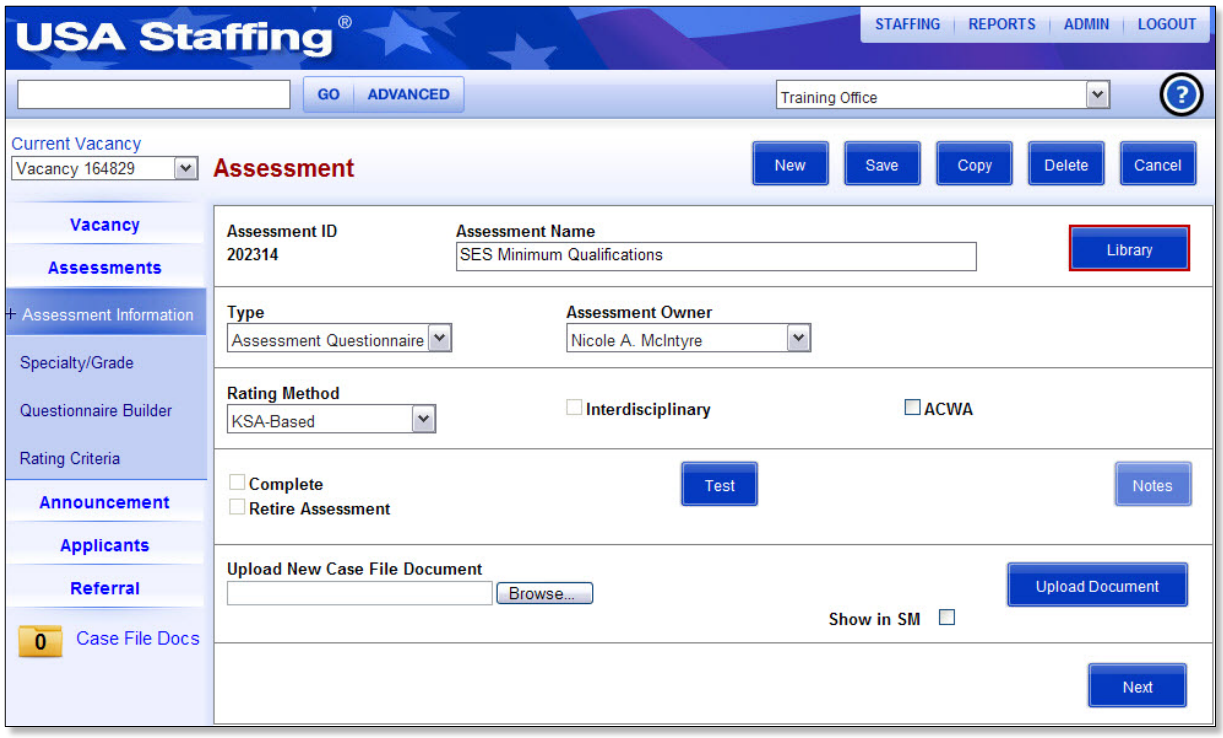
Check the appropriate boxes for the ***Accepted*** and ***Required*** supporting documents based on the instructions provided to the applicant in the How To Apply or other sections of the Announcement. Note that an Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) supporting document type is available for applicants to upload their ECQs in Application Manager.

Setting up the Assessments

USA Staffing requires that an assessment be entered before an announcement can be released to USAJOBS to establish the series, specialty, and grade of the position. This guide suggests using two assessments, an ***Assessment Questionnaire*** to determine the minimum qualifications and/or basic eligibility of the applicants, followed by a ***Manual Assessment***. The manual assessment serves as a placeholder for the receipt and recording of the combined ratings assigned by the agency after a formal panel review of the applicant's Resume, ECQs, Structured Interview, and/or any other relevant information.

To add these two assessments to the vacancy, follow these steps:

1. Create a minimum qualifications ***Assessment Questionnaire*** or click ***Library*** to select an existing assessment.



2. If you decide to create a new assessment, add the series, specialty, and grade on the Specialty/Grade page.

3. In the Questionnaire Builder page,

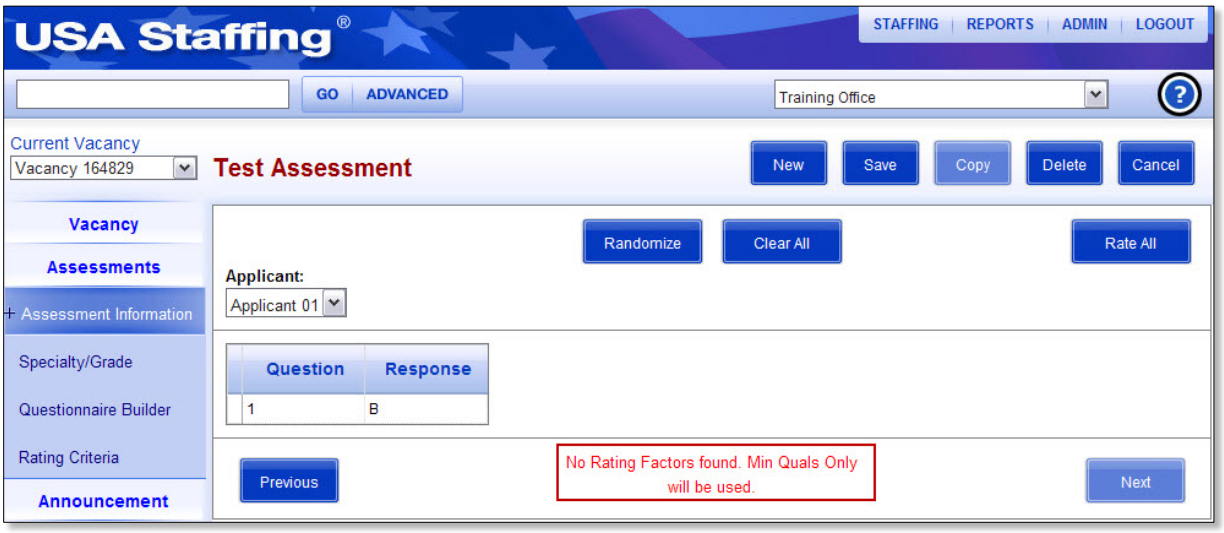
   - Enter the minimum qualifications questions and responses.

