



**Australian
Human Rights
Commission**

everyone, everywhere, everyday

Recruitment and Selection Guidelines

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1. Introduction

The objective of these guidelines is to assist delegates and staff in making employment decisions with the aim of selecting the best person for the job. The Commission is committed to open competition on merit and equity in employment. Selection for vacancies will be without patronage or favouritism as well as without unlawful or unjust discrimination.

These guidelines are consistent with the *Public Service Act 1999*, Public Service Regulations, Public Service Commissioners Directions, Public Service Commission Advices and the Commission's Enterprise Agreement.

2. Definition of merit

Merit remains a fundamental principle of APS employment. This is articulated in the APS Values in section 10(1) (b) of the *Public Service Act 1999* which states that: "the APS is a public service in which employment decisions are based on merit".

Merit based decisions, as defined in Clause 10(2) for promotion and engagement, require, as a primary consideration, a competitive assessment of the relative suitability of the candidates against the genuine requirements of the duties having regard to the capacity of candidates to achieve outcomes relevant to the duties.

3. Job assessment and review

Prior to making a decision to advertise a vacancy, the delegate and manager have the following responsibilities to:

- Determine whether there is an actual need to fill the vacancy and, if so, how the vacancy will be filled
- Ensure the current key responsibilities and functions of the vacancy are clearly defined in the selection documentation
- Ensure the selection criteria accurately reflect the skills, abilities, qualities, and qualifications (if applicable) required, based on the duty statement. Particular skills/experience should only be identified as essential where lacking these would make carrying out the duties of the position impossible

[All jobs require an appreciation of the principles of Workplace Diversity and Work Health and Safety]

- Ensure the duties and selection criteria are appropriate to the classification

4. Filling a vacancy

All ongoing (permanent) vacancies and non-ongoing (temporary) vacancies 18 months or more are required to be advertised in the Commonwealth Government Gazette and a merit selection completed. Advertising in other mediums or forums should also be considered if Gazette advertising alone is not expected to produce a wide field of applicants.

Options for filling non-ongoing vacancies available for less than 18 months include:

- Temporary reassignment of duties for internal staff taking into account staff development and operational requirements
- Advertising in the Gazette (i.e. full merit selection – for vacancies that may extend beyond 18 months)
- Advertising on the Commission website, specialist job boards (eg Indigenous Job Board) and/or circulation on list serves
- Employing temporary staff through a recruitment agency
- Employing from the Commission’s temporary employment register
- Inviting expressions of interest from internal staff (requesting submission of a resume and/or a brief statement of suitability or a full statement of claims against the selection criteria and/or an interview) Subject to executive oversight and cross-Commission operational requirements.
- Utilising an existing order of merit that has been completed within the last 18 months

5. Special measures and identified positions

The Public Service Commissioner’s Directions 1999 enable agency heads to put in place **special measures** to identify particular non-SES opportunities as open only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants. When a vacancy occurs, Managers should consider whether there is an opportunity or need for a special measure.

Identified positions have specific selection criteria that signify that the role has a strong involvement in issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples but are not restricted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants. The Commission has used the following criteria for this purpose:

1. A demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders in contemporary Australian society and the diversity of circumstances of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.
2. A demonstrated ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

6. Applicants with a Disability

It is a Commission policy that where applicants for a position identify as having a disability, and they meet all the selection criteria, they should be offered an interview for the position. The applicant will still be required to demonstrate at interview that they are able to carry out the requirements of the position to a higher standard than other interviewed applicants.

7. Selection committee

The delegate must approve the composition of the selection committee before the start of the selection exercise (i.e. before any shortlisting has taken place).

The selection committee has the following responsibilities

- Planning and conduct of the selection exercise is timely, invokes the principles of fairness, merit and equity in employment
- Liaison occurs with the delegate as required
- Appropriate facilities/arrangements are provided for applicants particularly those in EEO groups (see Attachment A)
- Arranging interviews and submission of referee reports
- A selection report is provided to the delegate that makes a recommendation regarding the filling of the vacancy. **Note: there is no selection decision until the delegate has approved the recommendation**
- Maintenance of confidentiality and discretion at each stage of the selection exercise
- Post-interview feedback is provided to interviewed applicants on request

Generally, the selection committee should comprise 3 members who occupy jobs classified at or above the level of the vacancy. At least one member should be from an independent functional area and the

committee should have gender balanced representation. The delegate may form part of the committee, as may suitable staff from other relevant agencies.

It is recommended that staff participating on selection committees receive training in the principles and procedures to be followed. The Human Resources Section can provide details on appropriate training courses.

