Office of the Public Service Commissioner

Recruitment and Selection Guide 2025

Helping recruiters in the NSW Public Service to make informed hiring decisions.

August 2025

NSW GOVERNMENT

Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Public Service Commissioner acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this report.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

Recruitment and Selection Guide 2025

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to recruitment and selection

Getting recruitment right has never been more important. When done well, attracting and recruiting a diverse range of people to the NSW Public Service leads to the selection of the person best suited to the role and the needs of the agency.

Recruitment offers a great opportunity to build workforce diversity whenever a vacancy occurs. There are known benefits to policy, service design and service delivery when a workforce's composition reflects the community it serves.

1.2 About the guide

The Recruitment and Selection Guide is designed to help recruiters and hiring managers in the NSW Public Service to design consistent and equitable recruitment processes to:

- enable candidates to perform at their best
- make informed recruitment and selection decisions

The guide is organised around the following five areas that have the biggest impact to achieving successful recruitment outcomes:

- filling a role
- planning a recruitment and selection process
- attracting candidates
- assessing candidates
- deciding and appointing

Each subject area includes practical guidance, tools and examples to help improve the way you find, assess and select the best people.

1.3 Legal requirements

Recruitment in the NSW Public Service is governed by a legal framework that includes:

- Government Sector Employment Act 2013 (GSE Act)

The GSE Act establishes an ethical framework where recruitment and promotion of employees is based on merit. It also enables the employment and assignment of senior executives across the NSW Public Service (Division 4 of Part 4) and non-executives (Division 5 of Part 4) in the Public Service.

- Government Sector Employment Regulation 2014 (GSE Regulation)

The GSE Regulation supports the GSE Act and sets out the legal requirements about Public Service employment including allowances for temporary assignments and secondments.

- Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014 (GSE Rules)

The GSE Rules set out the legal requirements for recruitment, particularly Part 3 on the merit principles that apply to employment decisions in the Public Service.

2 Filling a role

Easily navigate the range of options for filling roles using our guidance and decision tree.

In this section, you will find guides on:

- doing a role analysis
- essential requirements
- deciding how to fill a role

2.1 Doing a role analysis

A role analysis is a systematic examination of the purpose, responsibilities and scope of a role in supporting business objectives.

Role analysis is the foundation for informing the role description and establishing the standards (capabilities, knowledge and experience) and other essential requirements needed to perform the role.

A thorough role analysis will support you to:

- produce a high-quality role description that gives clear information to potential candidates, assessors and managers and informs how the role is graded
- attract suitable candidates and select the best person for the role
- consider ways to structure the role (how, where and when work is performed) to enable flexible working and workplace adjustments
- develop appropriate, non-discriminatory pre-screening and disqualification questions
- design capability-based assessments around the pre-established standards for the role.

2.1.1 When to do a role analysis

The initial role analysis is done when the need for a new role is identified. In many cases there may be an existing role description that can be adapted for the new role.

Vacancies provide an opportunity to review existing roles to decide whether they are still required, or if their outcomes can be delivered in some other way. Because roles are not static, it is important to take the opportunity to review and update an existing role description to reflect changes including the organisation's regulatory framework, strategy, structure, operating environment or technology, or your agency's diversity and inclusion goals.

2.1.2 Recommended approach

An effective role analysis draws on a range of information such as:

- the hiring manager's description of their needs in the context of the needs of the team and organisation
- interviews with stakeholders who understand the purpose and outcomes of the role (such as supervisors, customers, persons currently in the role or similar role)
- review of an existing role description or similar role description in the sector role description library
- research and comparisons with roles in other agencies, clusters, or external organisations.

A multi-method approach is recommended to give a fair picture of the role and the required capabilities. Well established role analysis techniques include:

- critical incident interviews – interviews that seek information on behaviours that differentiate between success and failure
- visionary interviews – forward-looking interviews with leaders to anticipate future directions
- structured role analysis questionnaires – questionnaires to add rigour to the job analysis
- review of existing role-related documentation (including a role description, where available)
- direct observation of a person performing the role (useful for roles involving manual tasks).

If you have not done a role analysis before, seek advice from an experienced HR advisor in your agency.

2.1.3 Outputs of the role analysis

The main output of a role analysis for recruitment is the role description. Guidance on what to include in role descriptions is provided in the Role Description Development Guideline.

Inclusion of essential requirements in a role description or job advertisement needs careful thought. If these are not necessary to achieve the outcomes of the role, they may be discriminatory.

You may wish to consult with your agency's HR or diversity and inclusion contacts to consider whether the role can be targeted towards the employment of eligible persons under GSE rule 26 as a way of improving diversity.

2.1.4 Role analysis for senior executives

Work level standards help HR specialists to classify and evaluate senior executive roles by setting out the expected work performed by senior executives for each band. See NSW Public Service Senior Executive Work Level Standards for more information.

2.1.5 Tips for doing a role analysis

The role analysis should:

- be based on **regular reviews** and **workforce planning projections** of needs
- **focus on the business outcomes** to be delivered by the role and the ways in which the capabilities, experience, knowledge and other essential requirements support this
- consider any essential requirements needed to perform the role from day one
- be **objective** and be based on a range of **evidence**
- rethink the where, when and how work can be done. Also consider who can do it. Consider modern ways of working, flexibility and allowing for adjustments to accommodate people with disability
- look beyond the current role structure and **consider options for reshaping the role** to open it up to other candidates (e.g. eligible persons referred to in GSE rule 26)
- **use or adapt existing role descriptions** when the new role is like an existing role or role type to **maintain consistency** across your agency's role descriptions
- be centred on the **requirements** of the role and how they help to meet **business outcomes** to develop a high-quality role description and fit-for-purpose assessment approach.

2.1.6 Resources for filling a role

- O*Net Resource Center with generic questionnaires to assist with your role analysis
- Office of Personnel Management (United States Government): Job analysis
- Australian Human Rights Commission: A step-by-step guide to preventing discrimination in recruitment (Part 2. Creating the job description)

2.2 Essential requirements

Essential requirements for a role are those factors that are needed for successful performance in the role from day one.

2.2.1 Legal requirements

GSE rule 17 sets out the process required for comparative assessment including screening for essential requirements such as a qualification or licence.

GSE rule 18 sets out the process required for suitability assessment including screening for essential requirements such as a qualification or licence.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* protects people who are seeking or are in employment against discrimination. The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.

2.2.2 About inherent requirements and essential requirements

The following principles on inherent requirements can be applied when deciding on essential requirements and focus capabilities for roles in the NSW Public Service.

Inherent requirements relate to the core parts of the role without which it would not be possible to fulfil the functions of the role. The Australian Human Rights Commission's view of inherent requirements is that they will vary depending on what the role is, and may include:

- the ability to perform tasks which are essential to perform a job productively and to the required quality
- the ability to work effectively in a team or other organisation
- the ability to work safely.

Inherent requirements relate to capacity, or what must be accomplished, rather than the means, or how it is accomplished. [1] They should also relate to the specific role and its context.

2.2.3 Inherent requirements and employment decisions

Employers should offer equal employment opportunities to everyone. This means that if a person with disability can do the inherent requirements of a role, they should have just as much chance to do that role as anyone else. However, in situations where the person is unable to carry out the 'inherent requirements' of the role, or would require services or facilities, legislation provides an exception of 'unjustifiable hardship' for the employer. For information, visit the Australian Human Rights Commission's guide on unjustifiable hardship.

Before concluding that 'unjustifiable hardship' applies, an employer should:

- thoroughly consider how access might be provided or adjustments made
- discuss the issues directly with the person involved
- consult relevant sources of advice.

Unjustifiable hardship is, in broad terms, based on an assessment of what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances. If the proposed adjustments are likely to cause hardship, it is up to the employer to show that they are unjustified.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* contain a list of factors to consider when determining whether a person is able to carry out the inherent requirements of particular work, which are:

[1] Australian Fair Work Commission, *Capacity*, viewed 26 May 2025, https://www.fwc.gov.au/capacity.

- the person's past training, qualifications and experience relevant to the particular work.
- if the person already works for the employer – the person's performance in working for the employer; and
- other factors that are reasonable to consider.

See: Australian Human Rights Commission: A brief guide to the Disability Discrimination Act and Anti-Discrimination NSW – Your rights and responsibilities as an employer

2.2.4 Deciding on essential requirements

Essential requirements are those factors that are needed for successful performance in a role from day one. GSE rule 17 and GSE rule 18 give the example of a qualification or licence.

Citizenship or residency requirements must also be considered for employment in the Public Service.

It is up to the employer to decide on the essential requirements for a role. Knowledge and experience are different from essential requirements and have a separate section in the role description in recognition of this. The *Role description development guidelines* have for more information about including knowledge and experience in the role description.

Some examples of essential requirements are...	**Essential requirements are not**
• citizenship or residency requirements • qualifications or certifications (where needed to practice or to deliver the outcomes of the role) • employment screening checks (e.g. criminal records checks or working with children checks) • licencing or registration requirements (where necessary to deliver the outcomes of the role) • health assessments and fitness requirements • identification with a specific group where this is an occupational qualification (e.g. identifying as an Aboriginal for an Aboriginal identified role)	• written to suit a preferred candidate • a re-statement of the capabilities • knowledge and experience • desirable criteria or experience • a replacement for "selection criteria"

2.2.4.1 Role analysis

Essential requirements for a role should be determined during the role analysis. When deciding on whether something is an essential requirement of the role you need to be satisfied that it is necessary to deliver the required outcomes. Consideration should be given to whether outcomes can be achieved in another way or with workplace modifications.

2.2.4.2 Role description and job advertisement

You need to be able to justify for each role why something has been included as an essential requirement. If you are using a similar role description or advertisement, you need to consider whether the inclusion of an essential requirement is defensible (even if it was used in the past).

When advertising a role, the essential requirements should be clearly set out in the advertisement and/or role description.

2.2.5 Examples of essential requirements

The following examples show different circumstances where essential requirements should and should not be used.

2.2.5.1 Driver's licence – example for a bus driver

Essential requirements for NSW Government bus drivers include holding a valid Australian driver's licence in the appropriate class and holding a clearance for working with children. Without these it would not be possible to perform the core functions of the role of transporting customers safely to their destination.

2.2.5.2 Driver's licence – example for a community worker

A community worker role in a regional area involves travelling long distances by car to meet with clients. There are no other suitable transport alternatives, such as public transport, and it would place an unjustifiable hardship on the employer for the caseworker to use taxis or have a driver.

Driving a car is therefore the only viable option for effectively performing this role and is therefore an essential requirement.

For community worker roles in the Sydney CBD this scenario may not be defensible with a range of cost-effective transport options more readily available.

2.2.6 Citizenship or residency requirements

Citizenship or residency requirements must be complied with for all ongoing, temporary, term or casual employment in the NSW Public Service.

2.2.6.1 Legal requirements

Section 54 of the GSE Act sets the framework for imposing conditions of engagement in the GSE rules, including for citizenship or residency requirements.

GSE rule 6 sets out the requirements for citizenship or residency of NSW Public Service employees.

Introduction

You need to ensure that prospective candidates meet the requirements in GSE rule 6 when offering ongoing, temporary, term or casual employment in the Public Service.

Verification of citizenship or residency must be completed as a condition of engagement and to ensure compliance with Commonwealth migration law.

In making this verification, it is important that you consider the terms of the visa and whether it permits a person to work for a specified period only. In such cases, you should consider the length of employment being offered and whether the visa is valid for the entire period.

Note: While a temporary visa may provide a pathway towards a permanent visa, there is no guarantee that a permanent visa will be granted within the expected timeframe or be granted at all.

2.2.6.1.1 Ongoing employment

GSE rule 6(1) requires that any visa must be current and allow the person to work in Australia.

Accordingly, if ongoing employment in the Public Service is offered to a candidate who holds a temporary visa, the offer should be subject to conditions (imposed under section 54 of the GSE Act) to ensure that the employment does not exceed any limitations (including time limits) in the candidate's visa. The effect of the condition would be that, if the person ceases to hold a visa that permits the person to work in Australia, then the person's employment is immediately terminated.

2.2.6.1.2 Temporary employment

Temporary employment can be offered to a person listed in GSE rule 6(1).

In offering temporary employment to a person listed in GSE rule 6(1)(d), you should ensure the person's visa is valid for the entire period of their employment.

It is important in making judgments about eligibility of a person to be employed in temporary employment that you do not inadvertently discriminate against them. This would happen if a candidate was deemed ineligible based on the terms of their visa when, in fact, their visa was valid for the entire period of employment being offered.

2.2.7 Resources on essential requirements

- NSW Ministry of Health: Stepping up website (recruitment resource for Aboriginal applicants and hiring managers)
- Australian Human Rights Commission: Discrimination in Employment on the Basis of Criminal Record
- Australian Human Rights Commission: Guidelines for the prevention of discrimination in employment on the basis of criminal record
- Australian Fair Work Commission: Determining Capacity (inherent requirements)

2.3 Deciding how to fill a role

There are a range of options for filling roles. This guide sets out the legal requirements and strategic considerations to help you choose the most suitable approach.

2.3.1 Legal requirements

The GSE Act enables the employment of Public Service senior executives (Division 4 of Part 4) and Public Service non-executives (Division 5 of Part 4) and their assignment to a role.

The GSE Act and GSE Rules set out the legal requirements for the different kinds of employment and movements (i.e. mobility) within Public Service agencies or between government sector agencies. This includes the advertising and assessment requirements.

2.3.2 Deciding between employment or mobility

The GSE Act and GSE Rules establish an employment framework that separates the concepts of 'employment' and 'role'. This separation makes it possible to move existing employees to different roles through assignment, secondment or transfer rather than always needing to implement a full-scale recruitment and selection process.

This flexible approach to managing talent maximises opportunities for agencies to retain and redeploy good talent and provides opportunities for individuals to explore new opportunities and grow their careers.

To decide on the best approach to fill a role, you need to have a good understanding of your current workforce and organisational needs.

Depending on the situation, there can be advantages in sourcing from within the existing employees in the government sector by using mobility options. There are also valid reasons for looking more broadly.

2.3.2.1 Table 1: Considerations for choosing employment or movement (mobility)

Kind of employment or mobility	Assignment (move within agency)	Temporary assignment (move within agency)	Secondment (move within government sector)	Transfer (move within government sector)	Ongoing employment (employ internal or external candidate)	Temporary or term employment (employ internal or external candidate)	Contract (engage contingent labour)
Attract a broad candidate field					✓	✓	
Bring new skills, knowledge and ideas to the organisation					✓	✓	
Build internal capability	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Fill a role quickly	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Fill a role at low cost	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Fill many roles					✓	✓	
Increase diversity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Meet a short-term need		✓	✓			✓	✓
Quick on-boarding	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Retain employees in the sector	✓	✓	✓	✓			

2.3.2.2 Relevant factors to consider

1. Do existing employees have the capability, knowledge and experience to fill the role?

Movements within Public Service agencies or between government sector agencies can be a good solution where:

- there is strong capability within the agency or sector to fill a role
- the vacancy is for a common role where the knowledge, skills and abilities required are transferable, and organisational knowledge can be developed on the job.

2. Do existing employees have development potential to build their capabilities in the role?

Performance development processes and human capital management systems are the main sources for identifying employees for development opportunities based on their capabilities, knowledge and experience.

Mobility opportunities for developmental purposes can be at-level, above-level or below-level when on a temporary basis or at-level for an assignment.

See: Assignment to role guidelines for more information on mobility opportunities for development purposes for employees within the agency.

See: Transfer and secondment guidelines for information about secondments for developmental purposes

3. Are there gaps in the capability, knowledge or experience of the workforce for the role?

Capability gaps are identified through an assessment of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the existing workforce compared with those employers need.

External recruitment and selection is generally the best option for filling a vacancy where there are gaps in capabilities or professional or technical knowledge and skills.

4. Are you filling many vacancies or establishing a talent pool?

It is generally appropriate to use external recruitment and selection to:

- fill many vacancies
- establish a talent pool.

This is because you are looking to attract a diverse and competitive field for many vacancies (whether immediate or over the next 18 months).

See: *Talent pools guide for HR and hiring managers* for information about how to set up and use talent pools.

5. Is there a need to fill a role quickly to meet a short-term need?

The Contingent workforce management guidelines assist agencies to plan and manage their contingent workforce.

If you are looking to engage contingent workers you are required to use the contingent labour suppliers on the Contingent workforce prequalification scheme for the relevant employment category.

2.3.3 Using rule 26 to employ eligible persons

Government sector agencies can use GSE rule 26 to modify their recruitment and selection process to help employ people from designated groups in non-executive roles.

Modifications can generally be made to advertising requirements and assessment processes.

The main requirement is to be satisfied that the eligible person is suitable for the role and has the greatest merit out of all eligible persons seeking to be employed in the role.

See: PSC's factsheet on using rule 26 to employ people with disability for more information.

2.3.4 Graduate employment

Filling a role through graduate employment allows agencies to offer employment to individuals either in a role that is within the graduate's area of specialisation (e.g. engineer) or in a generalist role (e.g. policy officer).

There are many benefits to employing graduates such as for succession planning purposes, to bring new talent into the sector and to attract qualified individuals who have different views and perspectives.

The NSW Government Graduate Program is an annual process run by the Public Service Commission that seeks to attract and retain talented graduates to build public sector capability and develop a cohort of future leaders. Graduates are placed in a variety of roles in policy, project and other program initiatives.

The NSW Government Graduate Program uses a hybrid approach to employment. Graduates are initially offered 18 months' temporary employment and are offered ongoing employment, at-level, on successful completion of the program. This requires agencies to have solid workforce planning practices in place to ensure they can place the graduate in a role after 18 months.

See: NSW Government Graduate Program webpage for more information about employing a graduate through this program.

2.3.4.1 Graduate promotion

GSE rule 20A provides an opportunity in certain, appropriate circumstances to fill a role by promoting a graduate employee to a higher level after they have successfully completed an approved graduate program (e.g. the NSW Government Graduate Program), without conducting a comparative assessment after external advertising.

See: *Graduate employee promotion guideline* for more information about using this rule.

2.3.5 Re-employment of former temporary employees

In some circumstances an agency may wish to re-employ a former temporary employee into the same or very similar role. GSE Rule 22D provides a simplified pathway for re-employment as a temporary employee.

Under this Rule, a person must be or have been employed in temporary employment via comparative assessment after external advertising. The agency may re-employ this person into temporary employment without further comparative assessment or advertising, provided:

- the person is re-employed by the same Public Service agency, in the same classification of work; and,
- the person's break in service is 18 months or less; and,
- the original assessment related to the classification of work in which the person is to be re-employed; and was undertaken within 5 years before the decision to re-employ the person.

Agencies must use some form of assessment as a part of the re-employment pathway, but the choice of assessment type(s) is at the discretion of the agency. It may involve a capability assessment, a simple informal interview with the candidate, or any combination of the different assessment options outlined in the 'Designing the assessment process' section of this Guide.

In addition, Rule 22D requires that the agency head be satisfied that it is appropriate to rely on the original assessment and that within the 18 months preceding the decision:

- the person's performance as an employee has been assessed as satisfactory under the agency's performance management system; and
- the person's conduct as an employee has been satisfactory.

3 Planning a recruitment and selection process

Make time to plan your recruitment process to put yourself in a good position to find the best person for the role.

In this section, you will find guidance on:

- deciding the recruitment and selection approach
- designing the assessment process, including:
    - designing the application form
    - choosing assessors
    - assessment centres
- selecting fit-for-purpose assessment methods, including:
    - interviews
    - psychometric assessments
    - work sample exercises
- setting the standards and rating approach

Plus, you will find:

- a sample matrix for planning capability-based assessments
- a guide to writing interview questions
- a guide on designing work sample exercises and the capabilities commonly assessed using work samples.

3.1 Deciding the recruitment and selection approach

Planning your recruitment and selection approach at the outset will put you in a good position to employ the person best suited to the role and your agency's needs.

3.1.1 Legal requirements

Division 4 of Part 4 of the GSE Act provides the legal basis for the employment and assignment of Public Service senior executives.

Division 5 of Part 4 of the GSE Act provides the legal basis for the employment and assignment of Public Service non-executives.

In addition, the GSE Regulation and the GSE Rules deal with employment issues relating to senior executives and non-executive employees in the Public Service. Recruitment and selection under the GSE framework is the process of employing a person in a kind of employment and assigning them to a role.

3.1.2 Approach to recruitment and selection

Effective planning at the outset of your recruitment and selection process may take a little longer but will set you up to employ the best person for the role. It also positively affects candidates' experience of the process and their view of your agency.

This includes thinking about how you can promote diversity and inclusion and prevent discrimination in your recruitment and selection process. It is a good time to consider:

- Using GSE rule 26 to enable the employment of eligible persons from designated groups (an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander, a person with a disability, a person under the age of 25 years or a person on a Refugee and Humanitarian (Migrant) (Class XB) visa – see rule 26 for specific details)
- Flexible working options.

Talk to the HR or diversity teams in your agency for further advice or see:

- PSC's disability and accessibility resources for more information on using rule 26 to employ people with disability
- Australian Human Rights Commission - A step-by-step guide to preventing discrimination in recruitment.

3.1.3 What to think about when planning your recruitment approach

Some of the main things to think about in planning your recruitment approach are set out below.

3.1.3.1 Advertising and assessment requirements

The kind of employment (ongoing, temporary, term or casual) being offered impacts on the legal requirements for:

- Advertising – external advertising or advertising across the Public Service
- Assessment – comparative assessment or suitability assessment.

Also consider whether you want to target the role to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders or people with disability. You can modify the assessment and advertising requirements under rule 26 when seeking to employ people from these and other eligible groups. Some agencies have an Aboriginal Services Unit (or equivalent) that can advise on recruiting for Aboriginal identified or targeted roles.

The GSE Rules also provide flexibility to design the assessment process to assess the capabilities, knowledge and experience needed for the role.

Before deciding on your advertising and assessment approach, it is important to think ahead and consider whether there is any chance that at some future time you may want to:

- extend the length of temporary employment (see example 1)
- convert temporary or term employment to ongoing employment (see example 2).

3.1.3.1.1 Example 1 – extend the length of temporary employment

Adam was looking for a project manager to manage the installation of conferencing facilities in 3 regional locations. The project was expected to take a maximum of 12 months. Adam knew Alina from previous work she had done as a contractor for the Department and thought she could be a good fit. So, he undertook a suitability assessment then engaged her in temporary employment for 12 months (refer to Rule 21).

Not long into the project there were changes in the Department's priorities which meant that they had additional funding to roll out the conferencing facilities to a further 5 locations. This added at least 6 more months to the length of the project.

Adam could not extend Alina's employment beyond 12 months without advertising and a comparative assessment.

Given the project length was initially estimated at 12 months, Adam could have used external advertising and a comparative assessment from the outset to ensure he had a competitive field and the option to extend the temporary employment beyond 12 months if needed (refer to GSE rule 22).