   - Add any applicable technical competency questions and responses required for the position. These technical competencies and/or ECQs can be used for screen-out or informational purposes as part of the minimum qualifications review process.

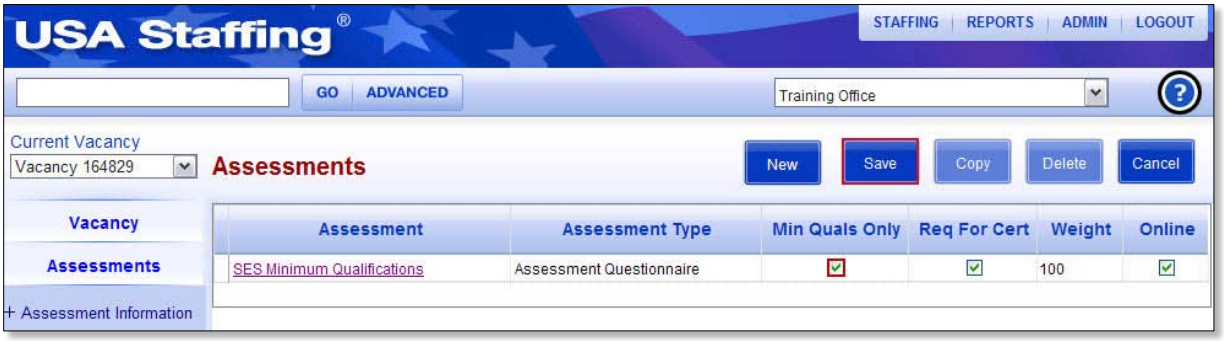
Note about using Narratives in USA Staffing: We strongly recommend that users collect ECQ write-ups as a separate supporting document rather than collecting them as Narrative Items within the assessment.

4. Establish the rating criteria, test the assessment to ensure it is screening applicants correctly, and mark the assessment ***Complete***.

Note: When testing the assessment you may notice a red message indicating, "No Rating Factors found. Min Quals Only will be used." In this instance, the assessment is only being used as a minimum qualifications/basic eligibility screen out. A score will not be generated at this point in the assessment process.



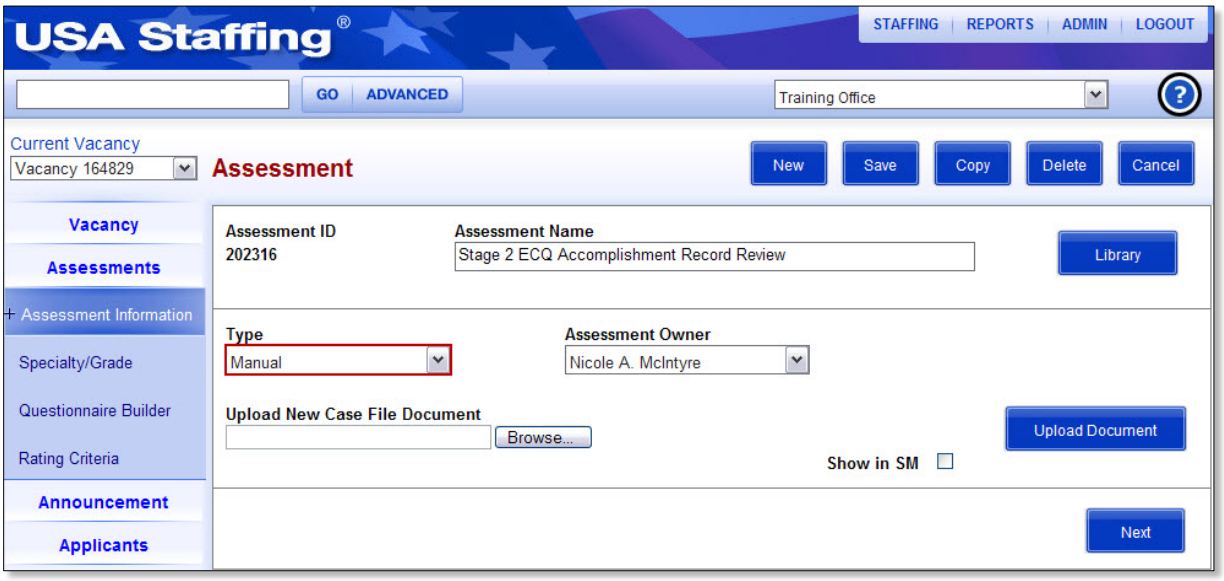
5. After the minimum qualifications ***Assessment Questionnaire*** is complete, mark the assessment ***Min Quals Only***. The ***Req for Cert*** and ***Online*** boxes will be defaulted to checked and the ***Weight*** is defaulted to 100. This ensures applicants are rated eligible or ineligible only.