The role of the panel members is to ensure that the recruitment process is carried out with independence and objectivity and to make a selection based on the skills, abilities and experience of the applicants and their ability to demonstrate these to the satisfaction of the panel.

Selection should be based solely on merit, i.e. the preferred candidate should be the person assessed as being able to carry out the duties and requirements of the position to the highest standard.

A chairperson is nominated by the delegate to ensure that the selection process is carried out in a timely manner and to liaise with the Human Resources Section and delegate as required. The chairperson usually arranges the interviews, writes the selection report and may take primary responsibility for providing feedback to applicants.

8. Role of the Human Resources Section

The Human Resources section administers the recruitment function and is available at all stages of the recruitment process to provide advice to selection committees. Specifically, it performs the following functions

- Maintain and update copies of selection documentation in consultation with section manager
- Arrange advertising of vacancies (including Gazette, press, website, list serves and email advice to all staff)
- Send out selection documents on request from applicants
- Receive and acknowledge applications
- Provide the original set of applications and a 'Schedule of Applicants' to the chairperson for shortlisting
- Arrange scribe if required (please note this occurs in exceptional circumstances only)
- Advise applicants unsuccessful after interview
- Send offer of employment to successful applicant and notify the outcome of the selection in the Gazette if required

9. Factors determining suitability

Examples of work related qualities that may be taken into account in making an assessment are

- Skills and abilities
- Qualifications and training
- Standard of work performance
- Relevant personal qualities
- Demonstrated potential for further development
- Ability to contribute to team performance

Although there are no specific requirements to use any particular selection method, usual practice involves the use of written application, interview and referee/supervisor reports. Committees may also consider whether other assessment tools such as practical exercises would be useful. Committees should ensure appropriate consideration of each of the assessment tools used in determining an applicant's suitability against the selection criterion and that there is no disadvantage created by their use, particularly for candidates with a disability.

10. Selection Checklist

This checklist may serve as a guide to undertaking staff selections

- an initial meeting of the selection committee to discuss assessment methods, timeframes, responsibilities, expectations, other considerations (e.g. late applications, diversity issues)
- shortlist
- confirm the assessment strategy e.g. interviews, referees etc.
- interview/conduct other assessment processes as appropriate
- collect and assess referee reports for the strongest candidates
- establish order of merit
- prepare the report for the delegate
- delegate makes a decision regarding staffing action to be taken
- all interviewed applicants advised of the outcome

11. Shortlisting

The selection committee should make an assessment of each application against the duties of the position.

Only those applicants who are competitive in relation to the field and in relation to the number of vacancies should be shortlisted for interview. It is the responsibility of applicants to supply the information necessary to judge whether they meet the requirements of the job. Applicants are not usually required to address specific selection criteria so the committee is required to experience and suitability on the basis of their CV and covering letter. If in doubt further information may be sought from the applicant.

Applicants must satisfy all criteria to be considered suitable. In addition, an applicant may be excluded from the shortlist if they are not as competitive as other applicants on one or more criteria.

It is necessary to provide to the delegate a brief record of the reasons against the selection criteria that applicants were not shortlisted. This record may simply consist of the completed 'Schedule of Applicants' form. Some examples of reasons may include "The applicant does not meet criteria 3" or "The applicant is not as competitive on criteria 2 and 6 as other applicants".

If the committee feels that the field of applicants is weak, they can recommend to the delegate that the vacancy be re-advertised.

The committee should then provide a list of applicants not shortlisted (or a copy of the Schedule of Applicants) to the Human Resources Section.

Internal applicants not shortlisted should be notified in person by the chairperson of the committee before interviews are conducted.

Due to the large volume of applications received, the Commission no longer requires the committee to provide feedback to those applicants not shortlisted unless there is the capacity to do so.

12. Interviews

If interviews are to be held, the selection committee should

- Give applicants at least two working days notice of their interview date and time
- Advise applicants of the membership of the committee
- Advise applicants of any documentation they are required to bring, including referees reports, a specific example of written work, etc.

- Where appropriate, provide applicants with sources of background material related to the work area
- Advise applicants of the expected length and format of the interview and any other assessment tools to be used (eg. Practical test)
- Where relevant, advise applicants that interview questions will be given prior to the interview and schedule an arrival time to accommodate this
- Identify any arrangements that might need to be made for applicants with a disability (see Attachment C)
- Confirm the nature of the interview i.e. in person, by telephone or by skype with consideration of any time differences based on the applicants' location. Whilst 'in person' interviews are preferred, the circumstances of the applicant should be considered and where possible and cost-effective, be accommodated. (please note that the travel costs of candidates wishing to be interviewed face to face is born by the candidate not the Commission)

Committees should base their questions on the selection criteria. Committees should also be clear about what answers they require in order to evaluate the performance of the interviewees.