3.1.3.1.2 Example 2 – convert to ongoing and retain great talent

Armin employed Luke as a Communications Officer to cover a 12-month period of maternity leave following comparative assessment after external advertising. Luke proved to be an exceptional performer and was highly valued by Armin. After 12 months in the role, senior management decided

to offer Luke ongoing employment in a newly created marketing role at the same grade. Armin was able to convert Luke's employment to ongoing as there was strong alignment between the two roles (i.e. both are in the same occupation stream) and he had met all the requirements set out in Rule 12 to convert temporary employment to ongoing employment.

3.1.3.2 Number of vacancies

When recruiting to fill many vacancies, or to form a talent pool, consider using an assessment centre approach, which allows you to assess a high volume of candidates efficiently and effectively.

Recruiting to fill an individual vacancy is best limited to when you want to fill a specialised or less common role.

When deciding on your approach, think about both current vacancies and projected vacancies for the same or similar roles in the next 12 months.

Check with your HR team to see whether there is an existing talent pool that you could draw from to fill your role. Employing someone from a talent pool can save you from having to run a lengthy recruitment process.

The PSC's *Talent pools guide for HR and hiring managers* has information about how to set up and use talent pools.

3.1.3.3 Features of the role

Consider the features of the role when developing your recruitment and selection approach. For example, the role may:

- be specialised (e.g. involving specialised technical or professional knowledge or experience)
- be hard to fill (e.g. professions where there are skills shortages)
- be a critical role
- have an essential job requirement (e.g. identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander).
- be a targeted role (e.g. targeted to people with disability)

Depending on the features of the role, you may want to reach the broadest field or narrow in on candidates who are most likely to suit the role.

The following table shows how the features of different roles impact on the recruitment and selection approach.

	Essential requirement, e.g. Aboriginal identified role (specialised or common role)	Targeted role e.g. targeted to people with disability	Specialised, hard-to-fill role, e.g. geotechnical engineer	Common role with an essential requirement, e.g. graduate policy officer	Common role with no essential requirements, e.g. policy officer
Recruitment approach	Role-by-role	Role-by-role or talent pool for 18 months	Role-by-role	Bulk	Bulk to form a talent pool for 18 months
Attracting candidates	Ad on *I work for NSW* Targeted ads (e.g. Koori Mail, Our Mob) and working with	Ad on *I work for NSW* Targeted ads and working with specialist providers	Ad on *I work for NSW* Targeted ads (e.g. with industry associations)	Ad on *I work for NSW* Targeted ads (e.g. graduate online platforms)	Ad on *I work for NSW*

	specialist providers				
Pre-screening	Disqualification question on meeting essential requirement of Aboriginality	Disqualification question on meeting requirement of being a person with disability	Disqualification question on engineering qualification	Disqualification question on degree qualification Targeted question on motivation	Targeted questions on capability or motivation
Design of assessments	Assessments measure capabilities Consider modifications under GSE rule 26 At least one assessor is an Aboriginal person	Assessments measure capabilities Consider modifications under GSE rule 26 At least one assessor is a person with disability	Assessments measure specialist knowledge and experience as well as capabilities (including occupation-specific capabilities)	Assessments measure capabilities	Assessments measure capabilities

3.1.3.4 Resources

Budget, availability of in-house expertise, and capacity of internal staff to deliver assessments will have an impact on your approach to recruitment and selection. Alternatively, whether you need to procure services from the Talent Acquisition Scheme to design and deliver assessments, undertake a talent search and provide and administer psychometric assessment tools and recruitment technologies.

Bulk recruitment approaches can seem time consuming and costly, but when executed well, they reduce the time and cost to hire per role in the longer term.

Designing and delivering assessments in-house is a good option where you have the available resources and expertise.

It may be worth investing more when recruiting to roles with high-level responsibility or roles that need specialist skills. You can procure services from the Talent Acquisition Scheme to design and deliver assessments, undertake a talent search and provide and administer psychometric assessment tools and recruitment technologies.

3.1.4 NSW Government Talent Acquisition Scheme

The Talent Acquisition Scheme is a scheme of pre-qualified suppliers who can be engaged by agencies to provide a suite of products and services to source, assess and select talent for executive and non-executive roles.

Categories on the scheme include:

- Schedule 1: Design and delivery of assessments
- Schedule 2: Talent Search
- Schedule 3: Psychometric Tools
- Schedule 4: Recruitment Technologies

For more information on the range of products and services available and on approved suppliers go to the NSW Government buy.nsw website.

3.1.4.1 Tips on best practice

When purchasing from the Talent Acquisition Scheme, discuss the role you are recruiting for and the capabilities you are assessing with the supplier. The supplier is responsible for:

- delivering a full range (or a limited range) of recruitment services - including but not limited to sourcing, short-listing, interviewing and recommending candidates - as provided for in the agreed scope of services
- recommending appropriate tools and advising how they assess the required capabilities and levels
- briefing assessors on the use of tools and recommending appropriate norm groups and difficulty levels
- providing results, including an explanation of how the assessment scores relate to the capabilities assessed
- advising on the accessibility of assessment tools and workplace adjustments that can be made depending on the needs of candidates.

For advice on selecting an appropriate executive or non-executive search supplier or the most relevant assessment methods speak with your Human Resources representative or your scheme supplier.

3.2 Designing the assessment process

An effective assessment process uses multiple methods to collect objective evidence about capabilities, experience, knowledge and other essential requirements relevant to the role.

3.2.1 Legal requirements

GSE rule 16 sets out the merit principles that apply to employment decisions in the Public Service. This includes the general principle that employment decisions are based on an assessment of candidates' capabilities, knowledge and experience as they relate to the role requirements and the needs of the relevant employer.

The legal requirements for assessments are set out in the GSE Rules:

- GSE Rule 17 defines the minimum requirements for a comparative assessment
- GSE Rule 18 defines the minimum requirements for a suitability assessment.

The type of assessment required depends on the kind of employment:

- GSE Rule 20 sets out the assessment requirements for ongoing employment
- GSE Rule 21, GSE Rule 22 and GSE Rule 22B set out the assessment requirements for temporary or term employment
- GSE Rule 26 sets out the assessment requirements for employing eligible persons from designated groups.

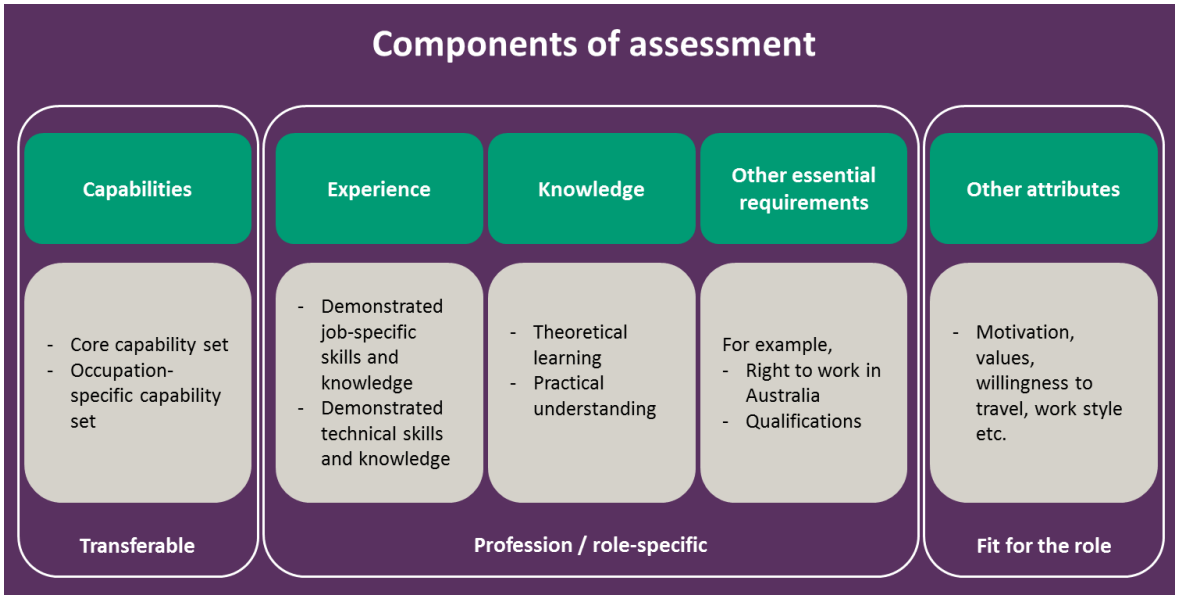
3.2.2 What to assess

Employment decisions must be based on an assessment of a person's capabilities, knowledge and experience against the pre-established standards for the role.

The minimum requirement for assessment processes when undertaking a comparative assessment or a suitability assessment is an assessment of the focus capabilities, knowledge and experience needed for the role. Complementary capabilities can also be assessed but this is optional under the GSE rules.

You should also consider motivation and fit to determine the candidate(s) best suited to the role and the needs of the agency. The diagram below summarises these assessment components.

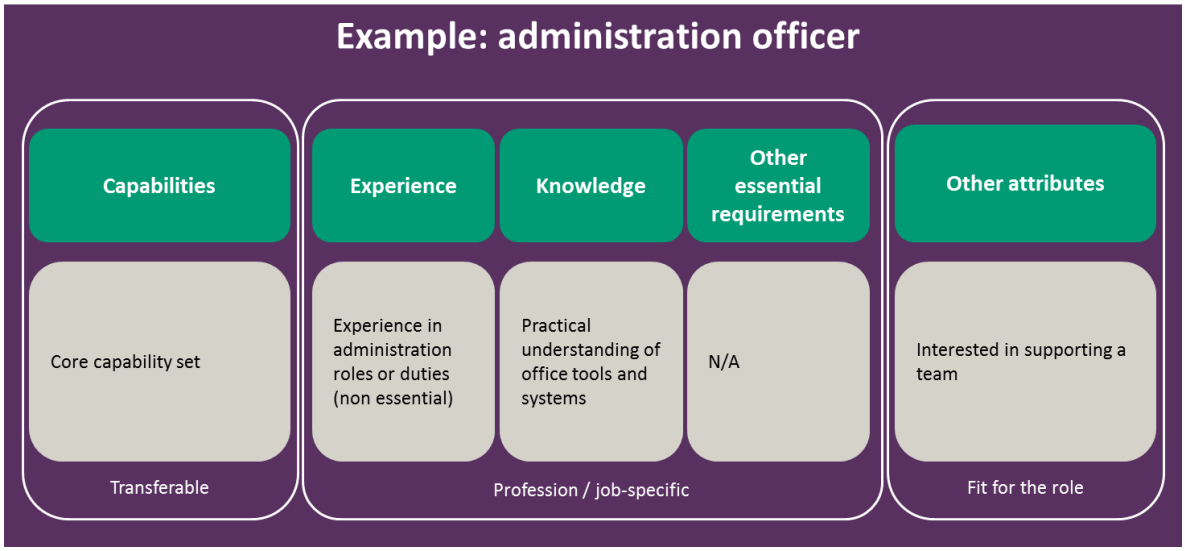
3.2.2.1 Example 1: Components of assessment for recruitment and selection



3.2.2.2 Examples of assessment components for different roles

Example 1 – Senior solicitor in criminal law

Example 2 – Administration officer



When planning your assessment process you need to decide how you will assess:

- focus capabilities, including any focus occupation-specific capabilities, using a minimum of two capability-based assessments to ensure that a reasonable amount of information is collected on each capability
- complementary capabilities, including any complementary occupation-specific capabilities
- profession / role-specific knowledge and experience required for the role, noting that knowledge and experience are usually more important for more senior and specialised roles than for entry-level and generalist roles
- any other essential requirements for the role (e.g. licence or qualification)
- motivation and fit for the role.

Note: GSE Rule 26 allows modifications to the requirements in Part 3 of the GSE Rules to facilitate the employment of eligible persons from designated groups. See: PSC's disability and accessibility resources for more information on using rule 26 to employ people with disability.

Table 1 below is a guide to structuring the assessment process to meet the requirements.

	Focus capabilities	Complementary capabilities	Profession / role-specific knowledge and experience	Essential requirements	Other attributes, e.g. motivation
Screening for essential requirements such as a qualification or licence				✓	
Reviewing a resume (required) and application (not required for suitability assessment)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Interview	✓	✓	✓		✓
Capability-based assessments (other than interview)	✓	✓	✓		
Referee checks	✓		✓		✓

You have choice and flexibility in how and when to deliver capability-based assessments, including the order of assessments, use of multiple stages and assessment centres.

3.2.3 Order of assessments

Ordering the assessments allows you to make use of the information gathered in the process and to optimise the use of resources.

The following table is a guide to the more common capability-based assessments and when they are best used.

	As part of pre-screening	Earlier in process	Later in process
Cognitive ability tests	✓	✓	
Interviews			✓
Personality questionnaires			✓
Work sample exercises		✓	✓

3.2.3.1 Use of multiple stages

Structuring assessments in multiple stages gives you the flexibility to set decision points along the way so that candidates assessed as unsuitable in one stage do not have to complete further assessments.

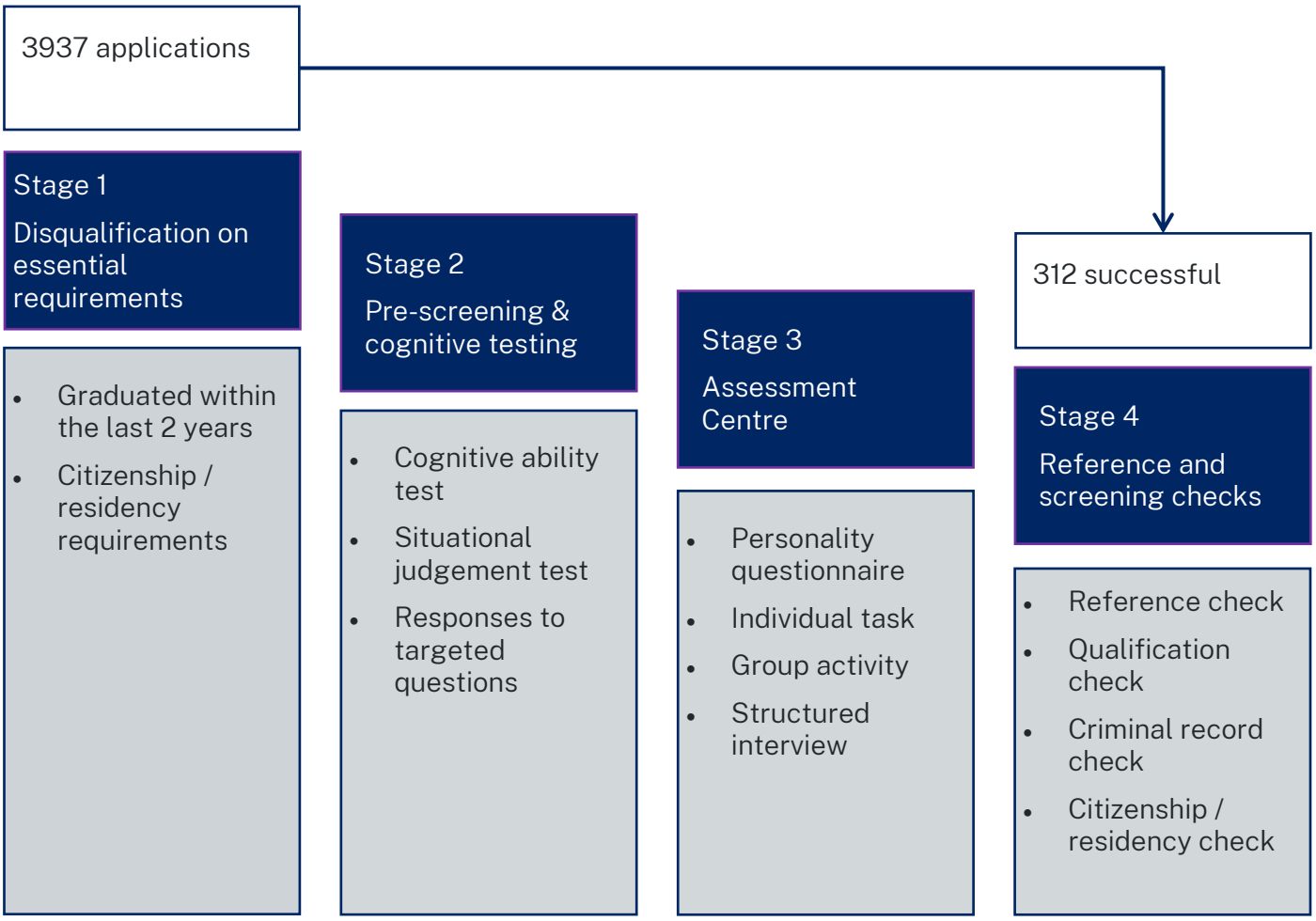
The resume and application review help to identify candidates who do not provide sufficient evidence that they meet the requirements for the role and can be screened out of the process.

You can also set decision points between capability-based assessments so that candidates you have identified as being unsuited to the role do not need to go through the whole assessment process. The multi-stage approach is particularly useful where there are many candidates.

3.2.3.1.1 Example of multi-stage assessment process for bulk recruitment

The PSC ran a multi-stage assessment process for the NSW Graduate Program.

The process involved 4 stages with a decision point at each stage taking the candidate pool from 3937 at Stage 1 to 312 successful candidates at Stage 4.

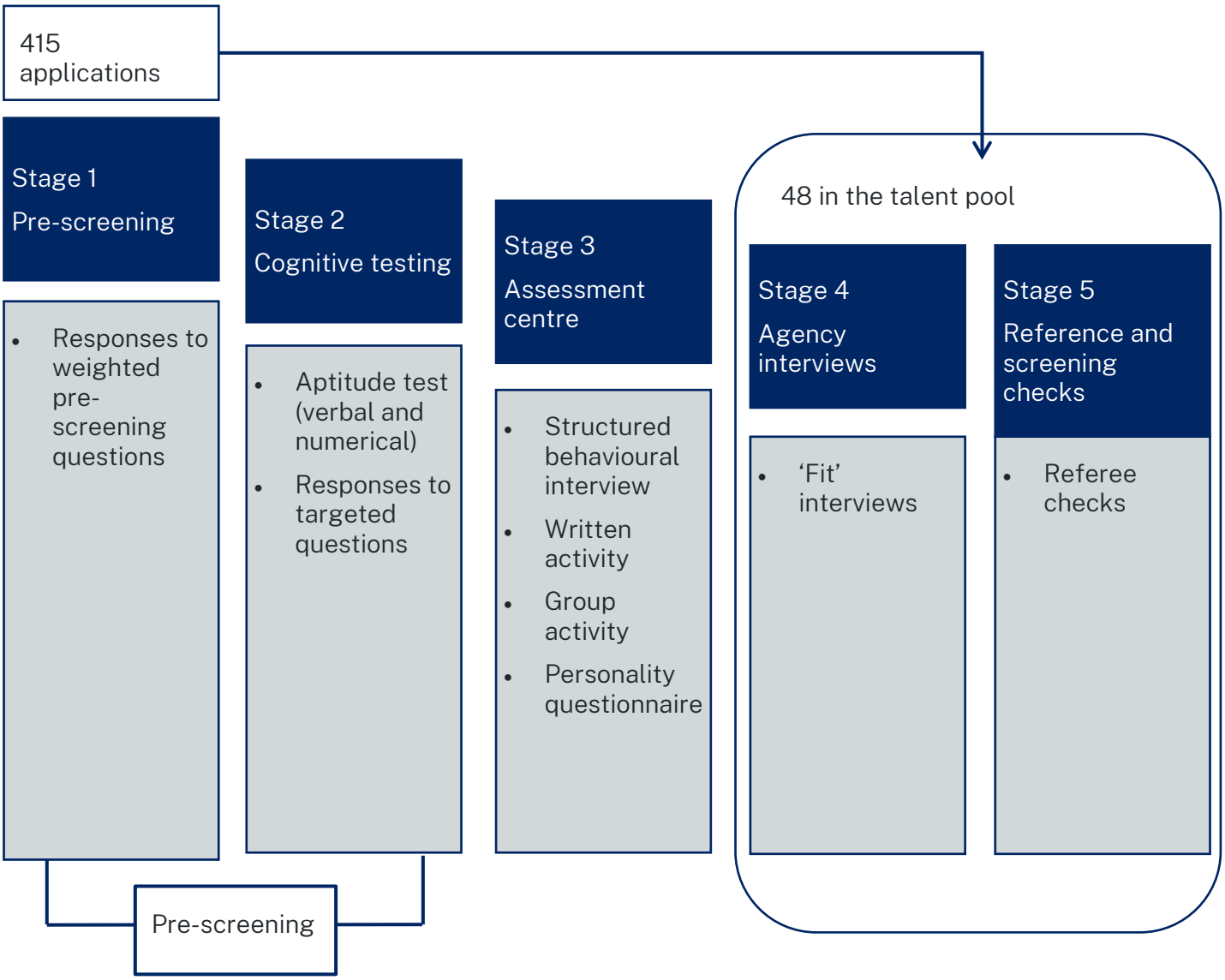


3.2.3.1.2 Example of a multi-stage assessment process for a talent pool

The PSC established a Public Service talent pool for a Policy Officer Clerk 7/8 role.

This involved 3 stages to establish the talent pool with decision points at each stage. This took the candidate pool from 415 at Stage 1 to 48 candidates in the talent pool after Stage 3.

Stage 4 and 5 allow agencies to recruit candidates for ongoing or temporary employment by doing interviews for fit (organisation/team/culture) and referee checks.



3.2.3.2 Tips for designing capability-based assessment processes

- To make sure you have enough evidence about the most important capabilities for the role, all focus capabilities should be assessed using a minimum of two capability-based assessments. The successful candidate should meet these capabilities at the level required for the role
- Capability-based assessments provide evidence about a person's capabilities compared to those required for the role. Using a variety of assessment approaches helps you to differentiate between candidates and to choose the person best suited to the requirements of the role and the needs of the agency
- Using a staged approach to recruitment can help you to reduce the candidate field and find the person(s) best suited to the role requirements. You can advise candidates who do not meet the

requirements of an assessment task that they will not be proceeding further in the process. This prevents candidates going through further assessments unnecessarily

- You may assess complementary capabilities included in the role description as these form part of the pre-established standards for the role
- Consider the relative importance of the capability, knowledge and experience requirements of the role and the order in which you will assess them. You do not want to discount candidates who can perform well in a role and could develop capabilities or other requirements, such as subject matter knowledge, on the job within a reasonable period.

3.2.4 Designing the application

The application is the information candidates provide to be considered for the role.

You have scope to tailor the application to include the following optional parts:

- a cover letter of no more than 1 to 2 pages
- a short statement against one or two targeted questions

Other information collected by default in the *I work for NSW* application form includes personal details, diversity information, work experience, education, details of referees and requests for workplace adjustment.

Note: It is not compulsory for candidates to attach a resume as a separate file. The 'work experience', 'education' and 'referee' fields can be used to capture the key aspects of a resume.

3.2.4.1 Managing requests for workplace adjustments

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) sets the framework for making workplace adjustments during the recruitment process by enabling a person with disability to have equal opportunities in seeking employment. This legislation applies to NSW public sector agencies.