6. Click the ***Save*** button. The page will refresh.

7. Click the ***New*** button on the Assessments page to add the second assessment.

8. Enter the ***Assessment Name*** and select Manual from the ***Type*** drop-down list.



9. Click the ***Save*** button. The page will refresh.

10. Click ***Assessments*** on the left menu bar.

Two assessments will be listed in the Assessments page for this Vacancy. Before proceeding to create the announcement, uncheck the ***Req for Cert*** box on the ***Manual Assessment***. This will ensure applicants are rated as eligible or ineligible based on the minimum qualifications ***Assessment Questionnaire***.

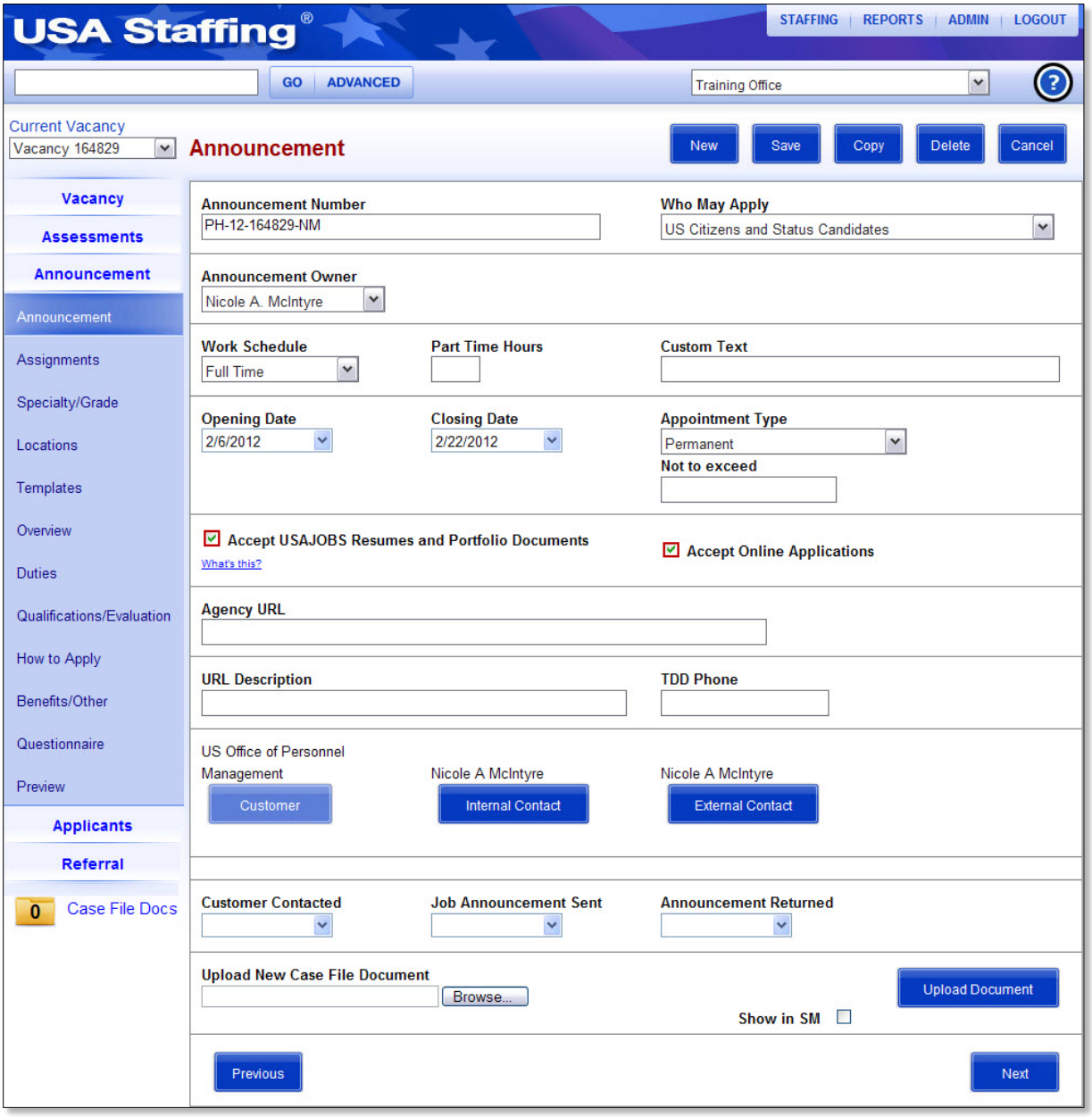
Creating the Announcement

Follow these steps when creating the announcement:

1. Select the appropriate ***Appointment Type*** from the drop-down list.

2. Leave the ***Accept USAJOBS Resumes and Portfolio Documents*** box checked to allow applicants to submit a USAJOBS resume and portfolio documents. If this box is unchecked, applicants will not be able to select their USAJOBS documents.

3. Leave the ***Accept Online Applications*** box checked to ensure applicants can apply online. This checkbox activates the ***Apply Online*** button on the USAJOBS announcement, which routes applicants through USAJOBS and then to Application Manager to complete their application. If this box is unchecked, applicants will not be able to apply online.



