

Designing the assessment process

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

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.

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.

See **examples** of assessment components for different roles.

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.

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

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: Structuring a process to meet requirements for comparative or suitability assessment

	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				Yes	
Reviewing a resume (required) and application (not required for suitability assessment)	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Interview	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Capability-based assessments (other than interview)	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Referee checks	Yes		Yes		Yes

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**.

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	Yes	Yes	
Interviews			Yes
Personality questionnaires			Yes
Work sample exercises		Yes	Yes

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. See [designing the application form](#) for more information.

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 a large number of candidates – see [examples](#).

Designing the application

For information about what can be included in the application form see: [Designing the application](#)

Choosing assessors

For information about choosing assessors to assist you with your assessment process see: [Choosing assessors](#)

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 have the ability to perform well in a role and could develop capabilities or other requirements, such as subject matter knowledge, on the job within a reasonable period of time.