To prevent discrimination you need to:

- talk to candidates about their specific needs
- have a strategy in place to manage requests for workplace adjustment
- be aware of the types of workplace adjustments your agency can make on the job
- understand the types of adjustments to assessments or opportunities for alternative assessments (or talk to your assessment service supplier to seek advice)
- put a plan in place to make workplace adjustments.

Some candidates may not disclose at the application stage that they may require adjustments at a later stage. Communicating with candidates throughout the process about individual needs will help you to accommodate any adjustments needed.

3.2.4.2 Cover letter

The cover letter gives the candidate the opportunity to:

- explain their motivation in applying for the role
- outline their achievements as they relate to the focus capabilities and other role requirements
- give a summary of their relevant qualifications and experience.

A good cover letter is generally no more than 1 to 2 pages in length and should be succinct and logically written.

It is recommended that you do not ask candidates to address targeted questions in the cover letter as it is easier to compare and assess these as separate responses.

3.2.4.3 Targeted questions

Targeted questions are written in a way that allows candidates to give examples of how they have demonstrated the behaviours that relate to a focus capability.

Targeted questions can be designed to assess how candidates demonstrated capabilities in a relevant context and can be situationally based, starting with phrases like:

- "Give an example of a situation where..."
- "Describe a scenario...".

Behavioural indicators can help you to develop targeted questions that relate to the focus capabilities you are examining. You can use or adapt the behaviours described in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework or develop your own specific behaviours to the capability level for the role.

The benefits of using this approach are that:

- the question relates directly to the capability and is pitched at the right level
- you can use the behavioural indicators to help you evaluate responses
- you can also use the candidate's written response to assess the Communicate Effectively capability if this is also a focus capability
- you can confidently screen out candidates who do not meet a focus capability.

3.2.4.3.1 Example – designing a targeted question using the behavioural indicators

Capability: Commit to Customer Service – Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives

Level: Adept

Behavioural indicators:

- Take responsibility for delivering high-quality customer-focused services
- Design processes and policies based on the customer's point of view and needs
- Understand and measure what is important to customers
- Use data and information to monitor and improve customer service delivery
- Find opportunities to cooperate with internal and external stakeholders to improve outcomes for customers
- Maintain relationships with key customers in area of expertise
- Connect and collaborate with relevant customers within the community

Targeted question: Give an example of a time when you identified an opportunity to improve customer delivery using data or information. What was the situation? How did you deal with it? What was the outcome?

3.2.4.3.2 Targeted questions on motivation

For a targeted question on motivation it is best to ask candidates about their desire to work in an agency, sector or role. For these types of questions you are looking for the candidate to show:

- their drive, enthusiasm or passion to work in this type of environment or role
- an awareness of the sector or agency
- an understanding of the role
- their values.

Examples include:

- Why do you want to work in the NSW Public Service?

- What interests you about the role?
- What are your expectations of a role within the NSW Public Service?

These types of questions can also align with the *Act with Integrity* capability which requires employees to be ethical and professional and to adhere to the government sector values.

3.2.4.4 Tips on designing the application form

Build the targeted questions into the I work for NSW application form so that responses are presented in a consistent format. You can download a report with candidates' responses, making it easier to review and compare. This approach also limits bias: evaluating sections of an application limits the risk that positive/negative evaluations from one section will carry into the next.

3.2.5 Screening

There are two main tools in the *I work for NSW* e-recruitment system to help you screen for any essential requirements and, in some cases, specific focus capabilities for the role.

3.2.5.1 Gross negative disqualifiers (disqualification questions)

Gross negative disqualifiers tell candidates immediately if they do not meet an essential requirement for the role. If the candidate does not meet the requirement they cannot progress with their application. These questions should be used for essential requirements such as:

- citizenship and residency requirements
- qualifications (e.g. degree for a graduate program)
- certifications (e.g. first aid certificate)
- licences (e.g. driver's licence, practising certificate for solicitors)
- registration (e.g. registered with a board or other professional body – registered nurse)
- criteria for identified roles e.g. confirmation of Aboriginality

Agencies can ask for disqualification questions to be built into the *I work for NSW* requisition template.

3.2.5.2 Other pre-screening questions

Other questions, including targeted questions, can be included in the application process so hiring managers can determine if a candidate meets the essential requirements or one or more of the focus capabilities for the role.

Types of pre-screening questions that HR and hiring managers can create in the *I work for NSW* requisition form include:

- single response questions (e.g. yes/no, radio button, drop down list)
- multiple response questions usually ask about candidates' preferences (e.g. willingness to work in specific locations) and are particularly useful when creating a talent pool
- text responses (e.g. targeted questions, knowledge and experience questions) – it is advisable to set a maximum number of words or characters and to communicate this to candidates in the application form.

3.2.6 Choosing assessors

Choosing the right assessors who are committed to finding the right person for the role will have a big impact on your assessment process.

3.2.6.1 Legal requirements

The minimum number of assessors required is two for a comparative assessment and one for a suitability assessment.

3.2.6.2 How to choose assessors

For a comparative assessment process, at a minimum, it is important to include:

- a hiring manager who is at a higher grade than the role being recruited (unless the hiring manager is a qualified human resources or recruitment representative)
- an independent person who works outside of the employment area or division (e.g. team, area, branch, division, group, function) of the other assessors and the role.

Having a person and their direct supervisor on the selection panel together should be avoided. If they are on the same panel, an independent assessor is required for a comparative assessment.

- For a non-executive role, an independent assessor can be from outside the agency but as a minimum, must be a person who is not employed in the same part of the Public Service agency in which the other assessors are employed and in which the role is being filled (see GSE Rule 17).
- For a senior executive role, the independent assessor must be a person who is not employed in the same Public Service agency in which the role is being filled.

Representatives from professional services suppliers may be engaged to provide expert support in the selection process. Such support may include reviewing and shortlisting of candidates and screening interviews. Professional service suppliers may be included as assessors, but they are not involved in making the selection decision(s). It is up to the person(s) responsible for undertaking the recruitment and selection process in the public sector agency to decide the outcomes of the selection process. This includes deciding who meets the standards for the role and who is the person best suited to the role and the needs of the agency.

In selecting assessors you should include, wherever possible:

- one male and one female
- persons reflective of the wider community with representation from diversity groups
- for an identified or targeted role, at least one person from the related diversity group (e.g. an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identified role).

Invite assessors to be involved in the recruitment process early on so they can plan their time commitment and involvement in the process. Also specify what their contribution will involve. This may include some or all the following:

- helping to develop the targeted questions
- screening resumes and applications
- helping to design interview questions
- participating as an assessor in interviews
- participating as an assessor in other assessment activities (e.g. observing group activities, marking work sample exercises etc.)
- doing referee checks
- giving input to the final selection decision.

3.2.6.3 Assessor training

It is important that assessors have a good understanding of the recruitment and selection requirements of the GSE Act and GSE Rules, particularly the merit principles set out in GSE rule 16. If you are using an assessor from outside of the NSW Public Service, you may need to give them an overview of the main assessment requirements.

Also consider the types of information and training that will help assessors to make well-informed and objective recruitment decisions. Types of training may include:

- The 'Navigating Recruitment' e-learning module
- training for specific assessment activities – e.g. training assessors to observe and rate a group activity
- information or training on techniques to address unconscious bias
- information or training on disability awareness and cultural awareness
- information on legal requirements and obligations (e.g. workplace adjustments, preventing discrimination etc.).

3.3 Selecting fit-for-purpose assessments

Selecting a mix of fit-for-purpose assessment methods helps give a full picture of a candidate's capabilities, knowledge and experience.

3.3.1 Legal requirements

The legal requirements for assessments are set out in the GSE Rules:

- GSE rule 17 defines the requirements for a comparative assessment
- GSE rule 18 defines the requirements for a suitability assessment.

The minimum requirements for assessment depend on the kind of employment:

- GSE rule 20 sets out the assessment requirements for ongoing employment
- GSE rule 21 and GSE rule 22 set out the assessment requirements for temporary or term employment
- GSE rule 26 sets out the assessment requirements for employing eligible persons from designated groups.

3.3.2 About capability-based assessments

Capability-based assessments are used to assess candidates against the capabilities, knowledge and experience at the required level for the role. Using multiple methods helps provide a full picture of a candidate's strengths and development needs and increases the reliability and validity of the assessment process.[2]

3.3.3 Principles for selecting assessment methods

The principles that guide the choice of assessment methods are:

- **Validity** – assessments measure the candidate's capabilities against the capability levels required for the role and predict performance on the job.
  See: Predictive validity of assessment methods
- **Reliability** – assessments consistently measure what they claim to measure
- **Consistency** – assessments are administered and measured consistently across the whole candidate pool. An exception is in the case of workplace adjustment. It is a legal requirement to allow candidates with disability to request adjustments to the assessment process to remove any barriers in demonstrating their abilities to meet the requirements of the role

[2] Schmidt, F. & Hunter, J. (1998). The validity and utility of selection methods in personnel psychology: Practical and Theoretical implications of 85 years of research findings, Psychological Bulletin, 124 (2), 262-274

- **Fit-for-purpose** – assessment methods are well-suited to what is being assessed (i.e. the capabilities at the level required for the role) in the particular context (i.e. functional or subject matter area)
- **Inclusive** – assessment methods do not indirectly disadvantage a particular group (e.g. Aboriginal people, people with disability etc.) unless there is an essential requirement that is needed for successful performance in the role.

3.3.4 Type of assessments

To select the assessment methods best suited to the role you should familiarise yourself with the range of assessments that are available. Some of these can be designed and administered in-house (e.g. work sample activities) while others, particularly psychometric testing, require accredited experts to design, deliver and evaluate the results.

Some of the common types of capability-based assessments include:

- Interviews
- Psychometric assessments (e.g. cognitive ability tests, personality questionnaires)
- Work sample exercises.

When choosing assessments, particularly psychometric assessments, you need to be sure about why you are using a particular test and how you intend to use the results. Psychometric assessments should be used to inform decisions about which candidates are best suited to the role and the needs of the agency. Assessments should never be used as an easy option for covering many capabilities simply because it is an easy way to tick-the-box.

Suppliers on the Talent Acquisition Scheme can give advice on the assessments that are useful for assessing specific capabilities and on assessments that are suitable for use with diversity groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or people with disability.

In designing or selecting assessments consider how you can make them accessible (e.g. for people who use screen readers) or provide practical alternatives for people with disability who cannot complete them but could otherwise effectively perform the role to be filled.

In some cases, a workplace adjustment can be made to help remove barriers in the assessment process. Considering each case for workplace adjustment separately will ensure you can meet an individual's specific needs.

3.3.4.1 Level of difficulty

Different assessments are designed to measure different skills or abilities at particular levels.

The level of difficulty of an assessment should be appropriate to the specific role. An assessment that is too easy will not differentiate between individuals with good or poor potential. An assessment that is too difficult can result in candidates being wrongfully excluded.

For psychometric tests, an accredited person should advise on choosing a test at the appropriate level of difficulty for the role.

3.3.4.2 Develop an assessment plan

It is a good idea to develop an assessment plan, which:

- clearly identifies the standards or levels required for capabilities, experience, knowledge and other attributes
- maps out which capabilities you will assess using which methods
- ensures each of the focus capabilities are assessed using at least two capability-based assessment methods.

An assessment matrix will help you to meet these requirements.

Tip - It is not necessary to develop separate assessments for every capability as one assessment method can measure multiple capabilities.

3.3.4.3 Developing an inclusive process

The assessment plan can also be used to establish a process for making workplace adjustments including determining roles and responsibilities. Having a plan is important as candidates may not let you know until the day of the assessment that they need an adjustment.

The assessments you choose should be relevant to the role, pitched at the right level and reflect the type of work done on the job.

You should also consider the accessibility needs for people with disability and consider available adjustments to assessment tasks. Adjustments must be based on individual need so communicate with each person to determine how best to meet their needs.

3.3.4.4 Tips on capability-based assessments

For the purposes of a comparative assessment or a suitability assessment, capability-based assessments do not include:

- a review of the resume or application
- a review of responses to targeted questions
- referee checks.

While these provide evidence about a candidate's claims for a role, such as their values, motives and professionalism, they have low predictive validity as a capability-based assessment method.

3.3.4.5 Predictive validity of assessment methods

- 1 -

Higher

Lower

- 0 -

Validity	Assessment methods
0.63	• Cognitive ability test + structured interview • Cognitive ability test + work sample test
0.54	• Work sample test
0.51	• Cognitive ability test • Structured interview
0.48	• Job knowledge test
0.31	• Unstructured interview
0.26	• Reference check
0.18	• Job experience (years)
0.10	• Years of education
- 0.01	• Age

Source: Schmidt, FL & Hunter, JE, 1998, 'The validity of utility selection methods in personnel psychology: Practical and theoretical implications of 85 years of research findings', Psychological Bulletin, Vol.124, No.2, pp.262-274.

3.3.5 Interviews

A recruitment interview is a conversation where an assessor(s) asks a set of questions to evaluate a candidate's suitability to perform a particular role.

An interview is needed for all employment decisions in the NSW Public Service.

A range of approaches and formats are available for recruitment interviews. The PSC recommends using structured behavioural interviews over unstructured interviews. The following content describes some of the available formats, which may suit different circumstances.

Sometimes you may need to adjust your interview practices for people with disability who need a workplace adjustment. See: Australian Disability Network - Recruiting and Careers.

3.3.5.1 Legal requirements

An interview is one of the capability-based assessments required for a comparative assessment and a suitability assessment.

3.3.5.2 Structured behavioural interviews

In a structured interview all candidates are asked the same set of questions and are assessed against the same standards with a common rating scale. Structured interviews have higher validity in predicting how someone will perform on the job than unstructured interviews

Behavioural questions invite candidates to share examples of specific situations from their own experience, how they approached each situation, what they did, and what the results were. This interviewing style is based on the idea that past behaviour is an indicator of future behaviour.

Probing questions can be used in structured interviews to clarify candidate's responses or to obtain further information relevant to the capability being assessed or role. Probing questions may vary from candidate to candidate depending on how the interview progresses. It is a good idea to include possible probing questions for each interview question to support assessors to get the best information from the interview without advantaging some candidates.

3.3.5.3 Unstructured interviews

Unstructured interviews have no fixed format or set of questions to be answered often resulting in different questions being asked of each candidate and potentially leading to interviewer bias. A common outcome is confirmation bias which is described as follows:

When interviewers use an unstructured format and ask questions that come to mind during the interview, they are likely to fall victim to confirmation bias – only asking questions that seek to confirm the interviewer's initial impressions about the candidate. (Department of Premier and Cabinet 2016, Behavioural approaches to increasing workforce diversity)

Unstructured interviews have a lower validity than structured interviews for predicting how someone will perform on the job and are not recommended in recruitment.

3.3.5.4 Interview format

Some common interview formats include: the panel interview, the multi-mini (or consecutive) interview, and interviews using technology (this can be used with other options).

3.3.5.4.1 Panel interviews

A common interview format is to have a panel of two or three assessors asking a full set of questions.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Assessors bring different perspectives	Can be daunting for candidates
Different assessors observe different things	Time to organise and challenges coordinating diaries of all assessors
Personality biases are reduced	

3.3.5.4.2 Multi-mini-interviews

The multi-mini (or consecutive) interview is an alternative to the panel interview format. It is particularly useful for large volume recruitment to maximise assessors' time.

In multi-mini-interviews, interview questions are allocated to individual interviewers or panels of two interviewers. Candidates rotate through the interview stations (usually four to six), each with its own interviewer and interview question. The interview rotations combined should not take any longer than a traditional interview.

This format can reduce any bias that might occur if a candidate provides one poor (or excellent) response at one interview station. However, the rotations make it hard to build rapport with candidates.

3.3.5.4.3 Interviews using technology

Interviews using video link or phone provide an alternative to in-person interviews. They are particularly useful for interviewing candidates who are not located close by.

A range of video interviewing platforms allow the interviewer to pre-record themself asking the interview questions, and candidates to record themselves responding to the questions. Video interviewing can be used at the pre-screening stage in place of written responses to target questions, or in place of a first interview.

Video interviewing can improve the efficiency of the recruitment process and reduces time and effort for candidates in travelling to your office. These benefits need to be weighed up against potential negatives such as not being able to ask probing questions in your interview.

3.3.5.4.4 Second interviews

A second interview is a good opportunity to invite strong candidates back to:

- build on the information gathered already
- assess for fit for a particular role
- meet with next level manager(s) or team members
- differentiate between leading candidates.

Second interviews are useful when you are looking to hire a candidate from a talent pool. These candidates have already met the pre-established standards for the role, so an informal interview can be used to determine if a candidate is a good fit for your role.

A second interview should still use a structured approach, but you may want to develop a new, tailored set of questions.

3.3.6 Work sample exercises

Work sample exercises are group or individual activities that simulate situations encountered in the role to be filled, allowing you to gather information on a candidate's capabilities and experience.

A work sample can be used as a standalone assessment, in an assessment centre environment or as part of the interview.

Work samples often involve the candidate analysing information and providing a verbal or written response individually or as part of a group.

Work sample exercises are useful for:

- giving direct evidence of capabilities that may be difficult to measure using other methods
- assessing several capabilities at once
- assessing capabilities in a context that closely mirrors workplace situations and challenges
- having high validity in predicting how someone will perform on the job.

In some circumstances you may need to make workplace adjustments to your work sample exercises for people with disability.

3.3.6.1 Common work sample exercises

Common work sample exercises are group exercises, role plays, case studies, case interviews, in-tray exercises, written exercises and technical skills assessments.

3.3.6.1.1 Group exercises

Group exercises involve candidates working together to develop solutions to a problem or to discuss a topic while being observed by assessors. They are typically used as part of an assessment centre process. Examples of group exercises include:

- a group discussion on a particular issue such as a policy or current news item
- a case study exercise with a group of candidates given a brief based on a realistic business scenario. Candidates may be assigned different roles, e.g. representing different departments or policy positions.

3.3.6.1.2 Role plays

In a role play exercise, candidates are asked to assume a fictitious role and handle a particular work situation that closely mirrors role-relevant scenarios.

Role plays can be used to assess multiple capabilities using direct observation in a context directly relevant to the role.

Role plays generally involve an interaction with a role player who has been thoroughly briefed on their respective role as a customer, manager etc. so the role players are consistent in their response, attitude and behaviours in the interaction.

Examples of role-plays include scenarios such as:

- a candidate for a customer service-focused role dealing with face-to-face queries and complaints
- a candidate for a manager role providing coaching to a team member.

3.3.6.1.3 Case study exercises

Case study exercises involve giving candidates information about a work-related scenario and asking them to examine the situation, analyse the material and present their findings, either in a written format or verbally.

3.3.6.1.4 Case interviews

Case interviews involve giving candidates a scenario in advance (e.g. one to two days ahead) and asking them to verbally present a proposal or analysis to assessors when they attend for interview. Case interviews often use an actual business situation (e.g. the establishment of a new program) and involve candidates developing and presenting their strategy (e.g. for the design and implementation of the program).

Case interviews allow hiring managers to ask follow up questions and assess a candidate's ability to think on their feet and communicate complex ideas.

They are particularly suited to more senior management, policy or project type roles or roles where strategic thinking and problem solving are important.

3.3.6.1.5 In-tray exercises

In-tray exercises simulate administrative aspects of a role. The candidate is asked to assume a particular role as an employee of a fictitious organisation and work through the correspondence and other documentation in their in-tray.

Some examples of activities that could be used for in-tray exercises include:

- managing multiple competing demands in a short time frame
- responding to a written customer complaint
- writing emails to other members of staff
- delegating work to team members.

3.3.6.1.6 Written exercises

Written exercises involve candidates reviewing written information (e.g. a case study, position paper or business problem) and writing a response in the form of a letter, email, memo, briefing etc. The written exercise is a good opportunity to test written communication skills in combination with focus capabilities that are important to perform the role.

3.3.6.1.7 Technical skills assessments

Technical skills assessments measure a candidate's professional or occupation-specific skills in a particular or specialised area to determine whether they can meet the technical requirements of a role. Technical skills can be assessed using cognitive ability tests or work sample exercises.

An example is a computer programming skills test which requires candidates to write HTML code to create a webpage.

3.3.7 Psychometric assessments

Psychometric assessments can be used as a type of capability-based assessment to inform selection decisions as part of the recruitment process. Care should be taken to ensure assessments are fit-for-purpose. This means that the hiring manager understands why a particular assessment has been chosen and is clear up front about how the results will be used (e.g. to inform probing in subsequent assessments, as part of the selection decision etc.).

The main types of psychometric assessments used in recruitment are:

- cognitive ability tests
- personality questionnaires.

Information about these is available below.

Reputable test publishers conduct rigorous studies on their psychometric assessment tools before they are released, and technical manuals are available containing evidence to support the validity and reliability of tests.

In some circumstances you may need to make workplace adjustments to psychometric assessments for people with disability. Speak to HR or your supplier about options for adjustments.

See: Talent Acquisition Scheme for information about sourcing services to provide and administer approved psychometric assessment tools.

3.3.7.1 Appropriate use of psychometric assessments

Psychometric assessments used in recruitment and selection are designed to determine if candidates have the capability and suitability to meet the role requirements and challenges. They are not designed to identify personal or confidential information about individuals.

The results of psychometric assessments should never be used on their own to select a candidate for a role, but should be used to inform decisions about which candidates are best suited to the role and the needs of the agency. Psychometric assessments are developed for specific purposes, and their use should be consistent with that purpose.

3.3.7.2 Benefits of using psychometric assessments

The main benefits of psychometric assessments are that they:

- allow candidates to demonstrate talents that may not be directly observable otherwise

- are reliable – accurate across different times
- are valid – measure what they claim to measure
- are objective – well-designed psychometric assessments are standardised, meaning they are administered and scored in a consistent manner, leaving no room for assessor bias
- are one of the best predictors of future individual job performance when used in combination with a behavioural interview or work sample task.

3.3.7.3 Cognitive ability tests

Cognitive ability tests are objective standardised tools that are used to identify the extent to which a candidate's reasoning abilities match those required to perform the role. Tests chosen must be matched to role requirements.

Some common types of cognitive ability tests include:

- Numerical reasoning – measures the ability to use numbers in a logical and efficient way
- Verbal reasoning – measures basic vocabulary, verbal fluency and the ability to reason using words
- Abstract reasoning – measures the ability to understand new logical problems and use information outside the range of previous experience to solve them
- General cognitive ability – non-verbal test that measures problem-solving, logical ability and ability to identify logical connections
- Mechanical aptitude – measures the ability to understand and apply mechanical concepts and principles to solve problems.

Advantages	Drawbacks
High validity in measuring capability Many assessment tools readily available – some in different languages Useful for large candidate pools and bulk recruitment campaigns Tests of abstract reasoning and general cognitive ability are likely to be culturally fair	Can cause anxiety for candidates, especially some diversity groups May not be accessible for all candidates Can be hard for hiring managers to understand

3.3.7.4 Personality questionnaires

Personality questionnaires are particularly useful to gauge a candidate's likely level of fit for a role or team. They measure relatively stable behavioural tendencies and work style preferences. Personality questionnaires are well-established useful tools to support hiring decisions.

