

Q/CAD/798/01/2022
Ministry of External Affairs
Administration Division
(Cadre Cell)

To,

All stakeholders

Subject: Amendment of Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' Rules, 2017 – reg.

I am directed to say that this Ministry is in the process of amending the Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' Rules, 2017, in the M/o External Affairs.

2. DoP&T vide its O.M. No. AB-14017/61/2008-Estt. (RR) dated 13.10.2015, has mentioned that before referring any proposal for framing/amendment in Recruitment Rules of any post in Ministries/Departments and their Subordinate and Attached Offices, the proposed amendments/revision in the Recruitment Rules would have to be put on the website of respective Ministries/Departments for 30 days for inviting comments from the stakeholders.
3. In view of the above, all the stakeholders are requested to furnish their comments on the draft RRs (enclosed) via email at uscadre@mea.gov.in within 30 days from the date of publication of this OM on the Ministry's website.

Encl: As Above.



(Soumya Ranjan Rout)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

Tel: 23085368

18.02.2026

Copy to:

1. XP Division, M/o External Affairs with the request to upload this OM on the website of the Ministry of External Affairs under the head of 'Acts, Legislation & Rules' in 'E-citizen'.

[To be published in the Gazette of India, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i)]
Government of India
Ministry of External Affairs

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, February, 2026

G.S.R. – In exercise of the powers conferred by the proviso to article 309 of the Constitution and in supersession of the Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' Rules, 2017, except as respects things done or omitted to be done before such supersession, the President hereby makes the following rules to amend the Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' Rules, 2017, namely: -

1. Short title and commencement. -

(1) These rules may be called the **Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' (General & Stenographer Cadre) Rules, 2026.**

(2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' Rules, 2017:-

- (A) for the words "Assistant" Grade, the words "Assistant Section Officer" Grade, wherever they occur, shall respectively be substituted;
- (B) for the words "Lower Division Clerk" Grade, the words "Junior Secretariat Assistant" Grade, wherever they occur, shall respectively be substituted;
- (C) for the words "Upper Division Clerk" Grade, the words "Senior Secretariat Assistant" Grade, wherever they occur, shall respectively be substituted;
- (D) in rule 3,-
(i) for Table (i): General Cadre, the following table shall be substituted:-

(1) Grade/Classification	(2) Sanctioned Strength (2026)	(3) Level in the Pay Matrix
Grade – I (Under Secretary at Hqrs. First Secretaries and Second Secretaries in Missions or Posts abroad.) Central Civil Service Group 'A' Ministerial, Gazetted.	250	Level 11 (Rs.67700-208700)
Attaches and Section Officers at Hqrs. Vice Consuls and Registrars in Missions or Posts abroad. Central Civil Service Group 'B' Ministerial, Gazetted.	729	Level 8 (Rs.47600-151100) Level 10 (Rs.56100-177500) The non-functional Level 10 in the pay matrix (Rs.56100-177500) is admissible to the Section Officers of the Service on completion of 4 years of approved service in that Grade. The Section Officers, who are granted this

		non-functional level will continue to remain in Group 'B' (Gazetted) and their eligibility for promotion to Grade I (Under Secretary) of the service will be reckoned on the basis of total period, spent in both the levels of Section Officer, counted together.
Assistant Section Officers at Hqrs. and in Missions or Post abroad. Central Civil Service Group 'B' Ministerial.	1105	Level 7 (Rs.44900-142400)
Senior Secretariat Assistants at Hqrs. and in Missions or Posts abroad Central Civil Service Group 'C' Ministerial.	94	Level 4 (Rs.25500-81100)
Junior Secretariat Assistants at Hqrs. or Posts abroad Central Civil Service Group 'C' Ministerial.	237	Level 2 (Rs.19900-63200)

(ii) for Table (ii): Cypher Sub-Cadre, the table shall be omitted;

(iii) for Table (iii): Stenographers' Cadre, the following table shall be substituted:-