Committees should also keep in mind the provisions of the *Public Service Act 1999* that preclude patronage, favouritism and discrimination. As such, the committee should not make assumptions that might unfairly bias the selection process against members of target groups.

13. Use of Scribes

The convenor has specific responsibilities to produce the selection report at the end of the selection process. In some circumstances however, assistance may be sought from an external scribing service. A scribing service provides the committee with a note taker who sits in each interview and provides both an individual assessment for each interviewed candidate and the final report on the basis of comments and decisions made by the committee.

The use of a scribing service adds significantly to the cost of the recruitment exercise and should only be used for the most senior positions and/or in exceptional circumstances.

14. Referees Reports

Referee reports should be sought for competitive applicants. Referee reports should assess the applicant against the job they are applying for rather than their current job, although it would be expected that there may be some cross over.

An applicant's current supervisor is best placed to provide informed comment. Where the applicant does not nominate the current supervisor, the committee should ask for the reason. To ensure that supervisor comment is a useful evaluation tool, comments should be substantiated by examples of work performance, achievements, etc.

If any of the selection committee members is required to provide a referee report for any of the applicants, they should submit them before any interviews are held.

Referee reports should state the jobs of the applicant and referee, and the nature and length of the working relationship with the applicant.

If referee comments are obtained orally, notes should be taken, accurately summarised in writing and read back to or emailed to the referee for confirmation. Referees should be advised that applicants will be made aware of the comments provided. It should be noted that if applicants can supply a referee report at the interview, it may be appropriate to verify the information supplied.

Applicants should be given the opportunity to respond to any adverse referees comments. If there is a significant discrepancy between supervisor comment and other assessment components, further information may be sought to clarify.

15. Selection Reports

As with all public sector processes, recruitment activities should be transparent and documented.

The selection report should be brief but contain sufficient detail for the delegate to be satisfied that the most suitable person has been recommended and that the process is consistent with procedural fairness principles.

All selection committee members must be involved in the decision-making process to discuss and resolve any differences of opinion they may have. If agreement cannot be reached, a minority report can be submitted with the main report.

In addition to the recommended applicant, an order of merit of suitable applicants may be established for use if future similar vacancies are likely to arise within the following 12 months.

The **recommendation** should be addressed to the delegate containing

- Job details and reason for the vacancy
- Advertising details
- Name, classification and work unit of all committee members
- Number of applications received and how many were shortlisted/withdrew
- Number interviewed and dates of interview
- Methods of assessment (written application/interview/referees reports/ practical exercise/skills assessments)
- Ranking of suitable applicants (where applicable)
- Recommendation for engagement (ongoing or non-ongoing), promotion or movement (ongoing or non-ongoing)
- Signatures of all committee members

Individual assessments must be written for each shortlisted applicant. These should be brief but contain

- Accurate, objective comments relating to experience, written application, interview, referees report etc in respect of each of the selection criteria
- Ratings (non-numerical) for each criterion that are consistent with these comments (an example of a rating scale is at Attachment A).
- An overall statement of suitability or non-suitability for the job

An applicant who fails to meet any important criterion must be rated overall as unsuitable for the job.

A **Comparative assessment** should also be provided to clearly justify the selection committee's conclusion as to which applicant best meets the selection criteria and is recommended for the job. It must also compare the relative merit of the highest rated suitable applicants who have been ranked on any order of merit. Suitable applicants may be compared against the selection criteria in a table using a rating scale (an example of a rating scale is at Attachment A).

The question of access to documents in the selection report is covered by the privacy principles. Applicants may request a copy of their individual assessment from the Human Resources Section.

An example pro forma of a selection report is at Attachment B.

16. Role of the Delegate

It is important to understand that the delegate is the decision-maker in the selection process. The selection committee's role is solely to make a recommendation to the delegate.

The delegate's role is to ensure that a decision based solely on merit is made, that appropriate procedures have been followed in reaching that decision and that legislative provisions have been adhered to.

Delegates may seek further information from the selection committee or make further investigations as necessary. The delegate may also ask for a new selection process to be undertaken or vary the recommendation of the selection committee. The delegate should record their reason for such a decision.

The delegate may also determine a commencing salary for the recommended applicant that is above the minimum for the classification.

For selection exercises at the Commission, the delegate is the Executive Director or Director Human Resources.