Personality questionnaires can be used to assess how a candidate is likely to handle work-related tasks such as managing stakeholders, working in teams, complying with rules and regulations, leading others, coping with stress and pressure etc.

Personality questionnaires do not measure what the candidate can do, but rather how they prefer to behave in the workplace. Personality influences performance because people are usually more motivated in a role if they are doing something they prefer doing. That is, people enjoy work environments that allow them to be themselves.

If a candidate's personality profile is not aligned to a particular role, this does not mean they cannot do the job: many people learn to manage their natural tendencies to perform effectively at work. However, working in a role that requires behaviour that does not come naturally (e.g. a reserved

person in a sales role) tends to be less rewarding and enjoyable, and increases the likelihood that a person will leave the organisation.[3]

3.3.7.4.1 How to use the results of personality questionaries

Personality questionnaires are useful for highlighting areas which require further verification during an interview or reference check. They can also be useful when deciding between two or more candidates who meet the requirements of the role. Once the successful candidate has commenced work, personality questionnaire results can be used to identify development needs and inform development planning.

Because personality questionnaires measure preferences and tendencies, they should generally not be used to screen out candidates during the recruitment process. An exception is where a validation study has demonstrated that a particular personality profile correlates with high performance in a role. Where a validation study provides strong support for the validity and job relatedness of a particular personality characteristic or profile, a candidate's lack of fit with the characteristic or profile for a particular role could reasonably be used as the basis for excluding the candidate.

Personality assessments need to be considered together with other information when making a selection decision. Using personality questionnaires together with cognitive ability tests, interviews and work samples will increase the likelihood of hiring the person best suited to the requirements of the role.

3.3.7.5 Emotional intelligence questionnaires

Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to identify and manage their own emotions and the emotions of others, and to use emotional information to display behaviour appropriate to the situation. Emotional intelligence is generally recognised to be a mixture of personality traits, such as emotional stability and resilience, and the ability to perceive emotions, process them appropriately and use emotional data to make decisions in social situations.

The two most common types of emotional intelligence assessments include:

- Ability-based measures, which compare the individual's emotional judgements with those provided by a comparison group, for example, their ability to detect emotions in facial expressions
- Trait-based measures, which measure the individual's self-perception of their typical behavioural preferences and responses in social and emotional situations, for example, their resilience in difficult situations.

3.3.7.5.1 How to use the results of emotional intelligence questionnaires

Emotional intelligence assessments can provide insight into a candidate's fit with the culture of the team and broader organisation. They can also be mapped to capabilities with an emotional and behavioural component, such as resilience, self-management, communication, collaboration and people management.

The results of emotional intelligence assessments should be considered in conjunction with other sources of evidence about a candidate's capabilities and behavioural preferences. Emotional intelligence assessments can identify areas which can be probed further during interviews or referee checks and may differentiate between candidates.

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[3] See M. R. Barrick and M. K. Mount, "The big five personality dimensions and job performance: A metaanalysis," Personnel Psychology 44 (1991): 1–26; J. L. Holland, "Exploring careers with a typology: What we have learned and some new directions," American Psychologist 51 (1996): 397–406; J. Hogan and B. Holland, "Using theory to evaluate personality and job-performance relations: A socioanalytic perspective," Journal of Applied Psychology 88 (2003): 100–112; and R. P. Tett, D. N. Jackson, and M. Rothstein, "Personality measures as predictors of job performance: A meta-analytic review," Personnel Psychology 44 (1991): 703–742.

3.3.7.6 Situational judgement tests

Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) evaluate the candidate's judgement using scenarios that are realistic job previews. The scenarios can be presented in writing or through a video or audio format. They differ from work sample tests because the candidate is not required to provide a worked example, but instead selects the most appropriate response to each scenario from a range of pre-determined options in a multiple-choice format.

Situational Judgement Tests may be purchased 'off the shelf' or customised for the organisational context. The development of a customised SJT involves a job analysis including the identification of critical incidents at work where a decision must be made and consultation with subject matter experts to establish the most effective responses in each situation. Development of SJTs should be done by qualified and experienced specialists in organisational behaviour.

3.3.7.6.1 How to use the results of situational judgment tests

Situational Judgement Tests can be selected 'off the shelf', or customised, to assess a broad range of capabilities and knowledge. Unlike most other psychometric assessments, each SJT measures something different according to the scenarios they contain, so a selection should be made with care.

The validity of SJTs for predicting job performance depends on a close match between the scenarios and the requirements of the role for which the candidate is being assessed. After a SJT has been in use for a period, a validity study should be carried out to establish that the tool adequately predicts job performance, to check for adverse impact and to identify any content that may require adjustment.

3.3.8 Designing work sample exercises

There are a few steps involved in designing a work sample exercise.

This guide uses a sector Project Officer (Clerk Grade 7/8) role to show how to design a work sample exercise.

1. Identify what work is critical to the role

Your initial aim is to ensure there is a direct relationship between the work sample exercise and the type of work done on the job. This takes into consideration the importance of the task, outcomes sought and extent to which the work is part of the role.

One way of approaching this is to seek input from subject matter experts or people who are managing or are in a similar role to find out about the type of work that is most important to successful performance in the role.

Another option is to use the key accountabilities in the role description to help frame your activity so that it closely aligns with the role requirements.

Here is one of the key accountabilities in the Project Officer (Clerk Grade 7/8) role description:

"Prepare and maintain project documentation for reporting, monitoring and evaluation purposes to ensure accessibility of quality information and contribute to the achievement of project outcomes."

2. Decide what you will be assessing

It is important to decide which capabilities to assess in the work sample. You do not want to cover too many capabilities in one activity – in general, it is reasonable to measure up to eight capabilities in a work sample exercise.

Review the capabilities to determine what fits well with the type of work being assessed.

In the case of the Project Officer role the relevant focus capabilities include:

- Manage self (Adept)
- Communicate effectively (Adept)
- Deliver results (Adept)

- Think and solve problems (Intermediate)
- Project management (Adept)

There is also an opportunity to assess complementary capabilities.

In the case of the Project Officer role, the complementary capability that fits well with the key accountability is:

- Plan and prioritise (Foundational)

Knowledge and experience also need to be assessed where these are in the role description as they form part of the role requirements. This assessment does not need to be separate from the assessment of capabilities as knowledge and experience are often inherent in the capabilities. You can design your assessments to draw this information out.

Make sure you set clear standards for knowledge and experience so you can record your findings against these when consolidating results. The standards should be based on the depth, breadth or context of knowledge and experience requirements being included in the role description.

See: *Role description development guidelines* for more information about knowledge and experience requirements.

3. Choose the work sample exercise

You can now decide on a work sample exercise suited to assessing the type of work and related capabilities, knowledge and experience that you have identified.

For the Project Officer role you could ask candidates to develop a project plan based on some information you provide about a fictional project.

- As part of the project plan, they could:
- briefly describe the project
- list the project outcomes sought
- develop a project schedule with key milestones for reporting
- identify any potential risks associated with the project
- allocate responsibilities to project team members
- briefly describe the resources needed (budget, personnel, time, materials).

You could ask the candidate either to develop a written plan or to do a verbal presentation.

You could also add in questions about the candidate's experience in developing project plans.

You do not want the task to be too onerous. You are looking to see if the candidate understands what they need to consider in developing a project plan.

Sometimes the instructions will involve the candidate being given the task and completing it in one sitting.

For other work sample exercises candidates can be given the scenario one or two days in advance and asked to present a proposal to assessors when they attend for interview. This is particularly useful for more senior roles (e.g. Grade 9/10 and above), including senior executive roles.

4. Develop the scenario

Develop a scenario which will allow the candidate to demonstrate the capabilities you identified in Step 2.

You also need to create standardised instructions and determine the time limit for the exercise.

5. Set the assessment standards

Determine upfront what is required for the candidate to meet the standards for the capabilities being assessed.

The behavioural indicators for each capability in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework can be used to help assessors to identify the types of behaviours expected at the required level of capability.

Make sure the behavioural indicators are adjusted to suit the specific role and agency setting as well as the activity you are observing.

For the Project Officer role, the main things you are looking for in each capability are listed below:

Manage self (Adept)

- a high level of personal motivation is demonstrated
- a commitment is shown to achieving challenging goals

Communicate effectively (Adept)

- communication is tailored to diverse audiences
- complex concepts are clearly explained
- various communication channels are used to share information.

Deliver results (Adept)

- resource needs are identified to ensure goals are achieved within set budget and deadlines
- responsibilities for delivering outcomes are clearly articulated
- communication with team members and stakeholders about expected goals is built into the plan.

Think and solve problems (Intermediate)

- uses research and analysis to inform recommendations
- issues are identified that may impact on the completion of tasks and solutions are found.

Project management (Adept)

- the project proposal is clear and defines the scope and goals in measurable terms
- the plan establishes performance outcomes and measures for key project goals, and defines monitoring, reporting and communication requirements
- the plan includes a requirement for monitoring completion of project milestones against goals.

Note: you may not see all these behaviours during an activity – they are a guide only, not a checklist.

If you are also assessing knowledge and experience, you need to think how you will measure these against the standards for the role.

For example, you may be able to determine whether the candidate has knowledge and experience in project planning based on the level of detail and complexity included in the plan, the tools used to develop the plan (e.g. use of computer software to develop timelines) and the inclusion of more advanced content that wasn't included in the assessment brief. You could also ask follow-up questions.

6. Validate the work sample exercise

A good way of validating the work sample exercise is to administer it to high performers in the role.

You want to make sure the exercise is not so hard that candidates cannot complete it or so easy that it does not allow for differentiation between candidates.

To validate the exercise you need to consider:

- timing – is there enough time to complete the exercise in a way that challenges candidates while allowing them to develop a satisfactory response?
- common understanding – do those testing the work sample demonstrate a common understanding of what the exercise involves? This will be apparent in the consistency of responses

- job performance – are the results indicative of what is expected for successful performance of the task on the job?

You should also confirm that the exercise is inclusive and does not give an unfair advantage to some candidates, especially those internal to the agency (e.g. not using scenarios that assume agency-specific knowledge or are familiar to some but not all candidates).

3.3.9 Writing behavioural interview questions

Taking the time to write interview questions for the role to be filled will put you, and the other assessors, in a good position to measure candidates' capabilities.

Behavioural interview questions should:

- be capability-based, allowing you to assess behaviours expected for the role
- be realistic
- be clear, brief and unambiguous
- be open-ended
- use past tense – e.g. "How did you…?", "Tell us about a time when…"
- ask for facts, not a candidate's feeling or opinion about something
- ask about practical situations, not hypothetical (how they think they might behave)
- be outcomes focused.

3.3.9.1 Capability based questions

Capability-based questions are interview questions that examine whether candidates have capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) at the level needed for the role. It is recommended that each question focuses on no more than two capabilities, although responses often provide evidence that covers other capabilities.

Use the interview to explore the main role requirements. These include the focus capabilities, and knowledge and experience where these requirements are in the role description. Each interview question can be designed to allow candidates to give examples of how their capabilities, knowledge and experience meet the role requirements. Complementary capabilities may also be assessed in the interview to help to distinguish between high performers, for example.

3.3.9.2 Motivation questions

You can also ask questions about motivation to decide if the candidate's values, interests and preferences are suited to the role. For example, in asking candidates about their motivation to work in the public sector you are looking for people who want to create a better society more so than those who driven by money or status.

Asking candidates about their motivation can span topics such as having a passion to work in a particular field (e.g. social services), having an interest in supporting and developing team members as part of manager responsibilities, being inspired by using their creativity etc."

3.3.9.3 Steps in writing behavioural interview questions

The following steps will help you to design behavioural interview questions that are customised to the role you are recruiting for.

1. Identify capabilities and levels

Firstly, refer to the role description and your assessment plan or matrix to identify the capabilities to assess. Also make sure you are aware of the capability level being assessed so that you are getting information relevant to the role.

2. Decide capabilities to be assessed for each question

Decide which capabilities you want to assess with each question and think about how these relate to the role. For example, when examining the Manage self-capability for a Park Ranger role, you may be looking for something different than for the same capability and level for a Disability Support Worker role.

3. Develop behavioural questions

A good behavioural question allows candidates to draw on their work experience. To do this is to think about the types of situations that are encountered in the role. For example, a Client Services Officer in a call centre is likely to have challenging situations where they need to seek assistance from a more senior colleague or where they cannot resolve an enquiry to the client's satisfaction. You could base a question on these challenges. For example:

Client Services Officers often deal with clients who are not satisfied with the outcome of their enquiry. Could you tell us about a time when you dealt with a dissatisfied client?

It is important to avoid making questions too specific; asking about situations they may not have encountered or that is unique to your work environment. Your questions should allow all candidates to demonstrate relevant experience that is transferable to the role you are filling. Here is an example of taking a narrow question and making it applicable to a broader audience, while still assessing the capability (in this case *Act with Integrity*):

Narrow question	Replacement question
Tell me about a time when you were involved in a procurement process and an external service provider asked you for preferential treatment.	Tell me about a time when you were asked to do something that went against policy or that you believed was not right.

Finally, if a question doesn't relate to the role, don't ask it. See: Australian Human Rights Commission: Questions in job interviews.

4. Probing questions

Probing questions are useful for:

- Drawing out more information – e.g. what was the situation? Can you give an example? What was your role?
- Examining a candidate's level of self-awareness and commitment to personal growth – e.g. What did you learn from this situation? What would you do differently if faced with a similar situation?

Preparing probing questions in advance allows assessors to be consistent in seeking further information from all candidates.

5. Set standards for rating responses

It is a good idea to set the standards for rating responses when designing your questions. By listing the main points you want candidates to cover you can score responses using a standard rating scale.

Example – Act with integrity (Adept)

The following question is assessing the *Act with integrity* capability at the adept level:

"Give an example of a time when you identified and explained ethical issues to your team/unit?"

Some of the points you could look for candidates to address include:

- The nature of the issue (does the situation reflect an appropriate level of seriousness or complexity given the seniority of the role)
- How did they identify the issue (e.g. did they rely on judgment, experience, knowledge of the code of ethics?)
- How did they approach the team conversation (e.g. did they do it in an appropriate way e.g. in a structured way during a team meeting or in a negative way e.g. by criticising one team member in front of others)

- What was the result (e.g. did they make sure everyone understood the message? Was there a change in behaviour because of the discussion?).

3.3.10 Assessment matrix

CAPABILITY GROUP	CAPABILITIES	Level	Assessment 1 (Cognitive ability)	Assessment 2 (Group activity)	Assessment 3 (Work sample)	Assessment 4 (Interview)
Personal attributes	Display Resilience and Courage *	Intermediate	✓		✓	
Personal attributes	Act with Integrity	Foundational		✓		
Personal attributes	Manage Self	Foundational				
Personal attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Foundational				✓
Relationships	Communicate Effectively *	etc.				
Relationships	Commit to Customer Service *					
Relationships	Work Collaboratively					
Relationships	Influence and Negotiate					
Results	Deliver Results					
Results	Plan and Prioritise *					
Results	Think and Solve Problems					
Results	Demonstrate Accountability					
Business enablers	Finance					
Business enablers	Technology					
Business enablers	Procurement & Contract Management					

CAPABILITY GROUP	CAPABILITIES	Level	Assessment 1 (Cognitive ability)	Assessment 2 (Group activity)	Assessment 3 (Work sample)	Assessment 4 (Interview)
Business enablers	Project Management					
People management	Manage and Develop People					
People management	Inspire Direction and Purpose *					
People management	Optimise Business Outcomes					
People management	Manage Reform and Change					

3.3.11 Capabilities commonly assessed using work sample exercises

Some capabilities are generally suited to being assessed in different types of work sample exercises.

The following examples show these capabilities and why they are suited to the different work sample activities, including:

- group exercise
- role play
- case study
- in-tray exercise
- written exercise.

Decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

3.3.11.1 Group exercises

Assessment of the following capabilities is particularly suited to most group exercises:

- Communicate effectively – candidates need to demonstrate verbal communication skills as part of a group situation including speaking, listening and articulating ideas. Behaviours that you may be looking for include speaking clearly and explaining ideas to the group in a logical way, listening to others and developing their ideas, seeking feedback and encouraging group members to contribute.
- Work collaboratively – group activities often involve collaboration between group members to reach an outcome. Behaviours that relate to this include actively participating as a member of the group towards a shared objective, being confident in sharing ideas and information and building cooperation within the group.
- Think and solve problems – group activities are usually based on the idea of solving a problem. Behaviours that you may be looking for include candidates' effectiveness in analysing the information provided and making recommendations based on this, generating ideas, identifying and addressing potential problems and thinking creatively or innovatively.
- Display resilience and courage – in the group context, candidates need to be prepared to think on their feet and put ideas forward without necessarily having had a lot of time to prepare. Behaviours that you may be looking for may include staying calm under pressure or when their ideas are challenged, listening to feedback from others, standing firm on their position when they think it is right.
- Value diversity and inclusion - given that group activities often involve people who don't know each other and can include a mix of people from different backgrounds (e.g. cultural, educational, work experience), there is an opportunity to assess the level of respect shown amid these differences. The behaviours you are looking for may include candidates' openness to encouraging input from others, and willingness to listen and consider different viewpoints.
- Influence and negotiate - the group dynamic lends itself to resolving issues and conflicts and building consensus. Some of the behaviours that you may be looking for include: the ability of candidates to support their position based on facts, knowledge and experience, influencing others and identifying key stakeholders, and considering avenues for engagement.

Note that decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

3.3.11.2 Role play

Assessment of the following capabilities is particularly suited to most role play activities:

- Act with integrity – in role plays, candidates will have an opportunity to demonstrate their ethical and professional values in representing the organisation in their fictitious role. Behaviours that can be assessed include showing an understanding of ethical obligations, identifying or speaking out about misconduct, illegal and inappropriate behaviour, professionalism in presenting their viewpoint as a representative of the organisation (even when they have a different viewpoint)
- Communicate effectively – candidates need to demonstrate a range of communication types in the role play situation including speaking, listening to the role player and tailoring communication depending on the focus of the role play (e.g. may be different for a face-to-face customer role play compared with providing coaching to a team member). Behaviours shown may include speaking clearly and explaining ideas so they are understood by the role player, being aware of their own and the role players' verbal cues and adjusting their communication style to suit the audience
- Commit to customer service – role plays are a good way of assessing candidates' commitment to customer service. This can either be for the delivery of frontline services or for dealing with customers internal to the organisation or sector. The behaviours shown in role plays may include: the delivery of high-quality customer service through effective communication and problem solving, negotiation with customers and stakeholders on the delivery of services and working cooperatively to identify and resolve issues
- Influence and negotiate – in a role play the objective is to reach an outcome in an effective way. Whether dealing with a difficult customer, responding to an enquiry or managing a day-to-day work situation, role plays test candidates' ability to resolve issues and conflicts. Some of the behaviours that may be shown are candidates' effectiveness in reaching an outcome, influencing others based on sound arguments and gaining agreement.
- Demonstrate accountability – in their fictitious role (as in the workplace) candidates need to take responsibility for their actions and adhere to relevant legislation and policy. Behaviours shown in role plays may include demonstrating awareness of relevant legislation, rules, policies etc. and seeking clarification when uncertain, showing awareness of limits of authority and asking others when in doubt, being proactive in identifying, mitigating and managing risks.

Role plays can be designed to focus on people management capabilities when these are needed for the role. Capabilities that are usefully assessed in these circumstances include:

- Manage and develop people – role plays designed with people management in mind are good for assessing candidates' ability to engage and motivate staff and to develop capability and potential in others. Some behaviours that you may be looking for include defining and clearly communicating roles and responsibilities within a team or to a team members, coaching or mentoring staff and providing performance-related feedback
- Inspire direction and purpose – this capability relates to the communication of goals, priorities and vision and the recognition of achievements. Behaviours you may be looking for in a customised role play may include recognising individual and team performance, promoting understanding of organisational priorities and business objectives, and providing direction on achieving goals at the team level.

Note that decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

For example, the Value diversity and inclusion capability can be assessed in a customised role play. In assessing this capability, you may look for behaviours including seeking out others' opinions and views and observing how the candidate adapts to individual differences and working styles.

3.3.11.3 Case study

Assessment of the following capabilities is particularly suited to most case study activities:

- Communicate effectively – case study activities allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to communicate ideas or information in a clear, succinct and persuasive way. They can be based on either written or verbal communication skills depending on how the findings are presented. Behaviours you are looking for may include communicating in plain language and tailoring communications to the audience, analysing and interpreting information and communicating this in the format required (verbal or written) and using written or verbal communication clearly, logical and persuasive
- Deliver results – there is potential for case studies, particularly for senior roles, to draw out the capability of achieving results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes. Behaviours that you may be looking for include encouraging or creating a culture of achievement where effective budgeting and achieving outcomes are highly valued, progressing organisational outcomes and using resources effectively
- Plan and prioritise – case study activities can be used to assess candidates' approach to planning to achieve outcomes while dealing flexibly with changing circumstances. Behaviours that you may be looking for include planning business goals and thinking about contingency provisions, having plans in place to monitor progress of initiatives while considering the need to adjust, and evaluating achievements
- Think and solve problems – being able to think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions is a key part of case study activities. Behaviours that you may be looking for include analysing information and drawing conclusions based on the evidence available, exploring possibilities or opportunities and weighing up alternatives, and taking account of the business context when choosing options

Case study activities can be designed to focus on people management capabilities when these are needed for the role. Capabilities that are usefully assessed in these circumstances include:

- Optimise business outcomes – case study activities designed with people management in mind are good for assessing candidates' ability to manage resources effectively and apply sound workforce planning principles. Behaviours that you may be looking for include developing workforce plans that are aligned with organisational outcomes and planning workforce needs to achieve these outcomes.

Note that decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

For example, the Value diversity and inclusion capability can be used in case studies to assess candidates' initiative in seeking out stakeholder views and opinions and considering these views and the impact on their work. Behaviours you are looking for may include development of project plans that involve stakeholder consultation, approaches to dealing with differing stakeholder

3.3.11.4 In-tray exercises

Assessment of the following capabilities is particularly suited to most in-tray exercises:

- Communicate effectively – in-tray exercises allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to examine information and to take action to complete the required tasks. This may involve communicating with others in response to requests, to get something done or to diffuse a situation. Behaviours you are looking for may include communicating in plain language and tailoring communications to the audience, analysing and interpreting information and communicating this in the format required (written or verbal), using an appropriate structure for the written or verbal response that is clear and easy to follow.
- Plan and prioritise – a central part of in-tray exercises is for candidates to plan and prioritise so that they can manage a range of different tasks to achieve the required outcomes. Behaviours

you may be looking for through in-tray exercises may include taking a planned approach to sorting through information and setting clear priorities, taking appropriate action to respond to or escalate issues requiring immediate attention and understanding broader context of organisational goals when priorities own and others' work.

- Think and solve problems – in resolving the issues presented through in-tray exercises candidates need to think and examine the information they are given and develop practical solutions by either responding or assigning to someone else. Behaviours you are looking for may include identifying issues and potential problems and choosing an appropriate solution, thinking about different options for resolving the problem(s) and considering the impact of the chosen approach.

