



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

ATSS-CD

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
UNITED STATES ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY  
11291 SGT E. CHURCHILL STREET  
FORT BLISS, TEXAS 79918

23 January 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL ASSIGNED/ATTACHED PERSONNEL, US ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY, FORT BLISS, TX 79918

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum # 20, Superior Qualifications Appointment

1. References:

- a. 5 U.S.C. 5333
- b. 5 CFR 531.203(b)

2. It is the Commandant's policy to appoint individuals to General Schedule (GS) positions above Step 1 of the grade based on the unique or superior qualifications and existing pay, or a special need for the individual's service. Use of the superior qualification appointment authority is not to solely match existing pay but to enable the Department to compete for top quality candidates and is for only competitive actions. These types of appointments are exceptional situations.

3. In addition to the definitions found in 5 CFR 531.203, the following clearly define Superior Qualifications and Special Needs:

- a. **Superior Qualifications**—The individual brings unusually high, unique or superior qualifications, particularly suited to the position in comparison with other qualified individuals. In addition, the individual would be losing salary and/or benefits if employed at the first step of the grade.
- b. **Special Needs**—A documented need of the Department for a specific set of skills and/or expertise and recruitment has met with limited success. An individual who is singularly suited to a unique Departmental function; one who has special though not necessarily superior qualifications that meets the need of a position or a documented area of chronic labor shortage.

4. Eligibility: Superior qualifications appointments are made at a rate above the minimum rate of the appropriate General Schedule grade under authority of 5 U.S.C. 5333. To be eligible for superior qualifications appointments:

- a. Individuals must be newly appointed or reappointed after a break in service of at least 90 days from their last Federal appointment in accordance with 5 CFR 531.203 (b)(2);
- b. It must be determined that the individual's current and prior appointments, if any, do not preclude use of the superior qualifications provision; (see 5 CFR 531.203(b)(2)(i) through (iii));

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c. Individuals must have unique skills or qualifications that are above other individuals in the same category. There must also be a forfeiture of income that would justify an increase in salary above step one of the grade being considered for; and

d. Individuals must have a unique combination of education and experience that meets a special need of the Department.

5. All criteria for recommending a new employee for an SQA must be documented and presented to the Commandant prior to offer being made to new employee.

6. POC this policy is the Director, Personnel & Administration, (915) 744-8383.

**"Ultima Strong!"**



RORY L. MALLOY  
CSM, USA  
Commandant