



GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy

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SPE Memo SPE-2023-03

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL GSA CONTRACTING ACTIVITIES AND HEADS OF CONTRACTING ACTIVITY

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SUBJECT: GSA GS-1102 Modernization Project for Contracting Professionals

**1. Purpose.**

This memorandum announces GSA's GS-1102 Modernization Project. This modernization provides additional flexibility in the recruitment, hiring, and professional development of GS-1102s. It also introduces GSA's strategy for an early transition to an approach consistent with the new DoD [Back-to-Basics \(BtB\) Acquisition Workforce talent management framework](#). This transition will begin immediately upon issuance of this memorandum and continue throughout the calendar year.

**2. Background.**

The Department of Defense issued the Back-to-Basics Acquisition Workforce [talent management framework](#) which introduced a new contracting competency model and modernized their contracting certification from a three-level certification to a one-level professional certification, referred to as the DoD Contracting Professional Certification. For GS-1102s within the DoD, it also removed the requirement for 24 semester hours of business credits. On January 19, 2023, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued a [memorandum](#) that adopts this model for civilian agencies.

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The back-to-basics framework includes a commercial competency model, training curriculum that aligns with the phases of the contracting life cycle, and credentials that offer advanced knowledge associated with specific acquisition disciplines.

By transitioning to the new model, GSA will align with the certifications used by the Department of Defense. GSA will support a mobile workforce that may change positions many times, both in and out of Government. GSA will remain an employer of choice for current federal acquisition professionals, acquisition professionals in the private and nonprofit sectors, as well as state and local government. GSA, as America's buyer and the Government's landlord, is one of the best places to work in the federal Government.

Most directly, this transition and the new hiring flexibilities are designed to make it easier and faster for GSA to fill 1102 positions, particularly those at higher grade levels. By partnering between Acquisition and Human Resources, these changes mirror GSA's focus on acquisition innovation with a focus on streamlining our hiring processes to attract and retain top talent.

### **3. New GSA GS-1102 Qualifications.**

#### **a. GS-1102, Grades 13 and Above**

There are two legacy requirements for GS-1102-13 and above positions. Congress repealed these requirements for the Department of Defense, however, by virtue of the [Individual Occupational Requirements](#) for the 1102 Series, they remain in effect for civilian agencies.

The Senior Procurement Executive has the authority to waive these legacy requirements. GSA has developed a streamlined business process to waive these requirements on an individual basis until an updated policy goes into effect for civilian agencies. The legacy requirements are:

- Education: 24 hours of business credits
- Having completed mandatory training. GSA defined this mandatory training requirement as a FAC-C or DAWIA Level II certification

**Under the new certification model, in order to be eligible, applicants for all GS-1102-13 and above positions will still be required to have:**

- Education: A bachelor's degree with a major in any field.

- Specialized Experience: Minimum of 4-years experience in contracting or related positions. At least 1 year of that experience must have been specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level of the position.

**b. GS-1102, Grades 5 Through 12**

**Applicants for all GS-1102-5 through 12 positions will still be required to have:**

- Education: A bachelor's degree with a major in any field.
- Specialized Experience for contracting positions:
  - GS-7: 1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
  - GS-9: 1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
  - GS-11: 1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
  - GS-12: 1 year equivalent to at least GS-11

For GS-1102s in grades 5-12, GSA will no longer accept 24 semester hours of business-related college courses in lieu of a bachelor's degree.

Individuals in GS-1102 positions requiring certification will need to attain the new FAC-C Professional Certification within the established timeframe, unless the individual has a legacy FAC-C or DAWIA certification.

**4. New Competency Model and Contracting Curriculum.**

Effective immediately upon issuance of this memorandum, GS-1102s without an existing acquisition certification (or those who have not completed courses under the legacy curriculum) will follow the new Contracting Professional Certification in lieu of the legacy FAC-C curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

This will ensure GSA contracting professionals are not pursuing a certification that will soon no longer be used, and new hires are trained in competencies they will need in order to be successful.

The new federal contracting curriculum will only be required for GS-1102s, and other designated professionals, who have not previously attained a Federal Acquisition Certification in Contracting.

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information will be available on the GSA Acquisition Portal at <https://insite.gsa.gov/acquisitionportal>.

## **5. Acquisition Onboarding and Professional Development.**

To facilitate improved talent management solutions, GSA organizations hiring GS-1102s must implement the agency's professional development program that delivers a consistent certification pathway and competence development for contracting professionals without a FAC-C.

Organizations hiring GS-1102s will be responsible for ensuring that all new personnel, as well as personnel without a FAC-C, participate in the GSA GS-1102 Project Professional Development Plan business processes, where data can be reported and tracked monthly.

To drive successful outcomes, any supplemental, service or staff office-based professional development programs must include strategies to ensure completion of training within the first year, commencing with onboarding date.