Note that decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

3.3.11.5 Written exercises

Assessment of the following capabilities is particularly suited to most written exercises:

- Communicate effectively – written activities are highly focused on the ability to write clearly, succinctly and present well-structured information in an appropriate format. Behaviours you may be looking for include communicating in plain language and tailoring communications to the audience, analysing and interpreting information and communicating this in writing and structuring the response clearly and easy to follow
- Plan and prioritise – planning and prioritising may be part of the written exercise in the way candidates present solutions or objectives going forward, particularly when preparing a position paper or a response to a business problem. Behaviours you are looking for may include supporting solutions with realistic timeframes, prioritising recommendations in a logical way and incorporating criteria for evaluating outcomes
- Think and solve problems – written exercises usually involve developing a position or resolving a problem with candidates needing to show how they think and analyse the issue to develop practical solutions. Behaviours you are looking for may include identifying issues and potential problems and interrelationships, thinking about different options for resolving issues and considering the impact of the chosen approach, including in relation to the wider business context.

Note that decisions about the content of the activity should be based on the capabilities to be assessed. There may be additional capabilities that can be covered or some that are listed which may not apply in certain circumstances. In addition, the example of behaviours that you may be looking for should be contextualised to the role and agency setting.

3.3.11.6 Matrix for capabilities commonly assessed using work sample exercises

CAPABILITY GROUP	CAPABILITIES	Group exercise	Role play	Case study	In-tray exercise	Written exercise	Technical skills assessment
Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	✓					
Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity		✓				
Personal Attributes	Manage Self						
Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	✓					
Relationships	Communicate Effectively	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Relationships	Commit to Customer Service		✓				
Relationships	Work Collaboratively	✓					
Relationships	Influence and Negotiate	✓	✓				
Results	Deliver Results			✓			
Results	Plan and Prioritise			✓	✓	✓	
Results	Think and Solve Problems	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Results	Demonstrate Accountability		✓				
Business Enablers	Finance						✓
Business Enablers	Technology						✓
Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management						✓

CAPABILITY GROUP	CAPABILITIES	Group exercise	Role play	Case study	In-tray exercise	Written exercise	Technical skills assessment
Business Enablers	Project Management						
People Management	Manage and Develop People		✓				
People Management	Inspire Direction and Purpose		✓				
People Management	Optimise Business Outcomes			✓			
People Management	Manage Reform and Change						
Occupation specific	Refer to relevant capability set						✓

3.3.12 Assessment centre fact sheet

An assessment centre is a process where several candidates (usually 8 to 12) rotate through a few assessment activities in one session (e.g. interview, written activity, group activity). The process can be run in-house by agencies or by engaging recruitment consultants.

Assessment centre processes are structured in their design, application and procedures and should be facilitated by trained assessors who help ensure objectivity and consistency in the process.

Assessment centres are used after the initial pre-screening stage.

The assessment centre approach is useful for high volume recruitment campaigns, to facilitate the establishment of talent pools or where there are many candidates.

A typical assessment centre incorporates a range of structured assessment activities where a candidate's performance is observed and rated by several assessors. This approach also allows for multiple capabilities to be assessed using different methods.

3.4 Setting the assessment standards and rating approach

Setting clear standards and a consistent rating approach lead to a reliable assessment process and fair and defensible selection decisions.

3.4.1 Standards for assessment

It is good practice to be clear upfront on the standards you will use to determine whether candidates meet the requirements of a role.

The role description and job advertisement help to inform the standards you need for assessing capabilities, knowledge and experience.

3.4.1.1 Assessing capabilities

The role description shows the level required for each capability (from foundational to highly advanced). In the recruitment context, you need to assess candidates against the capability levels in the role description.

In the *NSW public sector capability framework* each capability is supported by behavioural indicators at the different levels. These are indicative behaviours allowing scope for agencies to contextualise them according to the role and agency setting.

3.4.1.2 Assessing knowledge and experience

Knowledge and experience need to be assessed when they are included in the role description as they form part of the standards for the role. The Role Description Development Guideline contains advice about when to include knowledge and experience in role descriptions.

The assessment does not need to be separate from the assessment of capabilities as knowledge and experience as these are often demonstrated along with the capabilities. You can design your assessments in a way that draws this information out. For example, an Executive Assistant role may have an experience requirement to 'provide wide-ranging support to a senior leader' (i.e. CEO or head of an agency). You could design your

interview questions, for example, to allow candidates to explain their experience in one or more questions.

Make sure you set clear standards for knowledge and experience so you can record your findings against these when consolidating results

To determine standards for assessing either subject matter or functional knowledge and experience, consider the depth, breadth and context needed for the role. Then decide how this should be demonstrated through the assessment.

For a legal role, the level of complexity of cases previously managed and breadth of legal practice may determine or inform your standards.

3.4.1.3 Assessing essential requirements

Essential requirements are usually yes/no answers. You can often ask whether candidates meet the essential requirement in the application form. Responses of successful candidates should be validated at some stage during the recruitment and selection process, often through pre-employment checks.

3.4.1.4 Assessing other attributes

Other attributes that can be assessed include motivation to do the particular type of work (e.g. child support worker), to work in your organisation or the NSW public sector more generally, or willingness to undertake certain requirements of the role such as travel. It is up to you to decide the standards, but this should be based on the role context and needs of the organisation.

3.4.2 Using rating scales and benchmarks

A rating scale or benchmark is used to evaluate candidates' responses and behaviours in assessment activities.

A systematic approach to assessing candidates involves:

- applying the same approach to all candidates
- all assessors using the same approach
- applying the method consistently.

Rating scales or benchmarks should be used to evaluate the capabilities or other essential requirements being assessed, not skill on the assessment itself (e.g. interview technique).

The consistent use of a standardised rating scale:

- allows for comparison between the ratings of different assessors
- enables meaningful comparisons between candidates
- supports the integration of assessment results for each candidate at the end of the process.

Rating scales and benchmarks allow you to determine which candidates meet the standards for the role. Once you have identified those candidates, you need to decide who is well suited to the role requirements. This may not necessarily be the person who scored the highest rating.

3.4.2.1 Rating approaches

Different rating scales and benchmarks are suited to different situations or stages in a process. The following table shows the different rating approaches to consider depending on the expected number of candidates.

	Benchmark (met / not met)	3-point rating scale	5-point rating scale
Low-volume recruitment (e.g. for a single role)	✓	✓	
High-volume recruitment (e.g. bulk recruitment, graduate intake, establish a talent pool)		✓	✓

3.4.2.1.1 Rating scales

A rating scale allows for differentiation between candidates when there could be a few candidates who meet the standard required. Descriptive rating scales generally result in more consistent scores between assessors and help to minimise subjective biases because all assessors understand what they are looking for. Descriptions can be kept broad to reflect general performance against each capability.

While rating scales help to differentiate between candidates, you also need to consider other factors such as motivation and fit for the role when making your selection decision. Your aim is to find the person who meets the standards and is well suited to the role requirements, not necessarily the highest scorer.

3.4.2.1.2 Benchmark approach

A benchmark approach (e.g. met / not met) is useful when it is less important to make fine distinctions between candidates, for example if you receive few applications.

3.4.2.1.3 Combining approaches

You may also consider combining approaches by using benchmarking during pre-screening and a rating scale for the capability-based assessments.

3.4.2.1.4 Example of mixed model for Customer Service Representative

Svetlana decides to use the benchmark approach to assess two targeted questions in applications for the nine Customer Service Representative roles she is recruiting for. This allows for the initial selecting out of those candidates that do not meet the focus capabilities addressed in the targeted questions.

For the capability-based assessments (in this case, a cognitive ability test, group exercise, role-play and behavioural interview) Svetlana will use a 5-point rating scale. This will help her to make finer distinctions between the remaining candidates and to progressively reduce the candidate pool to a more manageable size.

3.4.3 Cognitive ability tests

3.4.3.1 Setting cut offs and ranges

Cognitive ability tests are scored and interpreted by qualified professionals. The score is the raw number of correct answers. To give meaning to the score, test results are compared to an appropriate comparison group who have completed the test.

You can either consult your in-house experts or seek advice from suppliers on the Talent Acquisition Scheme.

3.4.3.2 Comparison or 'norm' group

The comparison group should be chosen based on the requirements for the role.

Comparison groups are often available by country (e.g. Australian adults), sector (e.g. public sector), industry (e.g. engineers, science and technology) or role level (e.g. manager and professional).

It is important to consider the appropriate comparison group each time you use a test to ensure your benchmark is set appropriately.

3.4.3.3 Applying rating scales to cognitive ability test results

Your rating scale can be applied to cognitive test results to help integrate them with other assessment results.

This table shows an example where a hiring manager is assessing the *Think and Solve Problems* capability using a cognitive ability test. The candidate's raw score is 28. In relation to the comparison group, her score is in the 86th percentile. Using either the 5-point or 3-point rating scale, she achieves 4 or 'exceeds' on *Think and Solve Problems*.

Cognitive score ranges	Percentiles	5-point rating	3-point rating
Well above average	91-99	5	Exceeds
Above average	71-90	4	Exceeds
Average	31-70	3	Meets
Below average	11-30	2	Development required
Well below average	1-10	1	Development required

3.4.4 Descriptive rating scales

Where rating scales are used you need to be clear about what each point on the scale means. By having a description of the defining features for each rating point assessors are more likely to assess performance in a consistent and standardised way.

You can also tailor your rating scale for each assessment. See: Google's sample interview grading rubric for an example.

3.4.4.1 5-point rating scale

In this example, a candidate's performance would need to be rated at 3 or higher to be assessed as meeting the capability requirements.

Example: 5-point rating scale

Rating	Definition	Description
5	Very likely to be a strength	All behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate provided an excellent response demonstrating consistent application of capability at this level and could mentor others.
4	Likely to be strength	Most behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate provided a thorough response which clearly demonstrated capability at this level.
3	Meets requirements	A satisfactory number of behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate provided a satisfactory response which met the pre-established standards for this capability.
2	Development required	Few behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate would require development on this capability.
1	Significant development required	None of the behavioural indicators were seen, or negative behaviours were seen. The candidate was unable to demonstrate competence in the capability at this level. The candidate would require significant development.

3.4.4.2 3-point rating scale

In this example, a candidate's performance would need to be rated at 2 or higher to be assessed as meeting the capability requirements.

Example: 3-point rating scale

Rating	Definition	Description
3	Exceeds requirements	All behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate provided an excellent response demonstrating consistent application of capability at this level and could mentor others.
2	Meets requirements	A satisfactory number of behavioural indicators were seen. The candidate provided a satisfactory response which met the pre-established standards for this capability.
1	Development required	Few of the behavioural indicators were seen, or negative behaviours were seen. The candidate would require development on this capability.

4 Attracting candidates

Shift your thinking from what you want from candidates to what you have to offer to attract interest from job seekers.

In this section, you will find guides on:

- attracting and encouraging applications
- how to write job adverts.

4.1 Attracting and encouraging applications

An effective attraction approach is one that encourages all suitable candidates to apply.

4.1.1 Legal requirements

Advertising requirements depend on the kind of employment being offered:

- GSE Rule 20 sets out the advertising requirements for ongoing employment,
- GSE Rule 21 and GSE Rule 22 for temporary and term employment

NSW Public Service agencies must advertise on the *I work for NSW* public website to meet the legal requirement for external advertising.

4.1.2 Introduction to attracting and encouraging applications

Attracting interest from job seekers requires you to shift your thinking from what you want from candidates (i.e. requirements of the role) to what you have to offer prospective candidates.

Use the role analysis and role description as key reference tools but also think more broadly to:

- identify your target audience
- write an effective job ad
- opportunities for attracting the widest pool of candidates using various channels

what you can offer the candidate.

A key principle in designing your attraction approach is to encourage all suitable candidates to apply. This means thinking about the content and language you use in the job advertisement so you do not inadvertently discourage people who could perform the role from applying.

4.1.2.1 Identifying the target audience

The key principle here is quality over quantity – you want to attract people that are interested in the role and likely to be suited to the role requirements (including with a workplace adjustment). You need to think about what appeals to your target audience and effective communication channels to attract them to apply.

If you have essential requirements in your role description these will help you to identify the distinctive features of the role that can be used to attract suitable candidates. Here are some examples:

Essential requirement	Type of role	Target group
Aboriginality as a job requirement	Aboriginal identified role	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
Completion of a law degree and admission or eligibility for admission as a legal practitioner in NSW	Legal Officer role	Qualified solicitors
Completed undergraduate degree or postgraduate degree in the last two years	Policy Graduate	Recent university graduates
Experience in providing high level executive support and administrative services	Executive Assistant to CEO	People with experience in providing administrative or secretarial services at executive level

Think about how you can attract candidates from diverse backgrounds who could bring different skills, experiences and perspectives. Consider your agencies' goals, values, vision and culture and how these could help to attract the right candidates. Also think about highlighting opportunities for flexible working to make the opportunity attractive to a broader range of candidates.

Once you have identified your target audience you can work on advertising and marketing to encourage these candidates to apply.

4.1.2.2 Designing the job ad

An effective job advertisement ('job ad') is one that accurately represents the job opportunity. It should be clear and concise and written in plain English using inclusive and non-discriminatory language.

There is a clear distinction between the role description and the job ad. The role description has important information about role requirements and the outcomes to be achieved. The job ad is about why suitable candidates should apply for the role. The job ad needs to emphasise:

- key features of the role
- organisational context
- benefits of employment
- any essential requirements.

The job ad is also an opportunity to inform candidates the application and assessment processes. Letting candidates know if you will be applying the minimum standard of assessing focus capabilities, knowledge and experience or will also be assessing complementary capabilities will help candidates tailor their application and prepare for assessment tasks.

4.1.2.3 Advertising the role

You must advertise on the I work for NSW public website for any employment decision requiring external advertising.

I work for NSW also has a separate website for agencies to advertise an expression of interest to meet the requirement for advertising across the Public Service. You can also use your agency's intranet to notify internal candidates of a vacancy, in addition to meeting the advertising requirement.

For roles with strong supply or roles that are common across the sector, advertising on I work for NSW may be sufficient to attract a suitable pool of candidates.

You can also use other jobs boards in addition *to I work for NSW*. Refer to the Media Agency Services Contract and government advertising policy for information about suppliers for recruitment advertising.

4.1.3 Additional resources for attracting and encouraging applications

- Australian Human Rights Commission – A step-by-step guide to preventing discrimination in recruitment (Part 4 - Advertising the job)
- NSW DPC's Behavioural Insights Unit – Behavioural approaches to increasing workforce diversity

4.2 How to write job ads

In effect, job ads are the organisation's CV or cover letter that we share with job seekers. Job ads are often the first opportunity job seekers have to form an impression of us and may be enough to successfully engage a candidate or completely deter them from applying.

Just as we would expect candidates to carefully craft their resume or CV, writing an effective job ad also requires thought and preparation. We believe that investing time in job ads will pay off by attracting high-calibre candidates who are interested in, understand and are suited to the role.

Follow these steps when creating a job ad:

- describe the opportunity
- engage and interest prospective candidates
- edit and review
- resources

4.2.1 Step 1: Describe the opportunity

4.2.1.1 Job title and key information

Accurately describing the role starts with entering correct information into your requisition. The job title and table of key information displayed at the top of job ads on I work for NSW is prefilled from the requisition. Filling out these fields correctly will ensure the key information is right in the job ad.

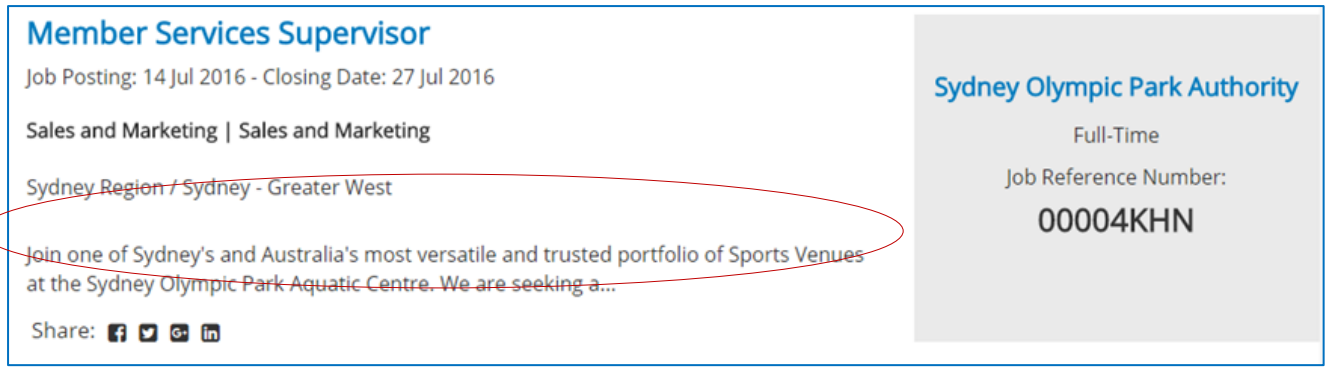
Completing the 'external description' field

Getting this section of the job ad right is crucial. Candidates want to know whether they can picture themselves in the role, so ensure that this section provides a realistic and engaging preview of the role and the requirements of the job.

4.2.1.2 Introduction

When writing the job description note that the first 20 words (approximately) show as the 'teaser text' in the job list when job seekers search or browse for jobs.

You can use this as a tool to grab the attention of job seekers and entice them to read more about the role. Do this by writing an engaging introductory sentence or 2-3 short bullet points (noting that formatting will be removed for the teaser text only). Here is a good example from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority:



Your goal: To write positive and persuasive short paragraph or dot points (50–100 words maximum) describing the type of person most suited to the role, and the job's main benefits.

Desired job seeker reaction: "That sounds like me. Tell me more"

4.2.1.3 About us

When a candidate applies, they are not just applying for a job; they are applying to be a part of a team, an agency and the NSW public sector. From reading a job ad, we want them to gain a positive sense of the organisation's mission, its culture and personality. The Sydney Opera House has written a good 'about us' section:

ABOUT THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

The Sydney Opera House embodies beauty, inspiration and the liberating power of art and ideas. It is a masterpiece that belongs to all Australians. Our mission is two-fold:

- We will treasure and renew the Opera House for future generations of artists, audiences and visitors.
- Everything we do will engage and inspire people through its excellence, ambition and breadth. We will strengthen our central role in Australia's life and identity.

For more information about the Sydney Opera House please refer to our website.

4.2.1.4 About the role

Tell job seekers exactly what the job involves, including the challenges, responsibilities, reporting lines. Don't rewrite the whole role description here but give an overview of what is required focusing on the parts of the role that are necessary from day one.

You do not need to include everything in the job ad. Providing links to additional information (e.g. role description, agency website, FAQs) is a good way of keeping the main message short and succinct.

Clearly state any essential requirements that you will use for screening.

4.2.1.5 What we can offer you

One of the primary aims of a job ad is to persuade the best and the brightest to apply for a job with us. In this section of the job ad we need to make it clear to candidates 'what's in it for them' and communicate some of the reasons why they should work for NSW (more about this in section 2). NSW Ambulance has answered the 'what's in it for them' question in their Communications Assistant ad:

What we can offer you:

- The base salary range for the Communications Assistant position is $53,310.85.
- Superannuation, annual leave loading and shift allowances
- Payment of salary during induction and training period (7 weeks)
- 5 weeks annual leave per year of service
- Generous salary packaging options and other fringe benefits
- Flexible working
- Opportunities for learning and development and Internal career progression

Tip on including flexible working in the job ad

Being specific about flexible working options can help to attract more applications. For example:

'Our agency believes in all roles flex, provided service delivery is maintained or improved. We believe this role can be done flexibly through:

- Adjusting start and finish times
- Working remotely
- Job share
- Part-time

Consider what form of flexibility might work for you and let us know at the job offer stage.

4.2.1.6 How to apply

In this section, let candidates know what they need to do to apply -you will have decided this in the early stages of the recruitment process.

Include any targeted questions from the application form in the job ad. This can help job seekers decide if they will apply for the role. It also allows them to draft their response without having to click through the application form.

It is good practice to inform candidates about the expected timeframe for the application process. This will help candidates to plan and identify any adjustments they may need, which may be particularly important for attracting candidates with disability.

In addition, provide information about what you will be assessing (e.g. focus capabilities, knowledge and experience) and assessments being used in the recruitment process and if you are using a particular test, you may also want to say why it is being used.

4.2.1.7 Find out more

Include a link to the role description and to your organisation's website and feature the details of a person (phone number and email address) that candidates can contact to find out about the role. Make sure the person is:

- Knowledgeable about the role, capabilities, standards and other attributes required of suitable candidates
- Readily available to answer enquiries during normal working hours
- Receptive to enquiries from all sections of the community
- Proactive in communicating information about workplace adjustments that can be made in the recruitment process.

Make sure you provide more than one way of contacting them e.g. phone and email to ensure this important function is accessible to all candidates.

4.2.1.8 Commitment to diversity and inclusion

To attract a diverse field of candidates your agency may routinely include a statement of commitment to diversity. Here is an example:

The NSW Government values diversity and is a proud employer of a diverse range of people. We are committed to reflecting the community we serve and creating an inclusive workplace for all people, where everyone feels valued. We encourage Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with disability to apply for employment with the NSW Government.

4.2.2 Step 2: Engage and interest perspective candidates

4.2.2.1 Highlight the benefits and reasons to work for NSW

Be specific:

In everything you write, remember that “specifics sell”. Giving details about your claims boosts your persuasiveness and credibility; omitting them can mean readers doubt what you say. Here’s what we mean:

Specific description	Generic description
Lead a team of over 70 people	Lead a large team
Report to the CEO and Board	Report to senior management

You can see in these examples that the specific information is far more helpful than generic in helping job seekers understand what is involved in the role.

Tell them what they’ll gain and contribute towards:

- Before: Provide occupational therapy to people with an intellectual disability
- After: Give help where it counts – improve life quality for people with an intellectual disability whilst growing your career

Use our employer brand messages:

The NSW Government’s Employee Value Proposition encourages people to come and work for us. As part of this, we regularly communicate 6 key reasons to work for NSW. You can select one or several reasons and adapt them according to the needs of your job ad and your agency.

1. Make a contribution

- Working for NSW is about more than just a job. It’s about the people we serve. It’s about building the future of our great State.

2. Join a workforce that values diversity

- The strength of our workforce lies in its diversity. We are building a workforce that is reflective of the community we serve and creating an inclusive workplace, where every person feels valued and can contribute.

3. Explore new opportunities

- As Australia's largest employer, working for NSW open up unparalleled career choice through the scope and scale of roles, projects and diversity of our people.

4. Be part of something bigger

- Working for NSW means belonging to a network of clever, capable professionals who are thinking about and responding to the changing needs of our community.

5. Grow your career

- Continual learning and development is a key part of enjoying what you do and moving forward in your career. We want you to be engaged and motivated in your role and that's why we're putting the necessary systems and processes in place to enhance workforce mobility.

6. Make time for what counts

- We recognise our employees bring a diverse range of life experiences and responsibilities that also contributes to their expertise. We have a policy of supporting flexible working for managing these responsibilities, provided it maintains or improves service delivery. Talk to us about the flexibility you may need.