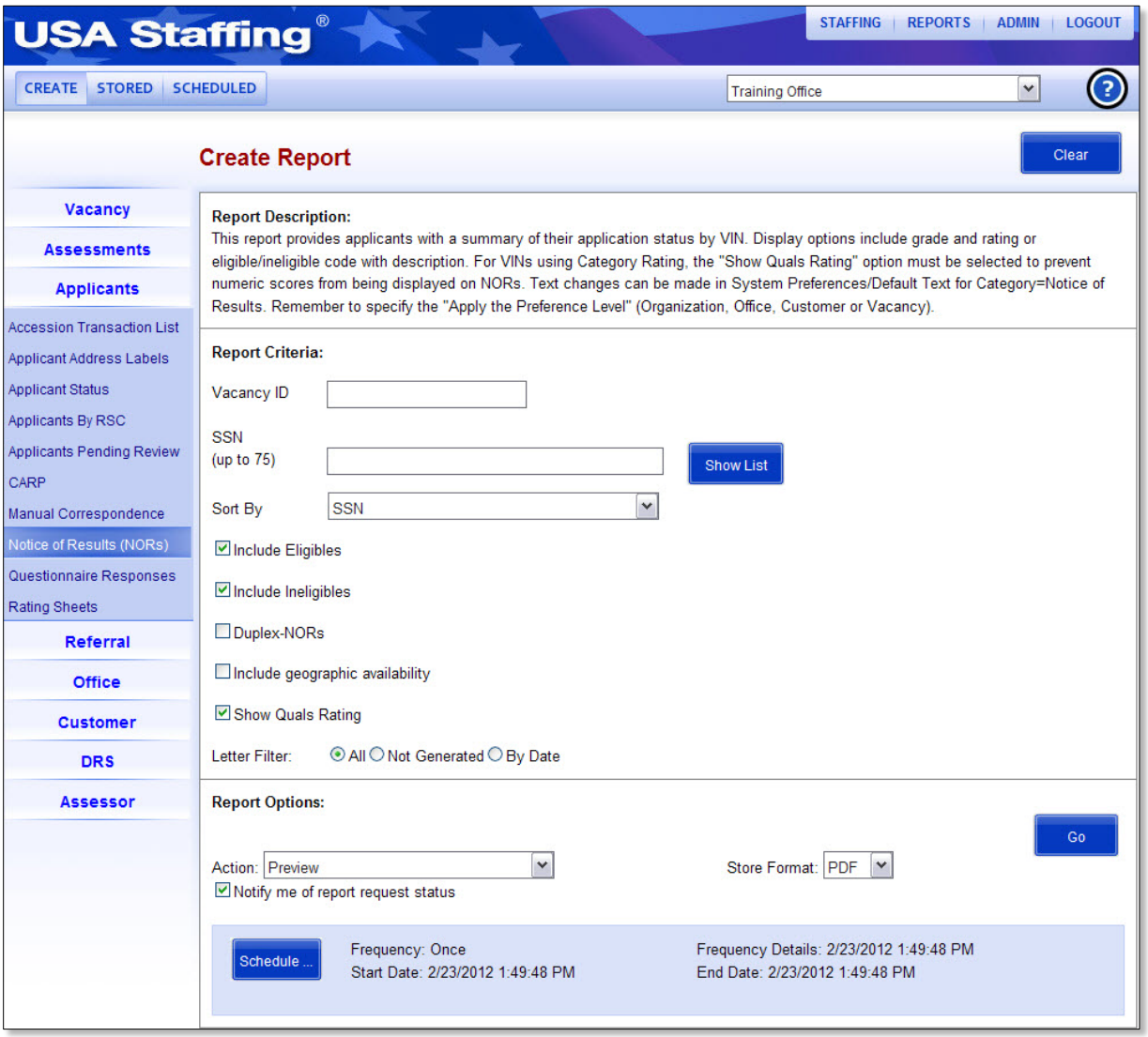
4. Complete the rest of the announcement pages as appropriate for an SES position.

Reviewing Applicant Records

Once applicants apply, they will be either eligible (AA) or ineligible (IN) because the minimum qualifications ***Assessment Questionnaire*** is not used to rate applicants. Eligible applicants will have an EL rating and will not have a score at this point in the process. Applicants can then be reviewed for minimum qualifications.

