

# Glossary

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## 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.

## Assessment centre

See: [Assessment centre fact sheet](#)

## Assessment requirements

Assessment requirements for recruitment are set out in the GSE Rules. These include:

- comparative assessment (rule 17); and
- suitability assessment (rule 18).

## 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.

## 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.

# 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.

## 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.

## Casual employment

**Casual employment** is employment of non-executives to carry out irregular, intermittent, short-term, urgent or other work as and when required.

## 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.

## 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.

## Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are identified from the *NSW Public Service Capability Framework* and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to performing the role. They contribute to employee performance and career development.

## 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**.

## 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.

## Critical roles

Critical roles are those that have a significant impact on achieving the organisation's strategic directions and priorities.

## 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.

## Disqualification question

See: [Gross negative disqualifier](#)

## 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.

## Essential requirements

See: [Essential requirements factsheet](#)

## 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.

## 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).

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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**.

## 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.

## GSE

The **Government Sector Employment Act 2013** (GSE Act) and related instruments are the legal framework for NSW government sector employment and workforce management.

## 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](#)

## 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.

## Inherent requirements

See: [Essential requirements factsheet](#)

## 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.

## Job advertisement / ad

A job ad is an announcement of a job opportunity designed to attract suitable job seekers to apply. The job ad emphasises:

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

## Job evaluation

An analysis of a role compared with other roles in the organisation or market to determine the classification of work.



## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## Merit principles

**GSE rule 16** sets out the merit principles that apply to employment in a role in the NSW Public Service.

## 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.

## 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 section64](#) and [GSE Act section66](#)) or transfer ([GSE Act section64](#)) – 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.

See: [Assignment to role guideline](#) and [Mobility guideline - Transfers and secondments](#) for more information.

## Mobility of senior executives

The mobility of senior executive employees refers to their movement to other roles through the following means:

- Assignment ([GSE Act section38](#)) or temporary assignment ([GSE rule 11](#)) – movement across Public Service agencies; and
- Secondment ([GSE Act section64](#) and [GSE Act section66](#)) or transfer ([GSE Act section64](#)) – movement to a different government sector agency or between a government sector agency and an employer outside of the NSW government sector.

See: [Assignment to role guideline](#) and [Mobility guideline - Transfers and secondments](#) for more information.

## National police check

A national police check (or criminal records check) may be required for employment in the NSW government sector.

## 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.

## 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.

## Ongoing employment

Ongoing employment is employment that continues until the senior executive or non-executive employee resigns or his or her employment is terminated.

## 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.

## Pre-established standards

The pre-established standards for a role refer to the capability, knowledge and experience standards needed to perform the role.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.](#)**

## Reasonable adjustment

See Workplace adjustment.

## Recruitment pool

See 'Talent pool'.

## Resume

A resume (or curriculum vitae/CV) is a brief account of a person's education, qualifications and experience in previous roles.