Grade/Classification	Sanctioned Strength (2026)	Level in the Pay Matrix
Principal Staff Officer Central Civil Service Group 'A' Ministerial, Gazetted	14* *Note: There would, however, be flexibility that these posts would be operated at the level of Principal Staff Officer as and when Senior Principal Private Secretary become eligible for consideration for promotion against these posts and till such time these posts would continue to be operated at the level of Senior Principal Private Secretary.	Level 13 (Rs.118500-214100)
Senior Principal Private Secretary Central Civil Service Group 'A' Ministerial, Gazetted	39	Level 12 (Rs.78800-209200)
Principal Private Secretary Central Civil Service Group 'A' Ministerial, Gazetted	170	Level 11 (Rs.67700-208700)
Private Secretary Central Civil Service Group 'B' Ministerial, Gazetted	406	Level 8 (Rs.47600-151100) Level 10 (Rs.56100-177500)

		The non-functional Level 10 in the pay matrix (Rs. 56100-177500) is admissible to the Section Officers of the Service on completion of 4 years of approved service in that Grade. The Section Officers, who are granted this non-functional level will continue to remain in Group 'B' (Gazetted) and their eligibility for promotion to Grade I (Under Secretary) of the service will be reckoned on the basis of total period, spent in both the levels of Section Officer, counted together.
Personal Assistant Central Civil Service Group 'B' Ministerial	373	Level 7 (Rs.44900-142400)
Stenographer Grade "D" Central Civil Service Group 'C' Ministerial,	226	Level 4 (Rs.25500-81100)

(E) in rule 6,-
(i) clause (ii) shall be omitted;

(F) in rule 11,-
(i) in clause (1), all provisions related to "Cypher Assistants" shall be omitted;

(G) in rule 12,-
(i) for clause (i), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(i) Eighty per cent (80 %) of the regular vacancies in the Assistant Section Officer Grade shall be filled by direct recruitment through Combined Graduate Level Examination held by the SSC once in a year for this purpose. The candidates must:

(a) Be in the age limit of 20 to 30 years as on the crucial date notified by SSC. Age relaxation shall be permissible beyond the upper age limit for SC/ST/OBC/PwBDs/Ex-serviceman and other such categories as per instructions of Central Government issued from time to time,

(b) At least possess a bachelor's degree from a recognized University or equivalent, as on or before the cut-off date prescribed by the SSC notification,

(c) Appear for a Computer Proficiency Test (CPT), as may be notified by SSC.

(ii) for clause (iii), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(iii) Five per cent (5 %) of the regular vacancies shall be filled through Limited Departmental Competitive Examination conducted by SSC for Senior Secretariat Assistant who, on the crucial date of eligibility:

(a) have undergone and successfully completed such mandatory training programme(s) as may be prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs,

(b) At least possess a bachelor's degree from a recognized University or equivalent,

(c) Have rendered not less than 6 years' approved service and have earned at least 5 Annual Performance Appraisal Reports (APARs).

Provided that eligibility service for the above purpose shall continue to be six years approved service for persons holding Senior Secretariat Assistant posts on regular basis before the date of commencement of these rules.

(H) in rule 14,-

(i) for clause (1)(i)(a), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1)(i)(a) Five percent (5 %) of the regular vacancies shall be filled on the basis of Limited Departmental Competitive Examination, conducted for this purpose by the SSC for Multi-Tasking staff in Group 'C' conducted by SSC for Multi-Tasking staff in Group 'C', who on the crucial date of eligibility:

(a) have undergone and successfully completed such mandatory training programme(s) as may be prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs,

(b) At least possess a qualification of 12th standard or equivalent examination from a recognised Board or University,

(c) have rendered not less than 3 years regular service and earned 2 Annual Performance Appraisal Reports (APARs).

Provided that eligibility service for the above purpose shall continue to be three years regular service for persons holding Multi-tasking Staff posts on regular basis before the date of commencement of these rules.

(ii) for clause (1)(ii), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1)(ii) Eighty Five per cent. (85 %) of the vacancies or such higher percentage as may be determined by the Controlling authority in accordance with the proviso to clause (i), shall be filled by the direct recruitment on the basis of competitive examination held for the purpose by SSC. The candidates must:

(a) Be in the age limit of 18 to 27 years as on the crucial date notified by SSC. Age relaxation shall be permissible beyond the upper age limit for SC/ST/OBC/PwBDs/Ex-serviceman and other such categories as per instructions of Central Government issued from time to time,

(b) At least possess a qualification of 12th standard or equivalent examination from a recognised Board or University, as on or before the cut-off date prescribed by the SSC notification,

(c) Appear for a skill test on Computer typing conducted by SSC, where they will be required to type at a speed of 35 words per minute (w.p.m) for English, and 30 words per minute for Hindi in a time limit of 10 minutes.