Notifying Applicants Pre-Certification

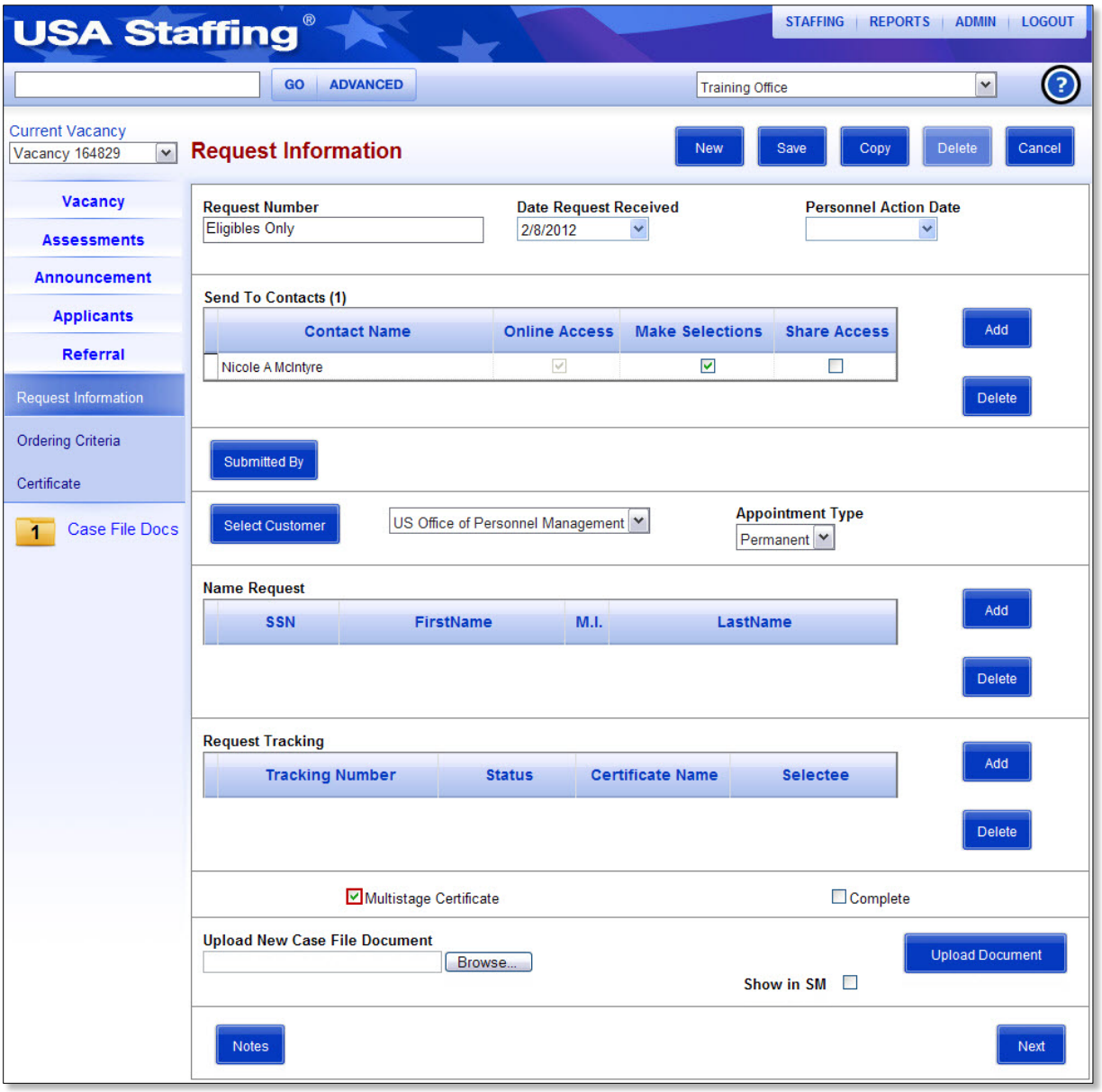
Users can send ***Notice of Results*** to notify all applicants of their application status or they can opt to notify only ineligible applicants at this point. The text in this notice can be customized to better suit the applicant pool and evaluation process in the Administration > Preferences > Default Text section. For details on changing default text, see the following USA Staffing online help task Customizing default text.



Issuing a Ranking List

After the minimum qualifications review is complete, users can issue a ranking list of all eligible applicants and send that list to the panel for the second stage rating determination. The panel will rate the applicants and assign a score based on a review of the resume and/or ECQs.

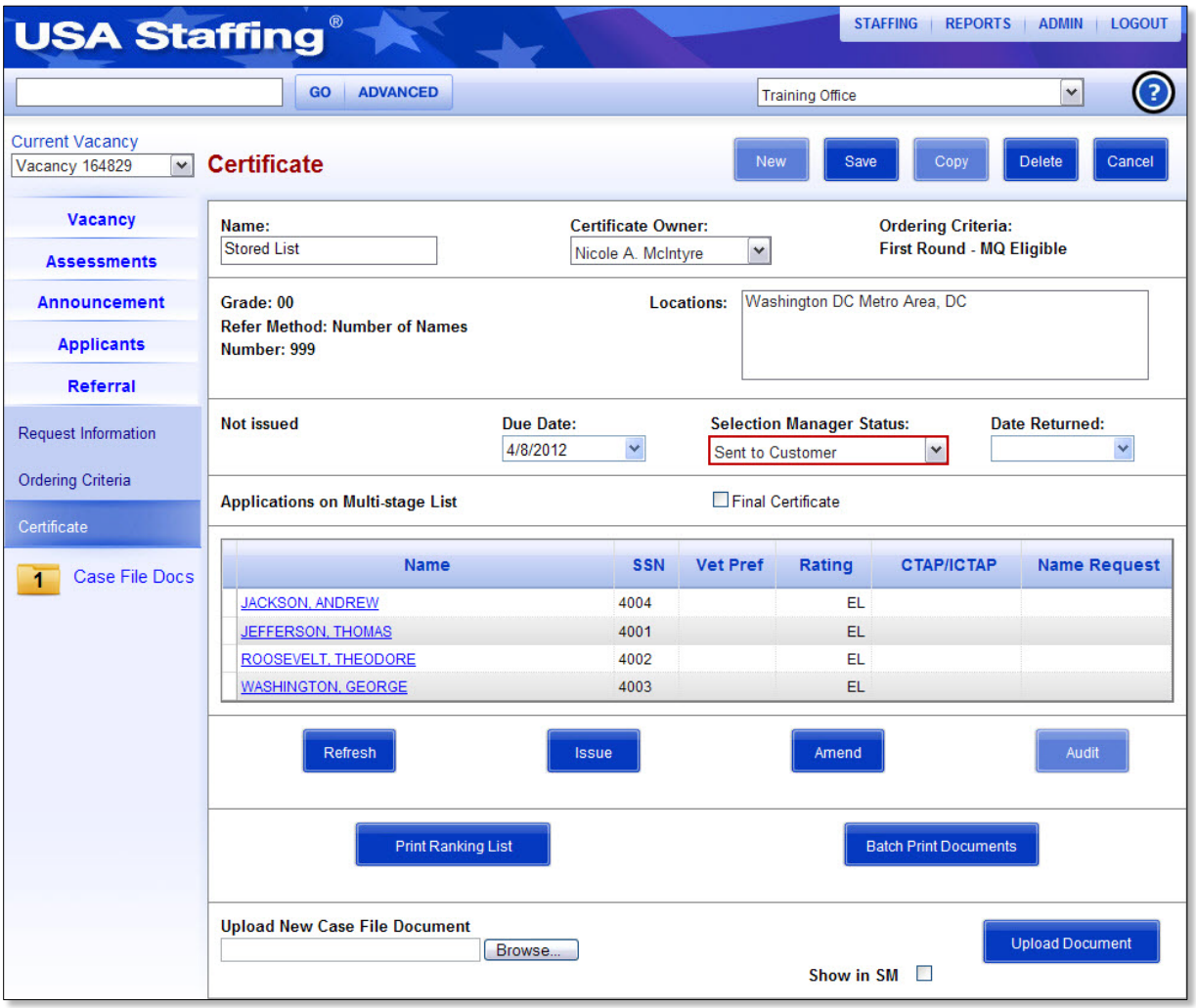
On the Request Information page, check the ***Multistage Certificate*** box at the bottom of the page to send the list of all eligible applicants and their documents to the members of the review panel through Selection Manager.



