

QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI)

1. **BASIS.** Recognition granted for sustained performance at the highest summary level as determined under the performance criteria of the position. The QSI must be related to the employee's most recent performance rating which must have been issued in the last 52 week period and be at the highest level attainable in the performance appraisal system. Regulations pertaining to QSI criteria can be found in 5 CFR 531, Subpart E.
2. **ELIGIBILITY.** Any Federal employee in the General Schedule (GS) system or remaining in the merit pay (GM) system who is not at the top of the scale for his/her grade.
3. **RECOGNITION AMOUNT.** Rate of basic pay will increase from one step of the grade of the employee's position to the next higher step of that grade.
4. **LIMITATIONS.** Only one QSI may be received in a 52-week period.
5. **PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

- a. All QSI nominations are to be supplemented with a copy of the employee's most recent performance rating and corresponding performance appraisal plan. The rating and plan are to be submitted by hard copy to the FHRB.

The nominator will submit to the Federal Human Resources Branch (FHRB) the QSI nomination through the Workflow feature of the Corporate Human Resources Information System (CHRIS). For those organizations that do not yet have access to CHRIS Workflow, nominations are to be made by completing an SF-52, Request for Personnel Action. Each nomination whether through Workflow or an SF-52, is to be in the following format and is to be cut and pasted into the "Comments/Justification" block in the Workflow Personnel Request screen or attached to the hard copy SF-52:

NOMINEE:

NOMINATOR: (Employee's immediate supervisor at the Branch Chief level or above)

AWARD TYPE: Quality Step Increase

DATE OF EMPLOYEE'S LAST WITHIN GRADE INCREASE:

DATE OF EMPLOYEE'S LAST QSI:

PERIOD COVERED BY THE QSI: (must be at least 52 consecutive weeks)

QSI JUSTIFICATION (for employees on two level (pass/fail) performance appraisal system) THAT

DOCUMENTS: (1) that the employee's performance for each performance element is of sustained high quality significantly above that expected for at least the past 52 weeks, and
(2) that the supervisor is confident that this level of performance will continue.

- b. In all cases the nominator will be the employee's immediate supervisor (Branch Chief or above).

WORKFLOW: The nominator will be the "1st Approver" in the Workflow "Approval Routing" screen.

SF-52: For organizations without access to CHRIS Workflow, the nominator will complete Blocks 1, 3, 4, and 5 of Part A and Block 1 of Part B.

- c. The approving/disapproving official will be the employee's Senior Staff member or above in the employee's line of supervision unless the latter is the Manager of the Office or Site Office. For OSTI nominations, the approving/disapproving official will be the Associate Director for Administration and Information Services (ADAIS).

WORKFLOW: The approving/disapproving official will be the "2nd Approver" in the Workflow "Approval Routing" screen.

SF-52: For organizations without access to CHRIS Workflow, the approving/disapproving official will complete Block 6 of Part A.

- d. The FHRB will review the QSI nomination for regulatory compliance and process the action as appropriate. The employee copy of the appropriate paperwork will be provided to the Office Manager of the organization nominating the award or for OSTI to the Office of ADAIS.
- f. The employee copy of the appropriate paperwork should be presented to the employee in the presence of an appropriate audience (i.e., coworkers in the immediate organization).