4.2.2.2 Ensure it is written and presented to a high standard

Candidates respond to adverts they understand, believe and feel included in. There are many ways to achieve this.

Be concise

Use short, simple sentences or dot points and remove repetition.

Speak in the first person

Using the first person e.g. saying 'you' instead of the third person e.g. 'the successful candidate' allows us to build a rapport with prospective candidates instead of appearing cold and detached.

Use plain English

Write how you would speak and use language that is easy to understand. If someone has to read a job ad several times to understand it, they probably won't apply or, if they do apply, they may not understand what they have applied for.

Organisational jargon and acronyms can be like an 'in-joke' if you are an outside, so make sure any organisational terms are explained or avoid using them altogether.

Be empowering

Consider including rhetorical questions at the beginning or end of the job ad that will help candidates imagine what it's like to do the role, for example: would you enjoy working in a team to improve the health of our rivers and wetlands?

We want people to feel excited and motivated about working for NSW. Speak in an active voice and use words such as drive, manage, own, create, build, accomplish.

Format the ad

Ensure the fonts, sizes, colours, etc in your ad are consistent with the style used on *I work for NSW*. This makes it easier for people to recognise the branding and compare one job with another.

Add subheadings to help readers scan your ad and jump to the bits that interest them most

Without enough white space, your ad will look cramped and be hard work to read. Break up any dense blocks of text with paragraphs, bullet lists, or subheadings.

Avoid using ALL CAPITALS – change to upper and lower case. Not only are 'all caps' hard to read, but they're perceived as shouting. Also, check you only capitalise proper nouns – e.g. "project manager" is a noun; "Sydney" is a proper noun.

Be inclusive and non-discriminatory

Allow flexible formats

Provide more than one way to respond to, and access, job information.

Ask for the same information from all candidates. It is discriminatory to require candidates with disability to provide information which other candidates are not required to provide, unless the information is required to determine the candidate's ability to perform the inherent requirements of the role.

Word job ads carefully. Research shows language in job ads can impact who decides to apply. The Behavioural Insights Unit's guide on Applying behavioural insights to drive public sector diversity provides useful suggestions on how to use behavioural insights to attract a diverse range of candidates.

4.2.3 Step 3: Edit and review

Just as we would expect candidates to proofread their resume and application, it is fundamental that you allow time to review each job ad before it is posted on *I work for NSW*. Errors in details and inconsistencies in how job adverts are structured and presented will deter talented candidates. During the editing and review process, ask the following questions:

- Are all the details in the ad correct?
- Is anything misleading?
- Could we phrase anything more succinctly?
- Is the job ad engaging?
- Will it attract a wide, diverse pool of talent?
- Have we run a spelling and grammar check?
- Has a colleague read and provided feedback? Can you ask a colleague outside your agency to check your ad?
- Is it formatted correctly?

Before you upload your ad to the *I work for NSW* live site, check how it looks on the *I work for NSW* testing site. Once you've proofread it on there you can upload it to the live site – but even then, check it again in case something has changed. You must be sure that what jobseekers see is what you intended. Once you're happy with the ad, THEN you can post it to external job boards like Seek, CareerOne, etc, if you want to. But double-check that it looks as good as it can on their sites, too!

4.2.4 Additional resources on how to write a job ad

- Job Access – Advertising your vacancy
- Australian Human Rights Commission: Job advertisements

5 Assessing candidates

Assess candidates using multiple assessments to provide a solid evidence base for your selection decision.

In this section, you will find guides on:

- Pre-screening, including:
    - Reviewing the resume and application, and
    - Developing a shortlist
- Administering and scoring assessments, including:
    - A practical guide to interviewing
    - A guide on administering and scoring work sample exercises
    - A guide on administering and scoring psychometrics assessments
- Consolidating results and making selection decisions.

5.1 Pre-screening

Application pre-screening is about identifying the candidates who are most likely meet the requirements for the role.

5.1.1 Legal requirements

Comparative assessment (GSE rule 17) and suitability assessment (GSE rule 18) require screening for essential requirements and a resume review. A comparative assessment also requires reviewing an application and resume. GSE rule 26 allows for amendment to these processes to facilitate the employment of eligible persons from designated groups.

Section 54 of the GSE Act sets out conditions of engagement that employees may be subject to. Requirements relating to these conditions are defined in the GSE Rules as follows:

- probation periods (GSE rule 5)
- citizenship or residency (GSE rule 6)
- formal qualifications (GSE rule 7)
- security and other clearances (GSE rule 8)
- health assessment (GSE rule 9).

5.1.2 About pre-screening

Application pre-screening is the first stage of the assessment process and is done once the advertising period closes. The aim is to shortlist candidates who meet the essential requirements and are likely to have the knowledge and experience or capabilities being considered at this stage.

Some or all these elements may have been included in your application form and will be the basis for deciding whether to shortlist candidates:

- responses to questions on essential requirements (optional, but recommended)

- a resume (required)
- a cover letter (optional)
- responses to up to two targeted questions (optional).

There are also times when pre-screening includes another form of assessment such as a phone screen interview or a cognitive ability test. See guidance on assessing candidates in these situations.

Minimum standards are needed so that each assessor evaluates applications in a consistent way. A simple benchmark approach of 'met' or 'not met' is a good option in the pre-screening stage. For more differentiation you could choose a 3- or 5-point rating scale. See guidance on rating scales.

5.1.3 Reviewing responses to pre-screening questions

The first step is to screen out candidates who do not meet essential requirements such as holding a qualification, having the right to work in Australia, or identifying as Aboriginal for an Aboriginal identified role.

You can do this using gross negative disqualifiers (or disqualification questions) in your organisation's recruitment system (e.g. Taleo). Alternatively, you can create your own questions in the application form.

5.1.3.1 Gross negative disqualifiers

Gross negative disqualifiers (or disqualification questions) are built into the application form to allow candidates to self-select out. Candidates who do not meet the requirements cannot complete their application.

You may need to confirm that candidates meet an essential requirement at a later stage if the requirement is a condition of engagement. For example, you may need to verify that the successful candidate does in fact have the right to work in Australia. To minimise the potential for discrimination based on age or other irrelevant considerations, screening checks, including service checks, police checks and qualification checks, should be done after a verbal offer is accepted.

5.1.3.2 Application questions

You can also include questions in the application form (see: Designing the application form) to help screen out candidates who do not meet essential requirements for the role. These questions may include targeted questions.

5.1.4 Reviewing the resume and application

A structured approach helps to quickly and effectively review resumes and applications.

In this context, 'application' refers to the cover letter or responses to targeted questions (depending on what you have asked for).

Before you start, review the role description and job ad, highlight the essential requirements and focus capabilities, and familiarise yourself with the targeted questions (if applicable) so you know what you are looking for.

5.1.4.1 Choosing your approach

There are different ways to approach your review.

One option is to review the resume and application at the same time. This lets you use the full set of information to determine if the candidate meets the essential requirements and is likely to have the capabilities, knowledge and experience required.

Another option is to start with a review of the targeted questions, evaluating multiple, de-identified responses side-by-side. This approach can decrease the likelihood of biases.

You could also do this with the resume if you have asked candidates to fill out the I work for NSW application form rather than attaching a resume as a separate document. You can then easily compare the different parts of resumes at the same time for multiple candidates (e.g. education first, then job experience). You will then need to review the applications.

5.1.4.2 Gathering evidence

When reviewing resumes and applications, you are gathering evidence to help you decide whether candidates are likely to have the capabilities, knowledge and experience required for your role.

Communication skills

The resume and application review is a good opportunity to assess the capability Communicate Effectively. This should only be done if written work is an important part of the role.

Knowledge and experience

Knowledge and experience requirements set out in the role description and job ad usually relate to one of the following factors:

- depth of experience – indicates a high degree of specialised expertise or knowledge in a particular discipline
- breadth of experience – characterises generalist roles often in leadership, management or senior professional roles
- context – refers to experience gained within a particular context or specialised industry setting.

When assessing experience you are looking for achievements and activities the candidate has completed that relate to the role. Look for:

- personal contribution and achievements (not just those of the team)
- quality or level of experience and skills as well as amount of time spent in a job
- transferrable skills even if these were in a completely different industry or type of role.

Example of transferrable skills

Consider the following (hypothetical) extract from a resume:

Project Officer Clerk 7/8 – Housing NSW (1 September 2013 to present)

- Analysed reports and policies relating to the housing sector published by different government and non-government organisations
- Coordinated input from a range of stakeholders for a submission on the housing sector
- Drafted the paper submitted by agency to the Senate enquiry into affordable housing.

This candidate demonstrates skills that are transferrable to different roles. Their ability to analyse information, coordinate input and develop a submission is relevant to other roles (e.g. policy officer) and other contexts (e.g. a different industry provided they are given a reasonable amount of time to develop requisite knowledge).

To assess knowledge, you are looking for evidence of the candidate's theoretical or practical understanding of a particular role requirement.

Example of knowledge requirement

A common requirement in job ads in the NSW public sector is to have a good knowledge of machinery of Government processes. However, not everyone has worked in the public sector. You therefore need to think about how anyone can demonstrate that they have a level of understanding of government processes to address this requirement.

For a role relating to Cabinet processes, knowledge could be demonstrated through a general understanding of the structure of Government, the functions of the Cabinet and stages in the Cabinet process. Knowledge of how the executive Government interacts with Parliament would also be advantageous. This would ensure the candidate has a firm understanding of the working environment from day one, with the application of the knowledge, such as using the e-Cabinet system, able to be learned on the job.

Note that knowledge is not experience. If you want the candidate to have a practical understanding (i.e. have participated in a Cabinet process) you need to ask for this in terms of experience.

5.1.4.3 Resume review

When reviewing a resume, consider:

- relevance of education, skills and work experience to the current role
- evidence of an individual's impact, contributions and accomplishments while in the role.

You may wish to seek further information from the candidate if their resume contains the following:

- unclear employment dates
- noting a higher education program but not indicating graduation
- decreasing responsibilities over time or frequent unexplained job changes.

5.1.4.4 Cover letter review

The principles that apply to the resume review also apply to a review of the cover letter. You are looking for information to indicate:

- capabilities, experience and achievements relating to the role requirements
- alignment between the candidate's motivation with the role, type of work, organisation etc.
- relevant qualifications.

5.1.4.5 Review of targeted questions

Targeted questions can be based on focus capabilities or about candidates' experience or motivation to work in the role and in your organisation etc. The different types of targeted questions may require distinct review approaches.

Targeted questions on a focus capability

Concentrate on whether the candidate's response indicates that they are likely to meet the focus capability or capabilities you are evaluating.

The best responses describe specific situations and give practical examples. If there is insufficient detail, you can also look at the resume and cover letter for more information.

Targeted questions on motivation

Look for whether candidates understand and are enthusiastic about the challenges and opportunities available in the role. You want them to show that they clearly understand the role and have thought about how their experience, skills, values, working style etc. match the requirements.

Examples of reviewing for motivation

Motivation for role – someone who states that they have a strong preference for working alone may not be well suited to a customer service role.

Motivation for organisation / sector – you are looking for someone whose personal values match the goals, values and culture of the organisation or the public sector more broadly, e.g. motivated to provide a great service for the people of NSW.

5.1.4.6 Important information

The online application form for jobs advertised on the I work for NSW public website provides the opportunity for candidates to indicate if they require an adjustment to make the assessment process accessible. Indicating a need for an adjustment to the assessment process due to disability or other reason allows the recruitment team or hiring manager to contact candidates to discuss their needs and make necessary arrangements.

It is your responsibility as hiring manager or recruiter to review the information provided by candidates about adjustments required in the assessment process and follow up as required.

5.1.4.7 Tips for good practice

Having assessor(s) review applications and resumes independently minimises potential bias.

Consider anonymising resumes and applications to reduce unconscious bias and improve the prospects of negatively stereotyped groups.

The following resources have examples of some of the biases that may come up in your review:

- NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet 2016 – Behavioural approaches to increasing workforce diversity
- CIPD research report – A head for hiring: the behavioural science of recruitment and selection.

Be mindful of making assumptions about previous experience. For example, if a candidate needs to have done the exact role previously or believing that because a candidate held a role with a similar name, the role was the same and they will perform effectively in your agency.

Look instead for examples of achievements and behaviours relevant to your role.

5.1.5 Developing a shortlist

Your approach to shortlisting will depend on how many assessors are involved at the pre-screening stage. It is good practice to use more than one assessor but there may be times where it is practical only to have one assessor (e.g. for a short-term, temporary role requiring a suitability assessment). In these circumstances you should be particularly mindful of avoiding potential biases and developing your shortlist based on an objective assessment.

Once the assessor or assessors have reviewed the resumes and applications, you can decide which candidates should progress to the next stage. Be aware of the potential for consensus bias and create an environment where assessors feel comfortable discussing the merits of each candidate without feeling pressured to conform to others' views.

Document your decisions so you have a record and can provide constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates. A shortlisting worksheet will help you to consolidate results.

As soon as you have finalised your shortlist you need to communicate the outcome to candidates. Timely communication is critical for creating a positive candidate experience and will reflect well on your organisation.

5.2 Administering and scoring assessments

Hiring managers and other assessors have an important role in ensuring the selection process is fair and creates an environment where candidates could perform at their best.

A key principle is that assessments should be administered and scored in a consistent way to allow you to make well considered and defensible selection decisions. Providing the same instructions, and timing, scoring and interpreting the results the same way every time a particular assessment is administered allows you to fairly and meaningfully compare the results obtained by different candidates on a particular measure of role performance.

Scoring assessments is not just about choosing the candidate with the highest ranking. You need to consider all candidates who meet the standards and decide who is well suited to the role requirements.

5.2.1 Administering assessments

Assessments need to be administered in a standardised way so that each candidate has the same opportunity to do their best.

For good practice tips on administering interviews, work sample exercises and psychometric assessments, see our guides:

- Practical guide to interviewing
- Administering and scoring work sample exercises
- Administering and scoring psychometric assessments.

5.2.1.1 Workplace adjustment

The exception to the principle of standardisation is where one or more adjustments to the assessment process are needed to ensure that the assessment process is equitable for all candidates, including people with disability.

In these cases, changing the administration of the assessment, or the assessment itself, can remove barriers so that all candidates can complete the assessment on an equitable basis, including people with disability. The purpose of making adjustments is to provide equal opportunity so that all candidates can be assessed and compete for the role fairly and on merit.

Preparing your process for workplace adjustment

It is good practice to mention to candidates at each stage of the process that they can request an adjustment or assistance with assessment activities.

If a candidate shares information about their disability prior to an assessment, it is your responsibility to talk to the candidate to understand what adjustments or assistance they need so that you can make arrangements in advance of the assessments. Be aware that this information is confidential and should only be used to organise an adjustment.

Be flexible about making adjustments because:

- candidates may not tell you until the day of the assessment that they need an adjustment
- candidates may not request an adjustment at all, yet it is apparent when the candidate attends for the assessment or completes a task that an adjustment is needed.

If an adjustment can be made and is reasonable, you should make it. Doing so reduces the risk of indirect discrimination and makes your recruitment process more inclusive. If an adequate adjustment cannot be made at the time, consider rescheduling the assessment after consulting with the candidate or seek advice from your HR team.

5.2.2 Scoring assessments

This stage builds on your efforts to set the standards and rating approach. To maintain a fair and defensible process, it is important to score capability-based assessments in a consistent way.

Assessments such as cognitive ability tests and personality questionnaires are scored automatically or by an accredited expert using scoring keys. Interviews and work sample exercises require human judgment and can be affected by biases and errors.

To objectively rate a candidate's performance and reduce the possible impact of biases and errors it is a good idea to:

- use a response template to record responses – this should include the standards for assessment, such as the capabilities and behavioural indicators for interviews
- write down what was said when taking notes, rather than recording your impressions or making judgments
- use a common rating scale with definitions and apply it consistently to all candidates.

For good practice tips on scoring interviews, work sample exercises and psychometric assessments, see our guides:

- Practical guide to interviewing
- Administering and scoring work sample exercises
- Administering and scoring psychometric assessments.

5.2.2.1 Tips for good practice scoring

- be consistent in evaluating candidates

- consider all candidates who meet the benchmark for their suitability to the role requirements, not just the highest scorer
- be mindful of cultural differences and avoid over-interpreting behaviours that may be cultural – only behaviours that impact a candidate's ability to perform in the role, either adversely or positively, should be taken into consideration when scoring
- be prepared by familiarising yourself with the rating scale and behavioural indicators relating to each capability
- be aware of biases and how to manage these. Some biases are:
    - 'halo' effect – after one excellent answer, the candidate is seen as a strong overall
    - 'horn' effect – after performing poorly against one capability, the candidate is seen as weak overall
    - 'central tendency' – favouring middle ratings, e.g. '3' or 'Meets Requirements'
- be aware of crediting:
    - statements about what the team or "we" did as evidence of what the candidate personally did
    - vague assertions as being fact – e.g. "They were all pleased…"
- be aware of allowing:
    - stereotypes (e.g. gender, ethnic/cultural group etc.) to affect your judgment of a candidate's strengths and weaknesses
    - prior knowledge of a candidate to affect your judgment of their interview responses.

5.2.3 Practical guide to interviewing

The aim of the interview is to enable candidates to demonstrate their capabilities, knowledge and experience, drawing on experience.

In this guide you will find practical information to help you with preparation (before the interview), during the interview and debriefing (after the interview).

5.2.3.1 Preparation

Preparing for interviews will help you to run a smooth process that gives candidates the opportunity to perform at their best. Preparation includes:

- choosing assessors
- having a set of interview questions
- having an interview response and scoring sheet
- deciding the interview format
- preparing for any workplace adjustments for people with disability
- preparing information for assessors and candidates

Assessors should also familiarise themselves with the role description, job ad, applications, the work done by the team and how this role fits in.

5.2.3.2 Before the interview

Making time to discuss the process with the other assessors before the interview will help the process run smoothly. Some things to discuss are:

- length of interview
- who will receive and introduce candidates
- who will ask which questions
- the rating scale
- any adjustments to be made for candidates with disability.

Depending on the role, you may want to provide a copy of the interview questions to candidates when they arrive for the interview and allow 5-10 minutes of reading time. This can help candidates to gather their thoughts and provide more structured, considered responses.

5.2.3.3 Opening the interview

A well-prepared introduction to the interview will help put candidates at ease and make it clear what is expected of them. This may include:

- introducing assessors
- giving a brief overview of the role and organisation
- explaining how the interview will be run (e.g. timing, number and style of questions, that you will be taking notes, opportunity to ask questions at the end)
- tips for interviewees (e.g. suggest using a structure for their responses such as STAR – Situation, Task, Action, Result or SAO – Situation, Action, Outcome)

5.2.3.4 During the interview

During the interview, try to:

- maintain a conversational flow to allow the candidate to be at ease
- let candidate do the talking
- use probing questions when you feel that you don't have enough information
- actively listen to all answers
- take notes so you have a record of what was said
- be objective
- confine your questions to the role requirements.

When asking capability-related questions, you are looking for the candidate to:

- describe how they have effectively handled a situation at an appropriate level of complexity
- give you enough detail to see the depth and breadth of the capability you are assessing
- show their capabilities are directly relevant or transferrable to the role you are filling.

Probing questions

Use probing questions to dig deeper when candidates do not provide enough information or give general responses.

Examples of probing questions include:

“Could you tell me more about that…?”

“Are you able to provide a specific example?”

“What was your thinking behind…?”

“What was your role – what did you do…?”

When probing, avoid using leading questions (which point candidates towards the desired answer) or closed questions (which prompt a yes/no answer).

Leading or closed question	Replacement question
Did you develop a project plan?	What strategies did you rely on to deliver the project?
Did you get a result?	What was the outcome?

Take notes

It is important to take thorough notes during the interview as it is difficult to accurately assess a candidate based on sparse notes and memory. Alternate between making eye contact and taking notes so candidates feel like you are listening to what they are saying. Another option when you have multiple assessors is for one assessor to take notes while the other maintains eye contact, alternating each question.

Where possible, write down what a candidate said or did rather than interpreting or providing your own impressions. For example, note that a candidate looked down for most of the interview rather than saying they had poor eye contact.

Keep your notes after the interviews to assist with the records of selection decisions and to provide a basis for feedback to candidates.

Privacy considerations

When taking notes you should be aware of a candidate’s right to seek access to information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* following their participation in a recruitment process with a NSW government agency.

For more information refer to the Information and Privacy Commission’s *Fact Sheet – Applying for Government Recruitment Information*.

5.2.3.5 Closing the interview

It is a good idea to ask candidates if they have any questions for you. Remember that the interview process is also about candidates deciding if this opportunity is the right fit for them.

At the end of the interview you can let candidates know about next steps (any further assessments, referee checks, screening checks and when they should expect to hear from you).

5.2.3.6 Debriefing (after the interview)

When assessing responses to behavioural interview questions, you are looking for evidence relating to the capabilities, knowledge and experience.

To assess questions with a different focus, such as motivation questions, you should use the requirements you developed when designing the question. This may include

attributes such as having values and ethics that align with public sector values and ethics, showing passion for working in a particular field (e.g. social services), being interested in supporting and developing team members as part of managerial responsibilities.

It is a good idea for each assessor to rate the responses separately before conferring with the other assessor/s. Discussion can then focus on areas of discrepancy.

Allow time after each interview to write a summary of how the candidate's responses demonstrated the capabilities being assessed or highlight any areas requiring development.

Remember that the interview is just one of a number of assessments and should not be treated as the only factor in making your selection decision.

5.2.3.7 Further resources for interviewing

- Australian Network on Disability – Inclusive recruitment
- Australian Human Rights Commission – Questions in job interviews
- Job Access – Interviewing people with disability

5.2.4 Administering and scoring work sample exercises

There are a range of different types of work sample exercises including written tasks, role plays, group activities and case interviews. The role of assessors in administering and scoring exercises will depend on whether the exercise requires observation (e.g. group activity, presentation) or reviewing a written response (e.g. in-tray activity).

5.2.4.1 Administering work sample exercises

It is important that your work sample has clear instructions for the assessor and the candidate. These should be developed when you are developing the work sample exercise.

The time limit and conditions for completing an exercise need to be the same for all candidates, unless you are making an adjustment. Where a workplace adjustment is to be made, this needs to be communicated to assessors so they can adjust the administration of the exercise.

The assessor instructions contain details of how to administer the exercise. This includes:

- resources the assessor will need – e.g. paper and pen
- resources to be given to the candidate – e.g. case study materials
- equipment needed by the candidate – e.g. computer for a written exercise, login and password details in case the computer goes to sleep
- time limit – full time allocated for the task (e.g. 60 minutes) and how the time is split up (e.g. 10 minutes reading time, 50 minutes to complete the task)

It is a good idea to read the candidate instructions aloud to make sure candidates fully understand what is required and can ask questions.

5.2.4.1.1 Work sample exercises involving observation

During role-plays, group activities and presentations the assessor needs to both observe and record behaviours so that they have the evidence necessary to support their ratings. This process should be done in the same way for each candidate.