The process for issuing an Eligibles Only ranking list is the same as for non-SES positions. For details on creating Requests, Ordering Criteria, and issuing Stored Lists, see the following online help topics:

- Referral_-_Request_Information_Page
- Referral_-_Ordering_Criteria_Page
- Referral_-_Stored_List_Page

Once your Stored List is created, you can finalize it by clicking the ***Issue*** button. Because the ***Multistage Certificate*** box was checked on the Request Information page, clicking the ***Issue*** button on the Certificate page will not assign a certificate number (***Name***) to the Stored List at this time. To send the stored list to the panel members, select the Sent to Customer option from the ***Selection Manager Status*** drop-down list.

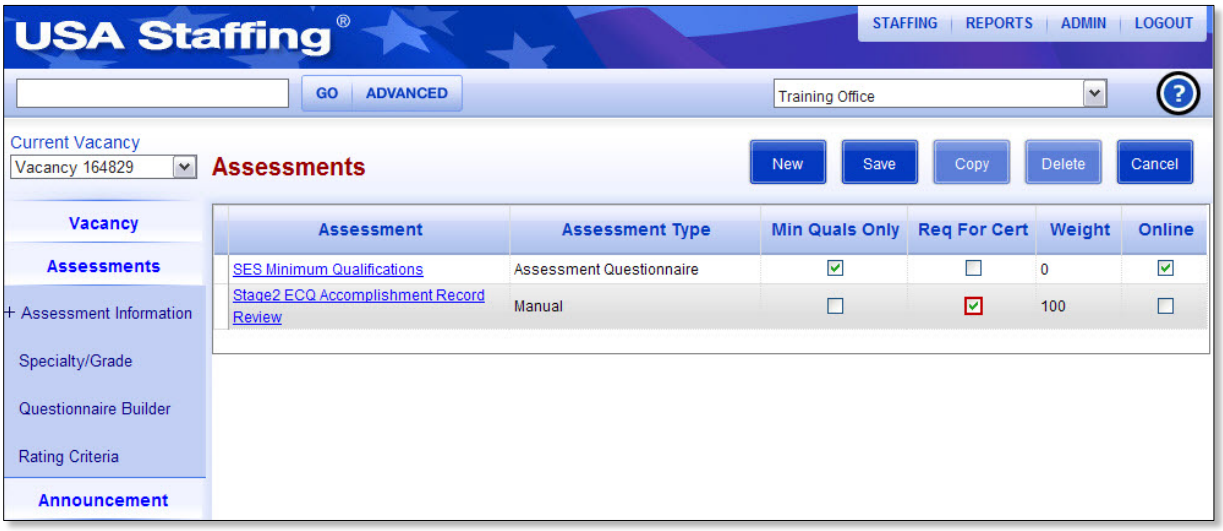


Panel members will have the option to batch print documents through Selection Manager using the ***Print*** feature. A Quick Start Guide explaining this feature can be found on the Selection Manager Login page. Additional information is available in the following online help task, Printing supporting documents. To print the applicants' supporting documents for the panel, click the ***Batch Print*** button on the Stored List page.

Activating the Manual Assessment

Once panel members have completed their review of the applicant resumes and/or ECQs, you can enter the rating results into USA Staffing.

To access the Assessments section, click ***Assessments*** on the left menu bar. Prior to entering the ratings, you must check the ***Req for Cert*** box on the ***Manual Assessment***. The ***Weight*** for the ***Manual Assessment*** should be 100. The ***Weight*** for the minimum qualifications ***Assessment Questionnaire*** should be zero (0) at this point. Once these changes are complete, click the ***Save*** button. The system will automatically re-rate all applicants. Applicants in AA (Eligible for Certification) status will change to PL status (Pending Additional Assessment Component).

