



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Glossary of terms

Note: This explanation of terms is provided for use with the “Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection of Candidates for Secondment to OSCE Field Activities” and is intended only to facilitate their understanding. It is offered without prejudice to the definitions participating States themselves may use in their internal administration systems and laws.

Analytical skills

The ability to evaluate information and data, and on the basis of such analysis, to develop courses of action to achieve a policy or operational goal or objective.

Availability for deployment

The time required from being informed of selection for assignment to an OSCE field activity to reporting to the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna for induction and onward deployment.

Communication skills

The ability to organise and present ideas cogently, whether extemporaneously, as prepared public statements or in written documents. In addition, the ability to elicit effectively information from others.

Cultural sensitivity and judgement

OSCE participating States represent broad cultural diversity. International staff assigned to the Organization’s field activities will find themselves in a variety of cultural contexts and will work with colleagues from widely varied cultural backgrounds. Thus, success in an assignment to an OSCE field activity will depend significantly on the ability to perceive, understand and empathise with behaviour and mores that may differ substantially from what is common and accepted in one’s own culture. Conversely, one must be able to express one’s opinions and preferences, and to conduct oneself, in a manner that is not offensive to the sensitivities of others from different backgrounds.

Diplomatic skills

The ability to interact successfully with a wide variety of personality types and individuals of varying professional, cultural and national backgrounds. Qualities frequently associated with diplomatic skills include: the ability to articulate thoughts clearly, persuasiveness, sensitivity, understanding, and the ability to see all sides of an issue.

Drafting skills

The ability to present ideas in writing in a well-organised, coherent and persuasive manner.

English, limited knowledge

The ability to comprehend a limited number of simple phrases used in everyday conversations (e.g., concerning greetings, directions, prices, time, dates, etc.) and to respond, not necessarily in complete sentences. The ability to comprehend street signs, newspaper headlines, advertisements, restaurant menus and timetables. A vocabulary of approximately 1000 words or less.

English, professional knowledge

The ability to work independently in English, including the preparation of written reports, correspondence, and papers with a minimum number of grammatical and syntactical errors. The ability to participate actively in and lead meetings conducted in English. The ability to give oral briefings and public presentations in English.

English, working knowledge

The ability to follow work-related discussions and discussion in meetings, as well as to participate in them to a limited degree, although command of grammar and syntax may be uncertain. The ability to use the telephone in English, to read and understand work related documents written in English, and to draft basic correspondence in English which is comprehensible if not necessarily grammatically and syntactically correct.

Field of expertise (FOE)

In this context, one of the twelve categories of work performed in OSCE field activities.

Induction

In this context, the orientation programme conducted in Vienna for personnel selected for secondment to OSCE field activities just prior to deployment to post.

Internship

A period of on-the-job training, usually undertaken prior to actual employment in the field of work or profession concerned.

Interpersonal skills

Ability to interact effectively with peers, superiors, and subordinates by demonstrating effective social behaviour in a variety of settings and under different circumstances.

Leadership skills

The ability to delegate responsibility to subordinates and effectively motivate them to carry out assigned responsibilities in co-operation with one another or independently for the purpose of achieving common goals. The willingness to apply appropriate disciplinary measures when circumstances so require and to do so in ways that those disciplined learn from the experience and increase their commitment to the common purpose.

Managerial experience

Experience in positions that require planning and organising, setting objectives and priorities, making decisions affecting policy and/or operations, and motivating subordinate personnel and directing their work. Management also typically entails some degree of responsibility for such things as training and development of subordinate staff, budgetary and financial matters, and the appropriate use of equipment, supplies and real property employed in operations.

Mandate

The right and power to carry out certain policies. In the OSCE context, mandate usually refers to the authorities established by the Organisation's Permanent Council in the form of a decision for a field activity.

Mediation skills

The ability to understand both the details and the larger context of a dispute and to identify common grounds that can serve as the basis of a compromise accepted by all parties to the dispute.

Negotiating skills

The ability, through dialogue, to reach an accommodation with one or more parties which is acceptable to all concerned.

Nominating authority

The person, persons or entity designated by a participating State as authorised to propose candidates to the Secretariat for secondment to OSCE field activities.

Operational experience

Experience and direct involvement in the principal activities of an organisation, especially in matters where planning is required, decisions are made, and actions carried out to reach a specific goal.

Organisational skills

The ability to identify requirements, develop a plan for meeting them, and prioritise the specific tasks which must be carried out for timely and effective accomplishment of objectives.

Planning skills

The ability to analyse requirements for accomplishing a given task and, on the basis of that analysis, to develop a realistic schedule of work.

Police administration course

A certified police course dealing with general police administrative policies and procedures held at a police academy or training establishment or institution.

Problem-solving skills

The ability to apply a methodological approach in assessing an issue or situation and to develop possible solutions.

Professional experience

In this context, the number of years of work experience, exclusive of internships or apprenticeships.

Professional competence, level of

One of the four levels of responsibility delineated in the OSCE Staffing Matrix for Selection of Field Staff.

Professional training

Special instruction designed to develop skills needed to meet established standards for a given field of work.

Secondment

The practice of one entity making the services of an employee available to another entity for a short period of time while continuing to remunerate the employee. In the OSCE context, it is the practice whereby participating States make personnel available to the Organization while continuing to remunerate those personnel.

Selection panel

A committee of Secretariat staff charged with reviewing and assessing the qualifications of candidates proposed by the participating States for secondment to OSCE field activities and making recommendations for selection to the heads of the concerned field activities or their designated representatives. See Annex D of the Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection of Candidates for Secondment to OSCE Field Activities for the Selection Panel's Terms of Reference.