Employees will be required to acknowledge the training and certification timeframe expectations in a signed Condition of Employment Agreement (see Attachment A) as well as an Individual Development Plan (IDP) developed in consultation with their supervisor.

The contracting activity's Acquisition Career Navigator must track all waivers and progress towards completing required certifications. They shall provide status updates to the employee and their supervisor.

## **6. Impact on Warrants.**

GSA employees must have a certification to obtain a GSA warrant. Minimum warrant requirements, including those with a DoD Contracting Professional Certification, are included on the GSA Acquisition Portal. Under the new curriculum, an employee should be able to complete all requirements to become certified within 12 months. Heads of Contracting Activity should consider employee experience and judgment as part of a decision on warrants. Additional guidance is forthcoming to standardize considerations for warrants.

## **7. Impact on GS-1102 Job Announcements.**

As part of implementation, the Office of Human Resources Management will proceed with updating position descriptions, job analysis worksheet elements, and vacancy announcement templates to implement this new direction. OGP will work with OHRM on the timeline to make these updates. Hiring managers should partner with their respective OHRM Staffing Specialist(s) to explore strategies for using the new business processes.

As explained in section 3, waivers may be needed until an updated policy goes into effect for all civilian agencies. In the interim, OGP will offer a [streamlined waiver process](#) to facilitate individual waivers for eligible candidates. Additional information on the business process will be available on the GSA Acquisition Portal.

## **8. Applicability.**

This memorandum applies to all GSA contracting activities.

## **9. Authority.**

OFPP and OPM developed a January 1, 2000, qualification [standard](#) for the 1102 contracting series. This qualification standard grants an agency's Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) authority to waive any and/or all of the qualification requirements for individual contracting positions at and above the GS-13 grade level, if certain conditions are met.

## **10. Effective Date.**

This memorandum is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded.

## **11. Cancellations.**

This hereby cancels the GSA Acquisition Workforce Applied Learning Center (ALC) moving forward, but does not negate any previously approved waivers<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> GSA launched a competency assessment initiative called the Acquisition Workforce Applied Learning Center (ALC). The ALC provided opportunities for 1102s to obtain training credits and a permanent waiver to the Clinger-Cohen requirements. The Clinger-Cohen Act requires that the Administrator of OFPP establish qualification requirements, including educational requirements, for positions at civilian agencies in the GS-1102 series (see 41 U.S.C. 1703).

## **12. Additional Information.**

For additional information on GS-1102 qualification standards and temporary waivers, please visit the GSA [Acquisition Career Management](#) pages on the GSA Acquisition Portal and the OPM [website](#).

## **13. Point of Contact.**

Any questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to Clarence Harrison Jr or Bea Dukes at [GSARPolicy@gsa.gov](mailto:GSARPolicy@gsa.gov).

## **Attachment**

Attachment A - GSA Condition of Employment Agreement

**SPE Memo 2023-03**  
**Attachment A**  
**SAMPLE Condition of Employment Agreement**

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

AGREEMENT TO CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT BASED ON EMPLOYEE'S  
RECEIPT OF WAIVER OF TRAINING AND/OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS  
FOR GS-1102 POSITION

1. I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Employee), understand that I have been granted a temporary waiver of training and/or certification requirements to allow my placement in the position of \_\_\_\_\_ (position title, pay plan, series and grade) in the \_\_\_\_\_ (regional and organizational entity).

2. I acknowledge and agree that within (timeframe) of being placed in this position, I must complete the training and/or courses listed below to satisfy the core training and/or certification requirements associated with the position of \_\_\_\_\_, and that timeframe for completing this training begins on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) and will conclude on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

3. I acknowledge and agree that I may submit a request for an extension of the temporary waiver to the Senior Procurement Executive in GSA's Office of the Chief Acquisition Officer. This request must describe the circumstances that preclude my meeting the training and/or certification requirement within the prescribed timeframe which will be evaluated to reach an appropriate determination resulting in approval or disapproval of my request.

4. I further acknowledge and agree that failure on my part to complete the training and/or certification requirements identified above within the (timeframe) or extended timeframe, if approved, could result in my reassignment, demotion or separation, and that appropriate action in my case will be determined based on the specific circumstances leading to my inability to fulfill these requirements.

NOTE: The terms of the condition of employment pertains only to failure on the part of the employee to complete the training and/or certification requirements, and not on any actions that might have been taken on the part of management that might have impacted the employee's ability to meet the requirements within the timeframe.

5. I acknowledge and agree that if I am reassigned, demoted or removed due to my failure to meet the training and/or certification requirements above, I knowingly and voluntarily waive my rights of appeal to the Merit System Protection Board, to file an administrative grievance, or grievance pursuant to the negotiated grievance procedure with the appropriate union.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(DATE)