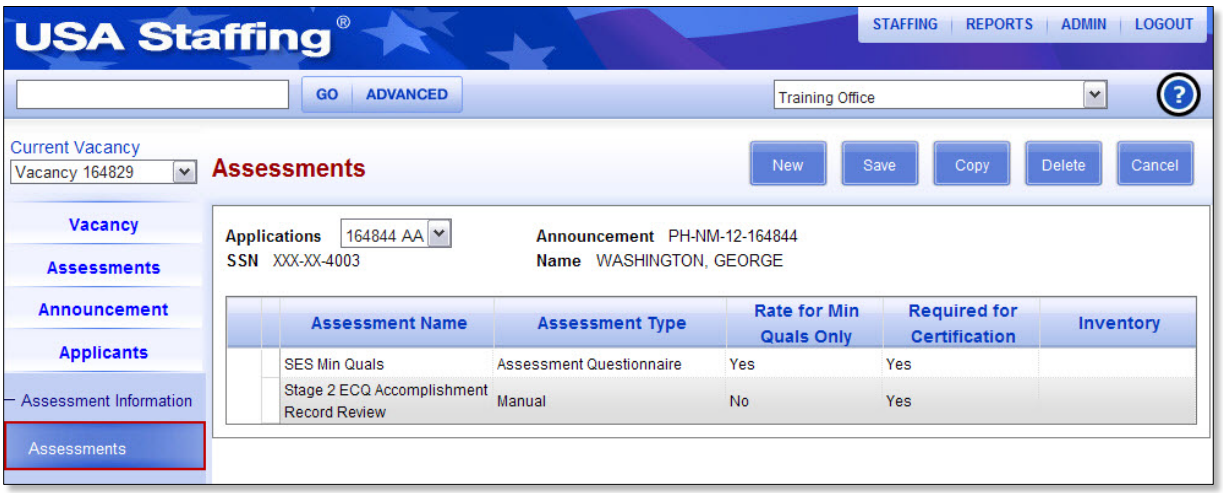


Entering Applicants Ratings Manually

Applicants must be in PL status before ratings can be entered. To enter a final rating, follow these steps:

1. Click the ***Open*** link next to the applicant's SSN on the Applications page.

2. Click to expand the + (plus) sign next to Assessment Information on the left menu bar to access the Assessments page.



3. Click the box to the left of the ***Assessment Name*** for the ***Manual Assessment***. A black arrow appears indicating your selection. When the screen refreshes, you will see the ***Rating Information for Selected Assessment*** section.

4. Click the ***New*** button.

5. Enter the applicant's final rating in the ***Rating*** box. If an applicant has an Ineligible rating, you can select the appropriate code from the ***Min Quals Rating*** drop-down list.

6. Click the ***Save*** button. The applicant record status will change from PL (Pending Additional Assessment Component) status to AA status (Eligible for Certification) or IN (Ineligible for Certification).

Creating a Certificate of Eligibles

Once the applicant ratings are entered into the records, you must ensure no applicant remains in PL status. All PL records should have a rating or an ineligible code entered before proceeding to generate the final certificate. Return to the Ordering Criteria for the Stored List previously issued to create a new Ordering Criteria and issue the final selection certificate.

To create a new Ordering Criteria, follow these steps:

1. Click the ***New*** button on the Ordering Criteria page.

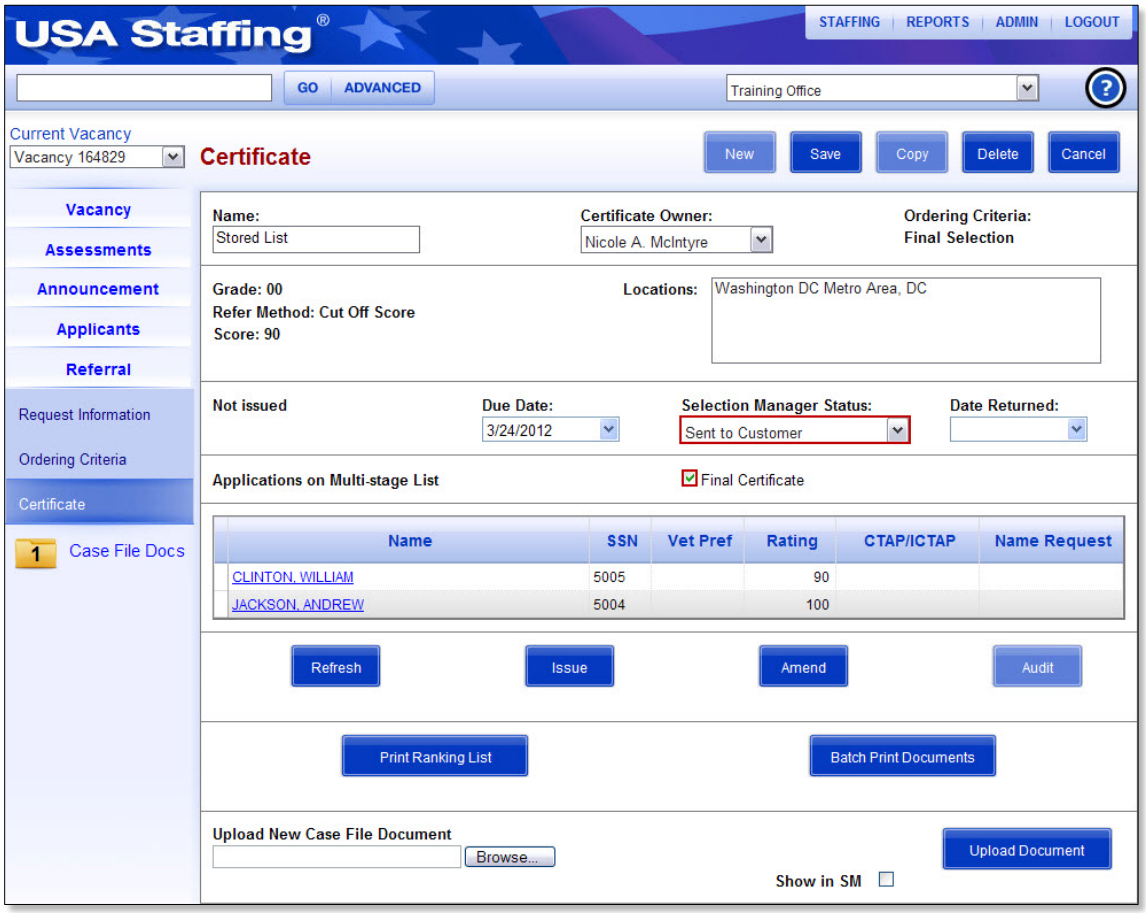
2. Complete the necessary fields in the Ordering Criteria page. In this final phase, you must ensure the ordering criteria reflects the rules related to SES hiring and the agency's preferred method for referring applicants (e.g. by category or cut off score).