Before the activity:

- Familiarise yourself with the rating scale you are using and apply it consistently across all candidates.
- Understand how the evidence relates to the rating scale

During the activity:

- Observe, look and listen – if you are assessing more than one candidate, make sure you are clear on who's who
- Record what you see (body language) and hear (word-for-word is best) – if you are observing more than one candidate, make sure you can differentiate between each in your notes. You could use a work sample response template to assist in rating responses.

After the activity:

- Sort the recorded behaviours according to the capabilities being assessed (this is completed after the assessment and not done in the presence of candidates)
- Evaluate based on objective, observed behaviours using your agreed rating scale (this is completed after the assessment and not done in the presence of candidates)
- Integrate your evaluation with the other assessors and be prepared to explain your ratings based on the behaviours you observed.

5.2.4.1.2 Work samples involving a written response

Work samples that require a written answer are assessed against the capabilities. You are looking for the response to demonstrate the behaviours you have identified for each capability you are assessing.

Ticking off behaviours as you find them in the response will further assist you to determine whether the capability is demonstrated and, if so, to what extent.

5.2.4.2 Quick guide to administering and scoring work sample exercises

- determine rating scale and benchmarks
- use a work sample response template to capture evidence
- sort evidence into the relevant capabilities
- tick off the behavioural indicators observed in the responses
- apply a rating to each capability based on the evidence
- discuss and consolidate scores with other assessors
- progress candidates who meet the benchmark to the next stage

5.2.5 Administering and scoring psychometric assessments

A registered psychologist or other qualified person who is accredited, trained, and skilled in this activity needs to administer and score psychometric tests (including cognitive ability tests and personality questionnaires) and interpret the results. If this expertise is not available in-house you should engage an accredited supplier from the Talent Acquisition Scheme.

5.2.5.1 Administering tests

Some candidates will be anxious and nervous about having to complete a psychometric test for a selection process. Before inviting candidates to complete a test, it is a good idea to prepare them and put them at ease by explaining your selection process and the purpose of any testing.

Most service providers offer the opportunity for candidates to do practice tests prior to completing the assessment, which gives them a clear idea about what to expect and can help reduce anxiety.

Psychometric tests are usually administered online and can be completed in a candidate's preferred location, e.g. at an agency or test provider's offices or in their home. Some tests can also be administered in hardcopy by pencil and paper. They can be administered simultaneously to screen large numbers of candidates or individually in a face-to-face setting. They may also form part of an assessment centre.

Psychometric tests are often administered in an unsupervised environment in the early stages of a selection process. Some providers recommend re-testing candidates who progress to the next stage.

Generally, psychometric test results are valid for 12 months in the recruitment context and assessment service providers generally recommend the same test should not be completed again within this period. This is because:

- performance can improve from frequent exposure to a test
- it is unnecessary and costly to complete the same assessment more than once in 12 months.

Note: A person can be in a talent pool for a total maximum period of 18 months even if an assessment tool has a time limitation. GSE rule 19 says that a person who has satisfied the pre-established standards for a role through a comparative assessment may be included in a talent pool for up to 18 months following the completion of the comparative assessment. The standards are therefore satisfied at the time the person entered the pool, even if a test is said to be valid for less than 18 months.

5.2.5.2 Scoring tests

5.2.5.2.1 Cut-off scores for cognitive tests

You should decide upfront the cut-off score for any cognitive tests in your assessment process. Once you receive the test results you can incorporate them into your consolidated scoring sheet by applying your rating scale.

5.2.5.2.2 Interpreting personality questionnaires

The service provider should map the scales of the personality questionnaire to the appropriate capabilities in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework.

It may be the case that you will only receive a narrative report with no scores or ranges. As the personality questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire and provides an indication of the candidate's preferred workstyles, any information which is not consistent with the details obtained from other capability-based assessments should be explored further using behavioural based interviews or reference checking.

Personality questionnaires require accredited individuals or registered psychologists to interpret results and provide feedback to candidates.

5.3 Consolidating results and making selection decisions

Selection decisions are based on a consideration of the full set of assessment results for candidates who have progressed through the process. Notes of all assessor discussions should be kept throughout the selection process.

5.3.1 Legal requirements

5.3.1.1 Comparative assessment

When doing a comparative assessment under GSE rule 17 you are assessing candidates against the pre-established standards for the role as well as against any other candidates.

Rule 16(2A) requires that all components of the comparative assessment process in Rule 17(2) must be completed before finalising an assessors' report about the assessment. This includes:

- Screening for essential requirements,
- Reviewing an application and resume,
- At least 3 capability-based assessments, one of which is an interview, and
- Referee checks (at least for the preferred candidate).

The report must consider all information obtained for the comparative assessment and must reflect the consensus of the assessors. If the Assessors cannot reach a consensus, the recommendation of each assessor should be included in the report to the person who will make the employment decision (see Forming assessor consensus below).

GSE Rule 17(3) provides that referee reports may be carried out in relation to any candidate undergoing a comparative assessment and must be carried out in relation to a candidate who is proposed to be offered employment following comparative assessment.

5.3.1.2 Suitability assessment

When doing a suitability assessment under GSE rule 18 you are assessing against the pre-established standards for a role and not against other persons.

5.3.1.3 Meeting the capability standards

Using multiple assessments allows candidates to demonstrate their capabilities, knowledge and experience in a range of contexts. The consolidated results of these assessments help provide a solid evidence base for selection decisions.

> Important
>
> Focus capabilities are those that are most important for the role. Candidates should meet the required levels for these capabilities to be considered for employment. Where complementary capabilities are assessed, you should generally be satisfied that the candidate meets most of these or can develop them on the job in a reasonable period.
>
> Candidate should also meet the required standards for knowledge and experience (when applicable) and any essential requirements to be considered for employment.

It is a good idea to document strengths and development needs for all candidates to help you give meaningful feedback to unsuccessful candidates and for inclusion in the new hire's individual performance development plan.

5.3.2 Consolidating capability assessment results

Whether you are assessing one candidate or many, it is good practice to be systematic when reviewing assessment results. You can combine each candidates' results on the capability-based assessments to form capability ratings and an overall score for each candidate using a template such as the one in this example.

If one of your assessments is a personality questionnaire, ask the assessment provider for assistance with mapping the results against the capability requirements for the role. You can choose to either include the personality assessment results when you are working out the capability ratings or use the results from personality tests to help you to make your selection decision based on the right fit for the role.

5.3.2.1 Example of a candidate's consolidated results when all capabilities are assessed

Capability group	Capability	Cognitive ability (/5)	Written activity (/5)	Role play (/5)	Structured interview (/5)	Final rating (/5)
Personal attributes	Display Resilience and Courage *		5	3		4.0
Personal attributes	Act with Integrity *			4	4	4.0
Personal attributes	Manage Self			4	3	3.5
Personal attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion				3	3.0
Relationships	Communicate Effectively *	4	5		3	4.0
Relationships	Commit to Customer Service		4			4.0
Relationships	Work Collaboratively				4	4.0
Relationships	Influence and Negotiate *			4	4	4.0
Results	Deliver Results			4		4.0
Results	Plan and Prioritise		4			4.0
Results	Think and Solve Problems *	4	4	5		4.3

Capability group	Capability	Cognitive ability (/5)	Written activity (/5)	Role play (/5)	Structured interview (/5)	Final rating (/5)
Results	Demonstrate Accountability			4		4.0
Business enablers	Finance		2			2.0
Business enablers	Technology		4			4.0
Business enablers	Procurement and Contract Management		2			2.0
Business enablers	Project Management *			4	4	4.0
People management	Manage and Develop People				4	4.0
People management	Inspire Direction and Purpose				3	3.0
People management	Optimise Business Outcomes		4			4.0
People management	Manage Reform and Change *		4		2	3.0
	* Indicates a focus capability				Overall score (/100)	72.8

This example shows what a candidate's assessment outcomes might look like when all capabilities are assessed using a 5-point rating scale. It shows how you can aggregate scores for a capability in the various assessment tasks to give an average score.

The capability ratings are helpful in showing how a candidate demonstrated their capabilities in the various assessments. They can be used to compare candidates to help determine who is best suited to the requirements of the role and the needs of the agency.

Some recruiters like to add up the capability ratings to give an overall score for each candidate. Another way to combine results is to calculate an average rating for each capability (if you have used the same numerical rating scale for all assessments).

Where there are multiple candidates who meet the standards for the role, overall scores can help you identify the stronger candidates. You can also consider each candidate's fit for the role to ensure they are the person best suited to the needs of the agency. Also consider if there are other candidates who are suited to the role in case your first choice is unavailable.

5.3.2.2 Example of a candidate's consolidated results when focus capabilities are assessed

Capability group	Capability	Written activity (/5)	Role play (/5)	Structured interview (/5)	Final rating (/5)
Personal attributes	Display Resilience and Courage *	5	3		4.0
Personal attributes	Act with Integrity *		4	4	4.0
Personal attributes	Manage Self				
Personal attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion				
Relationships	Communicate Effectively *	5		3	4.0
Relationships	Commit to Customer Service				
Relationships	Work Collaboratively				
Relationships	Influence and Negotiate *		4	4	4.0
Results	Deliver Results				
Results	Plan and Prioritise				
Results	Think and Solve Problems *	4	5		4.5
Results	Demonstrate Accountability				
Business enablers	Finance				
Business enablers	Technology				
Business enablers	Procurement and Contract Management				
Business enablers	Project Management				

Capability group	Capability	Written activity (/5)	Role play (/5)	Structured interview (/5)	Final rating (/5)
People management	Manage and Develop People				
People management	Inspire Direction and Purpose				
People management	Optimise Business Outcomes				
People management	Manage Reform and Change *	4		2	3.0
	* Indicates a focus capability			Overall score (/30)	23.5

This example shows what a candidate's assessment outcomes might look like when the focus capabilities are assessed using a 5-point rating scale. Note in this example that there is no focus capability from the Business Enablers capability group. Focus capabilities may be selected from the Business Enablers group, but this is not a requirement.

You may also notice that one less assessment is used in this example compared to the example where all capabilities are assessed as less capabilities are being assessed.

5.3.3 Inconsistent information

Sometimes there will be conflicting or inconsistent information obtained from various assessments. Inconsistent information is not necessarily a problem and can provide useful clues into the contexts in which a candidate is likely to perform better and where they may need to develop. Here are some examples:

- Communicate effectively – a candidate may communicate effectively in writing but not when presenting ideas in a case interview.
- Commit to customer service – a candidate may perform well in one task when responding to a general inquiry from a pleasant customer but may not perform well when dealing with a difficult customer in another activity.
- Display resilience and courage – a candidate may misunderstand the requirements of a work sample task and not demonstrate the behaviours required; yet a personality questionnaire indicates that this capability is likely to be a strength for the candidate.
- Project management – a candidate with limited work experience might find it difficult to demonstrate this capability in a behavioural interview despite having sound theoretical knowledge of project management frameworks.

Inconsistencies can be explored further when reference checking.

5.3.4 Combining capability results with other information

Selection decisions are not just about which candidate has the highest score on the capability assessments. It is important to consider capability assessment results

together with other information you have gathered through the process to decide who is best suited to the requirements of the role and the needs of the agency. Consider:

does the role meet the candidate's expectations?

is the candidate motivated to perform the tasks required in the role?

does the role allow the candidate to display their preferred work style?

will the candidate work well in the team?

is there alignment between the candidate's values and the agency and public sector values?

When you are doing a suitability assessment or if only one candidate is being considered, it is still important to consider other information that relates to the candidate's fit for the role, team and agency. If you have concerns about whether the candidate is likely to be suited to the role, team or agency you can follow this up in a second interview or through referee checks.

5.3.5 Forming Assessor consensus

Following the consideration of all relevant information, the Assessors will decide by consensus which candidate, or candidates for multiple roles, they will recommend as best suited to the requirements of the role and the needs of the hiring agency.

There may be some debate regarding this choice – this is common and healthy, potentially prompting critical analysis of individual perspectives and identifying and challenging unconscious bias. Where such debate occurs, you should allow each Assessor to explain their reasoning before facilitating discussion towards consensus on the preferred candidate(s).

If the Assessors cannot reach a consensus, the recommendation of each Assessor should be included in the report to the Delegate.

5.3.6 Preferred candidate

If you and your assessors have decided on a preferred candidate, you can go directly to the next step of doing the referee checks. If you are unable to differentiate between two or more strong candidates, you can consider doing a second interview or complete referee checks to help you make your decision.

You should not do referee checks on candidates you are not seriously considering for the role.

5.3.7 Making the selection decision

Making the final selection decision is an opportunity to bring someone into your team who will be happy and productive in the role you are filling.

Selection decisions should be made on balance considering all the information from the assessments and referee checks. After you have completed the referee checks, revisit the overall capability scores for each candidate and consider their fit for the role. Check whether any changes are required in selecting the candidate best suited to the role and the needs of the agency.

Ask your HR advisor for your agency's template to record and seek approval on your selection decisions.

While the approval to employ a person is the responsibility of the senior decision makers in the agency (that is, those with the relevant delegation), the assessors are responsible

for the selection of the preferred candidate. Delegates are not involved in the recruitment and selection process and do not have the discretion to revisit assessment outcomes when deciding to approve the assessors' selection decision.

5.3.8 Talent pools

If you have several strong candidates who meet the standards, you may decide to offer the role to the candidate most suited to the role (after conducting referee checks) and include the rest in a talent pool. You may also include a person who was offered the role and who declined it. You should ask their permission to include them in a talent pool.

If the purpose of your recruitment and selection process is to establish a talent pool, you can include all candidates that meet the pre-established standards for the role.

The PSC's *Talent pools guide for HR and hiring managers* has information about how to set up and use talent pools.

6 Deciding and appointing

Make an offer of employment after weighing all the available evidence on balance.

In this section, you will find guides on:

- Referee checks
- Pre-employment screening checks
- Making offers and providing feedback

6.1 Referee checks

Referee checks provide independent information about a candidate's capabilities, knowledge and experience as well as their behaviours from managers, peers or other people who have observed their work performance in a relevant context.

6.1.1 About referee checks

Referee checks are used to confirm a candidate's suitability for a role. They also allow you to verify or gather additional insights about a candidate from their application, resume, interview and other capability-based assessments.

The information obtained from referees should be used to inform the final decision of a candidate's suitability for the role by all assessors.

Referee checks do not need to be standardised. They should be tailored for each candidate. You should probe into areas specific to the candidate, which you may have identified through the assessments and interviews.

After you have completed the referee checks, revisit the overall capability score for each candidate and consider their fit for the role. Check whether this changes your views about the preferred candidate.

6.1.2 When to do referee checks

Referee checks are best done in the final stage of the recruitment process for the preferred candidate or candidates. Referee checks can be done for more than one candidate where the assessors need more information to separate the leading candidates.

You should not do a referee check on candidates you are not seriously considering for the role.

6.1.3 Referees

Referees need to have known the candidate for a reasonable amount of time (e.g. six months) and have good knowledge of their performance in a relevant context (e.g. work or education) to provide an objective assessment of their capabilities, knowledge and experience.

You should only contact the referees supplied by the candidate. If you believe there is a more suitable referee, speak to the candidate to seek their permission before approaching this person.

It is ideal for at least one referee to have been a direct manager of the candidate in the past two years. If a candidate has not included a direct manager as a referee, you can ask why they have not nominated their manager to satisfy yourself that the reason is valid.

6.1.4 Types of referee checks

360-degree

A 360-degree referee check involves conducting referee checks with managers as well as with direct reports, peers, customers or other stakeholders who have regular contact with the candidate.

Ideally this would involve contacting one or more people from each category. These checks are generally used for more senior roles where you are looking to understand how they respond in different work contexts.

Verbal

Verbal referee checks are tailored to each candidate so that you can find out specific information that was not clear or covered during the assessment process. Questions can be sent to referees in advance with a follow-up conversation. This approach gives you the ability to probe further on specific issues you and the other assessors have identified.

6.1.5 Service providers

If you engage a service provider to undertake referee checks, you must ensure they provide you with a comprehensive report that all assessors consider as part of their selection decision.

6.1.6 Preparing for the referee check

Always let candidates know in advance that you will contact their referees. This gives candidates the chance to let their referees know about the role and for the referee to prepare for your contact.

It is important to prepare properly for the referee checks so that you can obtain quality information about the candidate from independent observers. This includes reviewing the candidate's resume and assessment results and preparing tailored questions.

6.1.7 During the referee check

You are looking to obtain referees' observations and experience of working with the candidate.

Take notes of your discussion and share these with the other assessors. You will then share the evidence from the referee checks with the other assessors.

After the referee check

It is best to evaluate the evidence from all the referee reports on a candidate together. This allows you to recognise patterns of behaviour rather than putting undue weight on isolated incidents.

The results from referee checks should be considered together with the application, resume, interview and other assessment results. Taking all the information together helps you to take a holistic view of each candidate and make informed and balanced selection decisions.

Where discrepancies arise between what the candidate said and what the referee said, all assessors should:

- Consider the circumstances
- Evaluate the significance of the discrepancy – for example, is it a minor exaggeration or blatant dishonesty?

If you are not comfortable to proceed further with a candidate, inform them of your decision and decide whether there is another suitable candidate to progress to referee checks.

You should attach the referee report to the final selection report.

Tips for getting the most out of referee checks

- Keep an open mind. Don't fall into the trap of using referee checks to confirm a decision you have already made regarding your preferred candidate.
- Prepare questions tailored for the role or candidate to get the most value out of the referee checks.
- Keep questions focused on the role and the candidate's suitability. Do not ask questions of a personal nature or that do not relate directly to the role.

6.1.8 Legal requirements

Referee checks are required for a comparative assessment and a suitability assessment.

6.2 Pre-employment screening checks

Pre-employment screening is used to ensure the suitability, integrity and identity of people engaged to work in the NSW Public Service.

6.2.1 Legal requirements

Section 54 of the GSE Act contains a non-exhaustive list of conditions of engagement that employees may be subject to. Requirements relating to these conditions are set out in the GSE Rules. Those requirements that are relevant to pre-employment screening include:

Probation periods (GSE rule 5)

citizenship or residency (GSE rule 6)

formal qualifications (GSE rule 7)

security and other clearances (GSE rule 8)

health assessment (GSE rule 9).

There may be requirements in other legislation that apply to employment in certain roles in the NSW Public Service. For example:

a working with children check is a prerequisite for anyone to be employed in child-related work in NSW under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*; and

national police checks are sometimes required for employment in NSW (e.g. to be employed to provide disability support and services directly to people with a disability in a way that involves face to face or physical contact under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*).

6.2.2 About pre-employment screening checks

Subject to legislative requirements, it is up to the employer to determine the pre-employment screening checks required for the role.

The level of pre-employment screening needed will vary according to the organisational context and role being filled. It is therefore necessary to consider the essential requirements of the role, identify any risks associated with these requirements and decide on the screening needed to manage these risks.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption has published a guide on *Strengthening employment screening practices in the NSW public sector*. The guide emphasises the importance of screening checks to prevent employment application fraud and provides advice on designing an employment screening framework.

6.2.2.1 Candidate consent

You should obtain consent from candidates to undertake pre-employment screening checks.

The screening checks needed for the role should be stated clearly in the job ad or application form and explained during the assessment process. Candidates need to be made aware that their employment is dependent on the results of the screening checks.

6.2.2.2 When to do screening checks

Pre-employment screening checks should be completed prior to a formal offer being made. In some circumstances this may not be possible. If this occurs, an offer can be made conditional to satisfactory pre-employment being completed. However, the person must not be employed before the check has been completed. When making a verbal offer pending the outcome of a screening

check, it is your responsibility to make sure the candidate is fully informed of this condition of the offer.

It is best practice to make sure there is separation between those collecting the information and the recruitment panel to prevent discrimination or the perception of discrimination in employment.

6.2.2.3 Types of screening checks

There are a range of different pre-employment screening checks that can be used to verify information about preferred candidates. The key types are outlined below.

Suppliers on the Employment Checks Contract can be engaged to screen for essential requirements including:

- National and international criminal history checks
- Entitlement to work (visa) checks
- Licence checks
- Qualification checks
- Employment history checks
- Financial responsibility checks.

As well as providing checks for essential requirements, agencies can engage a supplier under the contract to do:

- Verification of identity
- Confirmation of previous employment.

6.2.2.3.1 Citizenship, residency or visa status

An essential requirement that applies to the employment of all individuals in the Public Service is that the individual must be eligible to work in Australia for the period of their employment.

6.2.2.3.2 Formal qualifications check

For some roles, an employee may be engaged subject to the condition that they hold a formal qualification necessary for the role.

This requirement should be assessed first in the application and resume review by asking candidates to self-report that they meet the requirement. The formal qualification check ensures there is documentary evidence of the completion of the qualification from an accredited institution (e.g. an original academic transcript showing completion of requirements for the relevant course).

6.2.2.3.3 Security and other clearances

Engagement of an employee in a Public Service agency may be subject to a condition that the person is required to have the security or other clearances determined by the employer to be necessary for performing the duties of the role to which the person is to be assigned.

A security clearance authorises an individual to access certain information and resources following completion of background checks.

For example, a security clearance is needed for employees who access information that has a security classification of ‘protected’ or above in accordance with Australian Government requirements, including appropriate security clearances. See: Digital NSW for the NSW Government Information Classification, Labelling and Handling Guidelines.

6.2.2.3.4 National police checks (or criminal records checks)

There are a range of circumstances where a national police check may be required, such as admission to a particular profession (e.g. to be admitted as a lawyer in NSW) or engagement to deliver particular services (e.g. to provide disability support and services directly to people with

disability in a way that involves face to face or physical contact). See: NSW Police Force's Criminal Records Section for information about National Police Checks.

It is up to the employer to assess a person's suitability for employment based on the findings of a national police check.

No national police check should be made on:

- any recommended candidate to whom it is not proposed to offer immediate employment; or
- children under the age of 14.

Criminal record checking should be carried out with the subject's consent.

If, following review of the results of the criminal record check, an agency forms a view that the candidate should not be employed, the agency should give the candidate the opportunity for discussion prior to making their final decision.

Agencies that obtain details of a person's criminal record should destroy the information after it has been used.

6.2.2.3.5 Working with children checks

A Working With Children Check is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. See the Office of the Children's Guardian's website for information on who needs a working with children check.

6.2.2.3.6 Professional membership of an industry association

Confirmation of professional membership may be needed where the employee is required by legislation to be a member of a professional association to perform their professional duties.

6.2.2.3.7 Employment history checks

Employment history checks help to validate information provided by candidates about their previous work experience. This may include verifying the organisation where they worked, their job title, seniority and salary, period of employment, accomplishments and any evidence of misconduct or disciplinary action.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption recommend doing employment history checks for public and private sector roles.

6.2.2.3.8 Service checks (or HR checks)

A service check should be completed for Public Service candidates who are recommended for appointment. The check usually involves confirming the candidate's current department and role, employment status and a brief comment on their conduct and services.

6.2.2.3.9 Health assessments

A health assessment may be carried out where a candidate's physical fitness to perform the duties of a role to which they are to be assigned is a condition of engagement. To access pre-employment health assessment services, refer to the Employment-related medical services scheme.

