

Fact sheet: Merit-based employment

Simplified assessment processes

Update of the *Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014 (GSE Rules)*

Key points

- Changes to [Part 3](#) of the [GSE Rules](#) commenced on 2 September 2019 to simplify the requirements for Public Service agencies when using comparative assessment or suitability assessment.
- The minimum standards for assessment processes when using comparative assessment and suitability assessment are an assessment of an individual's claims against the focus capabilities, knowledge and experience.
- A definition of focus capabilities has been added to [rule 3](#) to formally distinguish these capabilities from other capabilities.

Introduction

Changes have been made to [Part 3](#) of the GSE Rules on merit-based employment to simplify the requirements for comparative assessment and suitability assessment which apply to Public Service agencies. To support these changes, a definition of focus capabilities has been added to [rule 3](#).

The changes commenced on 2 September 2019.

What's changed?

Simplified processes for comparative assessment and suitability assessment

The amendments make clear that the minimum requirement for assessment processes when undertaking a comparative assessment under new [rule 17 \(1A\)](#) or a suitability assessment under new [rule 18 \(1A\)](#) is an assessment of the focus capabilities, knowledge and experience needed for the role, rather than all capabilities in the role description along with knowledge and experience. Other capabilities can also be assessed but this is optional under the rules.

[Rule 18 \(1\)](#) is further amended to make it clear that suitability assessment is about assessing an individual's claim for a role and with this addition.

Focus capabilities

The following definition of 'focus capabilities' is added to [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.

This definition replaces the explanation of focus capabilities from the [Role description development guideline](#).

Benefits

The main benefits of the change are:

- Assessment processes retain their rigour while having a greater emphasis on assessing the most important capabilities needed for effective performance of a role
- Focus capabilities are clearly defined and distinguished from other capabilities
- Agencies and candidates are clear that focus capabilities must be assessed
- Agencies have flexibility to decide if other capabilities are also assessed.

Questions and answers

When do the simplified assessments apply?

The changes to the minimum standards for assessment processes apply to comparative assessment ([rule 17](#)) and suitability assessment ([rule 18](#)). Under the GSE Rules:

- Comparative assessment is used to employ a person in ongoing employment (including for promotion) or temporary or term employment, to convert temporary or term employment to ongoing employment, or to place a person in a talent pool
- Suitability assessment is used to employ a person in temporary or term employment for up to 12 months.

Can I assess all capabilities?

Yes. While the GSE Rules require an assessment of focus capabilities to meet the requirements of comparative assessment or suitability assessment, this is the minimum standard. Assessment processes can involve an assessment of all capabilities needed for a role.

How many assessments should I use for comparative assessment?

[Rule 17](#) requires that at least three capability-based assessments are used to assess a person's claim against the pre-established standards and any other claimants for a role. One of the capability-based assessments must be an interview.

How many assessments should I use for suitability assessment?

[Rule 18](#) requires that at least two capability-based assessments are used to assess a person's claim against the pre-established standards for a role. One of the capability-based assessments must be an interview.

What are the pre-established standards for a role?

The pre-established standards are defined in [rule 3](#) as the capability, knowledge and experience standards for the role. These standards should be included in the role description with the capability level shown for each capability.

Should candidates be advised about the standards they will be assessed against?

Agencies should advise candidates about the standards they will be assessed against. This could be in the job ad. Alternatively, agencies can communicate this information to candidates when inviting them to participate in assessment activities.

Do the changes apply to graduate promotion under rule 20A?

No. The changes to simplify the minimum standards for assessment apply to comparative assessment ([rule 17](#)) and suitability assessment ([rule 18](#)).

[Rule 20A](#) specifies that comparative assessment after external advertising is not required so long as an agency head is satisfied that the graduate employee meets the pre-established standards for the higher-level role and that their conduct has been satisfactory. For the purposes of rule 20A, the pre-established standards are the capabilities, knowledge and experience requirements set out in the role description.

The [Graduate employee promotion guideline](#) provides advice to agencies on the types of assessments they may wish to use to determine capability.

Further information

The PSC's [Recruitment and selection guide](#) has information on structuring assessment processes and selecting assessment activities.