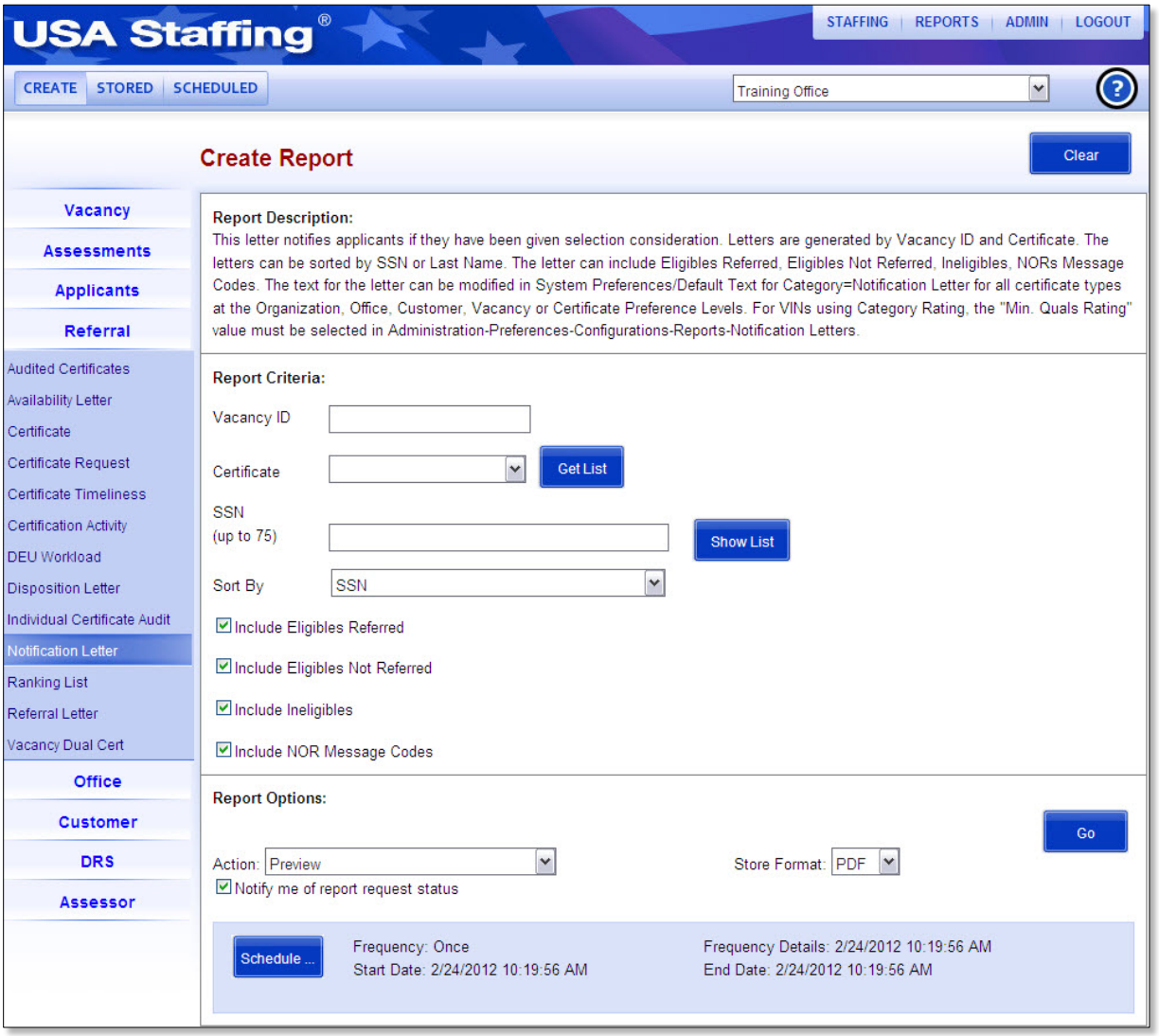
3. Click the ***Preview Certificate*** button to generate the Stored List.

4. Review the Stored List and click the ***Issue*** button. This activates the ***Final Certificate*** checkbox.

5. Check the ***Final Certificate*** box and click the ***Issue*** button once more. The Stored List is now assigned a system-generated certificate number (***Name***).

6. Select the Sent to Customer option from the ***Selection Manager Status*** drop-down list and click the ***Save*** button to transmit the certificate through Selection Manager.



Notifying Applicants Post-Certification

Users should send Notification Letters to all Eligible Referred and Eligible Not Referred applicants. If Ineligible applicants were not notified in previous steps, they should also be notified at this point. The text in these letters can be customized to better suit this applicant pool and evaluation process in Administration > Preferences > Default Text section. For details on changing default text, see the following USA Staffing online help task Customizing default text.