GSE rule 9 (3) sets out some of the forms health assessments may take.

Health assessments of this kind should be carried out only to assess the person's capacity to carry out the inherent requirements and demands of the role.

6.2.3 Additional resources for pre-employment screening checks

- Australian Government guide to hiring someone in Australia
- Australian Human Rights Commission: Discrimination in Employment on the Basis of Criminal Record

- Australian Human Rights Commission: Avoiding discrimination in health assessments
- Office of the Children's Guardian – Role of an employer
- Independent Commission Against Corruption: Strengthening employment screening practices in the NSW public sector

6.3 Making offers and providing feedback

An offer of employment is made when the recruitment process is complete, and a preferred candidate has been chosen.

6.3.1 Legal framework

Section 54 of the GSE Act contains a non-exhaustive list of conditions of engagement that employees may be subject to. Requirements relating to these conditions are set out in the GSE Rules. Under GSE rule 5 a person may be required to serve a probation period on commencing employment.

6.3.2 About offers of employment

The decision to make an offer of employment should be based on a consideration of all the available evidence, including application and resume, assessment results and referee reports.

The usual practice is for the assessor(s) to prepare a written recommendation of the preferred candidate(s). The recommendation should summarise the process and include the following information:

a description of the capability-based assessment activities completed.

information on the candidate's results on the capability-based assessments; and

reasons for recommending the preferred candidate, with reference to the role requirements.

Ask your HR advisor for your agency's template to record and seek approval on your selection decisions.

6.3.3 Making an offer

Once you have approval to make an offer, contact the preferred candidate as soon as possible.

It is usual practice to make an initial verbal offer to the successful candidate(s) and to follow this up with a formal written offer once the details of employment are confirmed.

During the verbal offer you should advise the preferred candidate(s) of any conditions of engagement that apply. You can also talk about a start date, any workplace adjustment(s) that may be needed and flexible working options. Also let them know that they will receive a written letter of offer that they should sign and return as the record of their acceptance.

The letter of offer does not need to read like a legal document; it is an important part of creating a positive on-boarding experience for new starters. Consider writing in plain English and highlighting the benefits of employment in the NSW Public Service. See: *I Work for NSW*: Join the public sector

6.3.4 Unsuccessful candidates

As soon as the role is accepted, it is important to notify other candidates that they have been unsuccessful or that you wish to offer them a place in a talent pool.

Remember always to treat candidates with care and respect. Although most candidates will be unsuccessful for any role, you want them to walk away with a good impression of your agency, and the NSW Public Service, and to consider applying for roles in the future.

Hiring managers and recruiters are encouraged to use our brief guide to giving good feedback to unsuccessful interviewed job applicants (PDF 1.2MB).

6.3.5 Giving feedback

It is good practice to offer feedback to candidates who are not successful but who made it through to the final stages of the process. Feedback is given to help candidates learn from their experience and improve for next time. It should be based on the person's assessment outcomes as they relate to the role requirements.

When offering feedback it is important to:

- be prepared – review assessment results before the feedback session and have relevant documentation on hand.
- be objective and focus on the behaviours displayed.
- talk about the candidate's strengths – be specific about what was done well.
- highlight specific examples where they need improvement.
- avoid commenting on other candidates' performance (including the successful candidate).
- ensure feedback on cognitive ability test and personality questionnaire is given by an appropriately qualified person.
- use the rating scale descriptors when giving feedback on results for other assessments rather than raw scores (e.g. 'development required', 'likely to be a strength' etc.); and
- give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions.

Further information is available in the Guide to giving good feedback to unsuccessful interviewed job applicants (PDF 1.2MB)

7 Onboarding a new employee

An employee's onboarding experience sets the tone for their employment. A great experience can ease their transition, encourage engagement, promote high performance and support retention.

A successful onboarding experience informs employees about compliance, clarification, culture, and connection. It requires clear goals and measures, teamwork across the organisation and ongoing support.

Taking a tailored approach to onboarding is a key component of creating a good experience, as everyone's situation, role and needs will be different.

You can create a positive onboarding experience by:

- considering what a good experience looks like in your agency
- understanding your responsibilities
- identifying who is responsible for each action (manager, HR, ICT) and communicating with them regularly
- personalising the employee experience by understanding their circumstances and connecting with them
- checking if the employee requires reasonable adjustments
- proactively asking for feedback throughout the onboarding process
- adhering to your agency's policies.

Use these resources to help you at every stage of onboarding.

- Preparing for a new employee
- Take the first week with a new employee
- The first 90 days with a new employee

7.1 Preparing for a new employee

A good onboarding experience is essential to retaining new employees. Preparing to onboard a new employee requires open communication with the new starter and planning within your organisation.

7.1.1 Contact the new employee

As the hiring manager or HR partner, it's a good idea to contact the employee to introduce yourself, explain your role in the agency and provide your contact details in case they have any questions before they start.

The employee's manager should touch base to welcome them to the team, ask how they are tracking with the onboarding process and answer any questions. This is a chance to talk about the team they are joining, to give an overview of current projects, discuss equipment and any workplace adjustments.

New senior executives can learn more about their role in the sector on the senior executive fundamentals website.

7.1.1.1 Workplace adjustments

It's important to give the new employee the opportunity to ask for a workplace adjustment, regardless of their circumstances.

A workplace adjustment is a change to a work process, procedure or environment that allows a person to:

- perform to the best of their ability
- work productively
- work in a safe environment
- feel included in the workplace
- increase their engagement and motivation to improve performance.

Adjustments can include workspace modifications, workplace practice adjustments, accessibility requirements and software requirements.

Being inclusive in every stage of the onboarding process will help ensure your organisation is supportive of all employees.

Seek advice from your HR team if you need additional advice accommodating an adjustment, or view guidance for onboarding a person with disability.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has resources that can help you prevent discrimination and promote diversity in your workplace.

7.1.1.2 Work location

Provide your new employee with information on their workplace location, including the address, access, transport options, and where they should report to on the first day.

7.1.1.3 Work delivery format

Clarify with your employee how they will perform their role and the flexible working options available. Depending on the type of work, this might be a good time to discuss rostering or start/finish times. Take time to listen to the employee's needs while understanding the needs of your team and organisation to find a solution that works.

7.1.2 Plan the first week

Prepare the tasks or projects the employee can start in their first week. This is also a good opportunity to discuss the new employee's role with your team.

Contact HR and IT to book your employee in for any induction sessions or mandatory training your organisation has and inform the employee.

It's a good idea to make a first day/week induction agenda to send to their personal email the week before their start date.

7.1.2.1 Arrange a buddy

A good way to welcome a new employee is to pair them with someone in their team before they start. Those best suited usually do similar work to the new employee and should be a supportive, honest and reliable companion.

A buddy is an informal onboarding support relationship which new hires can turn to for questions and concerns they may not wish to ask their manager or other colleagues. A buddy also provides valuable information about the context of your organisation and its culture and helps improve employee satisfaction and productivity.

7.1.2.2 Arrange equipment

Access to necessary work equipment is vital for employees to be set up for success. Consider whether they will need a laptop, headset, keyboard and mouse, software, user ID, building access, uniform or anything else specific to the role, and arrange for these to be ready on their first day.

7.1.3 New employee check list

- Contact the employee via phone call, video call or face-to-face, and share your contact details with them in case they have questions

- Discuss any adjustments the employee may need for their workspace, workplace practice, accessibility or software
- Clarify flexible working arrangements such as what format the work will be undertaken in and on what basis
- Organise any required equipment, software or uniforms to be ready for the employee
- Identify what projects or work your employee will be taking on in their first few weeks
- Contact the employee to update them on the onboarding process and answer any questions
- Provide the new employee with information on workplace location, including the address, access, transport options and where they should report to on the first day
- Arrange for someone from your team to volunteer as a buddy and introduce them to your new employee.
- Download the onboarding checklist

7.2 The first week with a new employee

An employee's first week is an opportunity to establish positive and productive relationships and introduce them to the organisation. Their experience during the first week can determine their sense of connection to the organisation and their intention to stay.

The guidance below will get you started on the right track. Your agency may have additional guidance to follow when onboarding a new employee.

7.2.1 Introduce the organisation

It's important for someone who will work closely with the employee to meet them when they arrive on their first day. If working remotely, connect and speak with them online at an agreed time as an introduction.

7.2.1.1.1 Meet the team

Connecting the employee with their team helps them better understand the work that you do and creates a sense of belonging to the team and organisation.

Introducing the new employee to their buddy ensures they're able to contact each other easily and the employee is supported in the early days.

7.2.1.1.2 Organisation chart

Discuss the organisation chart with the employee to provide background information and help them understand the structure and purpose of the organisation.

7.2.1.1.3 Meet a senior leader

Introducing the employee to a senior leader shows that the organisation cares about them as an individual. It gives the employee an opportunity to ask questions and better understand the organisation's overarching purpose, mission, and goal.

7.2.1.1.4 Tour the workplace

A workplace tour is a valuable way to familiarise the employee with their workplace and the facilities they have access to. It's a good idea to give the employee a map of the space, address workplace health and safety and confirm their security access.

7.2.1.1.5 Internal communication channels

Internal communication channels are a great tool to announce the arrival of your new employee, to help them to feel welcome and to encourage others to introduce themselves.

7.2.2 Hold manager conversations

Regular conversations between the employee and manager are vital to the employee's engagement and job satisfaction. Use the first week to set expectations and discuss how frequently to hold future check ins to build a positive and productive relationship.

7.2.2.1.1 Communication styles

Discussing the employee's communication preferences and sharing your own can help identify best modes of communication. It demonstrates flexibility and a commitment to building a productive relationship with the employee.

7.2.2.1.2 Flexible working options

NSW Government is committed to making all roles in the public sector flexible based on the principle of 'if not, why not'. Discuss your organisation's flexible working policy and what flexible work options are available to the employee.

This is a good opportunity to talk to the employee about having a healthy work-life balance and what is expected of them in terms of working hours.

7.2.2.1.3 Organisational values and strategy

All employees in the NSW public sector are committed to upholding our values of integrity, trust, service and accountability. Address these values with the employee and what they mean to the employee's role.

Discuss any strategic plans relevant to the employee, such as the organisational or branch plan, and how your new employee's work impacts this.

7.2.3 Discuss employee benefits

Onboarding is an opportunity to speak positively about your organisation and make the employee aware of benefits, leave provisions, memberships, and learning and development opportunities.

7.2.3.1.1 Networks and employee resource groups

Let your employee know about the networks and employee resource groups they could join. This could include a community of practice, Institute of Public Administration Australia – IPAA NSW and employee groups specific to your organisation.

7.2.3.1.2 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Many EAPs offer a range of support that employees may not initially be aware of. Discussing openly with your employee about your EAP and how to access it helps them feel supported to use it if they ever need to.

7.2.4 First week with a new employee checklist

- Arrange for someone appropriate to meet the new employee when they arrive on their first day
- Organise relevant induction sessions or training through HR, ICT or similar
- Introduce the employee to their buddy, their team and a senior leader
- Provide a copy of the organisation chart and strategy
- Hold manager conversations and discuss communication styles, meeting frequency, flexible work options and organisational culture and strategy
- Tour the workplace, provide a map and confirm security access
- Welcome the new employee on internal communication channel/s

- Discuss employee benefits, including learning and development opportunities, policies, employee resource groups and your employee assistance program
- Confirm with your employee that they've read and understood the NSW public sector values.

7.3 The first 90 days with a new employee

A great onboarding experience will set new employees up for success and support them to build strong relationships with colleagues. A structured approach goes a long way to ensure they are given the time to become confident and comfortable in their new role and support retention. Continually investing in your employee beyond their first 90 days will support ongoing engagement and retention.

New senior executives can find specific insights and resources to help them in their roles on the senior executive fundamentals website.

7.3.1 Policies and mandatory training

Take time to clearly identify the policies and procedures critical to the employee's role and ensure they complete any mandatory training. Provide the employee with the opportunity to ask questions to understand the relevance to their role.

7.3.2 Develop their Performance Development Plan (PDP)

Introduce your new employee to your organisation's PDP process and help them commence their plan. This may involve further discussion on your organisation, branch or team's strategic plan and how your new employee's work fits in with this. Ideally, this would be completed by the end of their first month.

7.3.3 Check in with the employee

It's a good idea to check in with the employee about how their onboarding is going at the end of their first month and at the 90-day mark. This gives them an opportunity to discuss how they're settling in, ask questions and provide feedback on the onboarding process. During these check ins you can also gauge their level of engagement with the organisation and their role.

7.3.4 First month with a new employee checklist

- Confirm the employee understands any policies and procedures relevant to their role
- Develop the employee's Performance Development Plan (PDP)
- Check in with the employee at the one month and 90-day mark to discuss their onboarding experience.

8 Glossary of terms

8.1 Advertising across the Public Service

Advertising a role on the *I work for NSW* Expression of Interest website as referred to in GSE rule 21 and GSE rule 22 regarding temporary or term employment.

8.2 Application (or application form)

The application (or application form) is the information candidates provide to be considered for a role. It is up to agencies to decide what is included in the application form based on the capabilities, knowledge and experience and any essential requirements for the role.

8.3 Assessment requirements

Assessment requirements for recruitment are set out in the GSE Rules. These include:

comparative assessment (rule 17); and

suitability assessment (rule 18).

8.4 Assessor

An assessor is someone involved in the recruitment process in the capacity of evaluating candidates against the pre-established standards for the role. Assessors are sometimes referred to as 'panel members', indicating their involvement as part of a team of assessors or assessment panel.

8.5 Behavioural indicators

Behavioural indicators describe the type of behaviours expected at each capability level and illustrate effective performance. The behavioural indicators in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework are indicative behaviours; they are not an exhaustive list, nor is every indicator necessarily relevant to every role.

8.6 Capability

Transferable **knowledge** (theoretical or practical understanding of a subject), **skills** (proficiencies developed through training, experience or practice) and **abilities** (qualities of being able to do something) for a role as set out in the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework and any other relevant capability sets.

8.7 Capability-based assessment

GSE rule 3 describes a capability-based assessment as the process that assesses a person's capabilities at the appropriate level against those required for a role. A capability-based assessment does not include the pre-screening parts of the recruitment process, such as targeted questions or screening for essential requirements, nor does it include referee checks.

8.8 Casual employment

Casual employment is employment of non-executives to carry out irregular, intermittent, short-term, urgent or other work as and when required.

8.9 Comparison group

A comparison group or 'norm' group or is a reference group for comparing psychometric test performance. The comparison group consists of large representative samples of individuals from specific groups. Some comparison groups are quite general, such as adult Australians or university graduates. Others relate to specific groups, such as sector (e.g. Public Service), industry (e.g. engineers, science and technology), role level, role type (e.g. manager and professional).

The comparison group should be specific to the role.

8.10 Comparative assessment

GSE rule 17 defines the minimum requirements for a comparative assessment, which must include:

- screening for essential requirements;
- reviewing and application and resume.
- at least 3 capability-based assessments, one of which is an interview; and
- referee checks.

A comparative assessment is the standard requirement for ongoing, temporary or term employment over twelve months. A key feature of a comparative assessment is that it assesses an individual against the pre-established standards for the role and against any other claimants for the role.

The GSE Rules set the minimum requirements for the number of assessments and assessors, but agencies can choose to use additional assessments or assessors.

8.11 Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are identified from the *Capability Framework* and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to performing the role. They contribute to employee performance and career development.

8.12 Conditions of engagement

The GSE Act establishes that the engagement of a senior executive or a non-executive may be subject to conditions of engagement.

In the GSE Rules, Part 2 General Public Service employment provisions sets out these conditions, including: probation, citizenship or residency requirements, formal qualifications, security and other clearances and health clearances.

8.13 Core capabilities

Core capabilities are the 20 capabilities in the NSW Public Service Capability Framework in the Personal Attributes, Relationships, Results, Business Enablers and People Management groups. The capabilities in the People Management group are only for roles with manager responsibilities.

8.14 Critical roles

Critical roles are those that have a significant impact on achieving the organisation's strategic directions and priorities.

8.15 Descriptive rating scale

A descriptive rating scale for assessing capabilities uses definitions to explain each rating level. Having good descriptions for each rating level enables assessors to evaluate performance consistently.

8.16 Disqualification question

See: Gross negative disqualifier

8.17 Employment

GSE Act section 34 sets out the kinds of senior executive employment: ongoing employment and term employment.

GSE Act section 43 sets out the kinds of non-executive employment: ongoing employment, temporary employment and casual employment.

8.18 External advertising

External advertising is defined in GSE rule 3 to mean the process of advertising on the NSW Government jobs website, which is the *I work for NSW* public website. External advertising may also include any other form of advertising that is accessible to the general public.

8.19 Fit-for-purpose assessment

In the context of assessment for recruitment and selection, fit-for-purpose indicates that an assessment method is well suited to what is being assessed (i.e. the capabilities at the level required for the role) as well as the context of the role (i.e. functional or subject matter area).

8.20 Fitness to perform the duties of the role

Fitness to perform the duties of the role, in relation to health assessments under GSE rule 9, includes the ability to carry out the role without endangering the health and safety of the public, other persons employed in the Public Service agency or the person concerned. It can also include a person's ability to carry out the inherent requirements of a role.

8.21 Flexible working

Flexible working means re-thinking the way we plan and arrange work – when it takes place, where it takes place and how we arrange it.

A note on agile/activity-based working: agile work in the government context generally means activity-based working (or hot-desking) and refers to the physical workplace environment. While some concepts may overlap e.g. remote working – agile work is not the same as flexible working.

8.22 Focus capabilities

Defined in GSE rule 3, focus capabilities for a role means the capabilities, of those required for the role, decided by the employer as being the most important for the effective performance of the role.

8.23 Government sector

The government sector is defined in section 3 of the GSE Act and includes the Public Service – see: About the NSW government sector on the PSC website.

8.24 Gross negative disqualifier

A gross negative disqualifier (or disqualification question) is a screening tool that allows candidates to self-determine their eligibility for the role against an essential requirement (e.g. the right to work in Australia). Ineligible candidates are screened out immediately, preventing them from unnecessarily completing the full application process.

8.25 GSE

The Government Sector Employment Act 2013 (GSE Act) and related instruments are the legal framework for NSW government sector employment and workforce management.

8.26 GSE legislative framework

The GSE legislative framework includes:

- *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*
- *Government Sector Employment Regulation 2014*
- *Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014*
- *Government Sector Employment (Health Service Senior Executives) Rules 2016*
- *Government Sector Employment (NSW Police Force) Rules 2017*
- *Government Sector Employment (Transport Service Senior Executives) Rules 2017*
- *Government Sector Employment (Senior Executive Bands) Determination 2014*

8.27 Identified role

An identified role is a role where being a member of a particular group is a genuine occupational qualification as specified in the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. For example, an Aboriginal person involved in the delivery of services and programs that have an impact on Aboriginal people or involve dealing with Aboriginal communities.

8.28 I work for NSW

I work for NSW is the primary jobs board for vacancies in the NSW government sector. Advertising on I work for NSW satisfies the requirement for external advertising.

8.29 Job advertisement / ad

A job ad is an announcement of a job opportunity designed to attract suitable job seekers to apply.

8.30 Job evaluation

An analysis of a role compared with other roles in the organisation or market to determine the classification of work.

8.31 Key accountabilities

The key accountabilities in the role description refer to the outcomes the role is expected to deliver with a focus on the most important aspects of the role.

8.32 Kinds of employment

Kinds of employment for senior executives are ongoing employment and term employment.

Kinds of employment for non-executives are ongoing employment, temporary employment and casual employment.

8.33 Knowledge and experience

Knowledge and experience are different to qualifications or certifications required to practice and should only be included in the role description where they:

- are needed for successful performance in the role
- cannot be met by transferable capabilities demonstrated in other roles
- cannot be developed on the job in a reasonable timeframe.

8.34 Merit principles

GSE rule 16 sets out the merit principles that apply to employment in a role in the NSW Public Service.

8.35 Mobility

Mobility is the movement of a government sector employee through assignment, transfer or secondment, including secondments and temporary assignments at a higher or (with the exception of temporary assignment) lower grade or band than the employee's ongoing employment.

8.36 Mobility of non-executives

The mobility of non-executive employees refers to their movement to other roles through the following means:

- Assignment (GSE Act section 46) or temporary assignment (GSE rule 11) – movement within the same NSW Public Service agency; and
- Secondment (GSE Act section 64 and GSE Act section 66) or transfer (GSE Act section 64) – movement to a different government sector agency (including to a different Public Service agency) or between a government sector agency (including a Public Service agency) and an employer outside of the NSW government sector.

8.37 Mobility of senior executives

The mobility of senior executive employees refers to their movement to other roles through the following means:

- **Assignment** (GSE Act section 38) or temporary assignment (GSE rule 11) – movement across Public Service agencies; and

- **Secondment** (GSE Act section 64 and GSE Act section 66) or transfer (GSE Act section 64) – movement to a different government sector agency or between a government sector agency and an employer outside of the NSW government sector.

8.38 National police check

A national police check (or criminal records check) may be required for employment in the NSW government sector.

8.39 Non-executive employment

Non-executive employment in the NSW Public Service may be ongoing employment, temporary employment or casual employment under section 43 of the GSE Act.

Once a non-executive is employed in ongoing or temporary employment in the Public Service they are assigned to a role under section 46 of the GSE Act.

8.40 Occupation-specific capabilities

Professional knowledge, skills and abilities required by individuals working in a specific occupational group, which:

- are transferable between roles in the function, but may have limited transferability to roles in a different functional area; and
- must be developed to progress within the function.

8.41 Ongoing employment

Ongoing employment is employment that continues until the senior executive or non-executive employee resigns or his or her employment is terminated.

8.42 Percentile

A percentile is often used in psychometric testing to standardise raw scores against a comparison group. The percentile indicates the percentage of the comparison group who gained a score at the same level or below that of the individual test-taker. For example, a score that falls at the 70th percentile means that the individual's score is the same as or higher than the scores of 70% of those who took the test.

8.43 Pre-established standards

The pre-established standards for a role refer to the capability, knowledge and experience standards needed to perform the role.

8.44 Probation

Probation is where a person who is new to the NSW Public Service completes an initial period to ensure they satisfy the requirements for the role in which they are employed.

8.45 Public sector

The term public sector usually refers to the government sector, State owned corporations and a range of other quasi-government entities, although as a term of general usage it is not defined in the GSE legislative framework.

8.46 Public Service

The Public Service is defined in section 20 of the GSE Act and includes departments, executive agencies and separate agencies – see: About the NSW government sector on the PSC website.

8.47 Resume

A resume (or curriculum vitae/CV) is a brief account of a person's education, qualifications and experience in previous roles.

8.48 Temporary employment

Temporary employment is non-executive employment for a temporary purpose. Under GSE rule 10, temporary employment is for a maximum of four years within any continuous period of 5 years.

8.49 Term employment

Term employment is senior executive employment for a specified period or for the duration of a specified task (unless the executive sooner resigns or his or her employment is sooner terminated).

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NSW GOVERNMENT