(I) in rule 16,-

(i) for clause (1)(ii), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1)(ii) 33.33% of the regular vacancies in the Private Secretary Grade are filled through LDCE to be held by UPSC from officers of Personal Assistant (PA) Grade, who on the crucial date of eligibility:

(a) Have undergone and successfully completed such mandatory training programme(s) as may be prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs,

(b) at least possess a Bachelors degree from a recognized University or equivalent,

(c) Have rendered not less than 5 years approved service and have earned 4 Annual Performance Appraisal Reports (APARs).

Provided that eligibility service for the above purpose shall continue to be five years approved service for persons holding Personal Assistant posts on regular basis before the date of commencement of these rules.

(J) in rule 17,-

(i) for clause (1)(i), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1)(i) 62.5% by direct recruitment through Competitive Examination held by the SSC. The candidates must:

(a) Be in the age limit of 20 to 30 years as on the crucial date notified by SSC. Age relaxation shall be permissible beyond the upper age limit for SC/ST/OBC/PwBDs/Ex-serviceman and other such categories as per instructions of Central Government issued from time to time,

(b) At least possess a bachelor's degree from a recognized University or equivalent, as on or before the cut-off date prescribed by the SSC notification,

(c) Appear for a stenography test conducted by SSC, where they will be given one dictation for 10 minutes in English at the speed of 100 words per minute (w.p.m). The transcription time for the stenography test is 40 mins for English.

(ii) for clause (1)(iii), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1)(iii) 12.5% through Limited Departmental Competitive Examination held by the SSC from officials in the service of Stenographer Grade 'D', who on the crucial date of eligibility:

(a) Have undergone and successfully completed such mandatory training programme(s) as may be prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs,

(b) Have rendered not less than 06 years approved service and should have earned at least 5 Annual Performance Appraisal Reports (APARs).

Provided that eligibility service for the above purpose shall continue to be six years approved service for persons holding Stenographer Grade 'D' posts on regular basis before the date of commencement of these rules.

(K) in rule 18,-

(i) for clause (1), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:-

(1) Regular vacancies in Stenographer Grade 'D' of the service shall be filled by direct recruitment on the basis of competitive examination conducted for the purpose by the SSC. The candidates must:

(a) Be in the age limit of 20 to 30 years, as on the crucial date notified by SSC. Age relaxation shall be permissible beyond the upper age limit for SC/ST/OBC/PwBDs/Ex-serviceman and other such categories as per instructions of Central Government issued from time to time,

(b) At least possess a bachelor's degree from a recognized University or equivalent, as on or before the cut-off date prescribed by the SSC notification,

(c) Appear for a stenography test conducted by SSC, where they will be given one dictation for 10 minutes in English at the speed of 80 words per minute (w.p.m). The transcription time for the stenography test is 50 mins for English.

(L) in Schedule (Annexure),-

(i) for Stenographers Cadre (row I), the composition of Departmental Promotion Committee shall be substituted, as follows:-

(I) Principal Staff Officer (PSO):

(1) A Secretary rank Officer nominated by the Ministry of External Affairs – Chairman

(2) Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs – Member

(3) Joint Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs – Member

(ii) for Stenographers Cadre (row II), the composition of Departmental Promotion Committee shall be substituted, as follows:-

(II) Senior Principal Private Secretary (Senior PPS):

(1) A Secretary rank Officer nominated by the Ministry of External Affairs – Chairman

(2) Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs – Member

(3) Joint Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs – Member

(4) point (4) stands omitted

Note: The principal rules were published in the Gazette of India, Part (II) Section 3 Sub-section (i) vide notification number G.S.R. 1133(E), dated the 29th August, 2017.

[Q/CAD/798/1/2022]

(Siddhartha Nath)

Joint Secretary to the Government of India