17. Post-Selection Feedback

Post-selection feedback involves discussion with an applicant about their application and interview performance and their overall assessment in direct relationship to the vacancy. It is available to all interviewed applicants when they are notified of the result of the selection. Internal applicants should receive their feedback prior to an announcement about the outcome of the selection process. The aim of feedback is to

- Promote confidence in the selection process
- Identify individual strengths and areas for development/improvement
- Resolve any misunderstanding or grievances on an informal basis
- Leave unsuccessful applicants with a positive view of the organisation – they may develop into just the right person we are looking for at some point in the future

18. Making an offer of employment

No offer of employment should be made to an individual without first confirming their eligibility for APS employment.

Generally, prospective employees must

- not be within the exclusionary period of reemployment following a redundancy from the APS or other Commonwealth employer
- hold Australian citizenship unless the Agency Head considers it appropriate to waive
- provide evidence of any mandatory educational requirements or professional memberships

19. Review of actions

There are two formal avenues available to a staff member to request a review of actions relating to staff selections.

These are:

- A request for a review of action (appeal) against a promotion through the Promotions Review Committee (PRC) of the Australian Public Service Commission

These may only be lodged against promotions to jobs classified at APS Level 6 and below. Only APS applicants for the advertised vacancy may seek a review and they must lodge their application within 14 days from the date of notification of the promotion in the Gazette.

Applications for review of promotion decisions can only be made on the grounds of merit. The PRC's decision can confirm or overturn the delegate's decision. Further information is available in the preamble to the Promotions section of the Gazette.

- A request for a review of action (grievance)

If an APS employee believes that a serious breach of the selection process has occurred, they may request that aspects of the procedures adopted in the selection exercise (as distinct from the merits of the decision) be reviewed. There is no power under these provisions to vary a selection decision, however, if a serious defect in the process is found, a delegate may cancel a promotion before it takes effect.

20. Some advice for selection committees

- Some committees use the written application only to shortlist applicants for interview. Committees should consider the content of the written application at all stages of the assessment.
- Committees sometimes employ “mathematical” selection methods with too much emphasis on applying the process faithfully and not on selecting the best person for the job. Scores should not be appropriated and added up to discover the successful candidate.
- Committees can tend to rely heavily on “scenario” questions. While this may be useful in measuring the applicant’s thought processes, what applicant’s say they would do may bear no relationship to what they would actually do when confronted with a real situation. Committees should also consider asking about past behaviour and achievements as a better indicator of future behaviour.
- Committees often approach the issue of prompting at interview differently - some view prompting negatively, some do not prompt at all and some prompt freely. Committees should keep in mind that applicants may be nervous at interview and may not reveal their abilities or knowledge without prompting. Prompting can assist the committee in their enquiry when it assists the applicant with their opportunity to present their claims. It is also important to keep in mind that too much prompting of one applicant over another may not be fair. It is therefore important that the committee agree on a consistent approach before the interviews.
- Referee reports can be useful but they can also be unreliable and inconsistent. Referees should not be asked to rate the applicant using a standard scale as some referees may be more generous in awarding ratings than others. Committees may also be inclined to see an applicant whose referee is more detailed as more suitable than another applicant whose referee is more taciturn. The same information should be elicited from all referees.
- Sometimes it may be necessary to readvertise the position. Committees should not feel compelled to take an applicant from a selection just because that person in comparison to the rest of

the field was the better applicant. Remember they still have to be able to meet the criteria for the position and be able to do the job.

Remember, it is costly to go through a recruitment process only to have a performance management problem due to poor selection, so ensure sufficient time and resources are devoted to the process.

Attachment A Example of a rating scale

The following standard terms can be used to describe the level at which the applicant is rated against the individual selection criteria.

Excellent	where the applicant meets the criterion at the highest possible standard, ie possesses exceptionally well developed and relevant skills and abilities; is outstanding
Very Good	where the applicant is remarkably good, ie possesses highly developed and relevant skills and abilities and clearly exceeds requirements
Good	where the applicant possesses well developed and relevant skills and abilities and has demonstrated competency at the required level
Satisfactory	where the applicant fulfils the requirements of the criterion, or possesses the relevant skills and abilities and could adequately carry out the duties of the job
Requires Development	the applicant possesses some skills, abilities and personal qualities relevant to the criterion, but is limited on others. Would be able to temporarily perform the duties with close supervision but would require further training and development to meet the standard required against this criterion
Unsatisfactory	where the applicant does not satisfy the criterion, or is unable to demonstrate that they possess the relevant skills and abilities; the applicant must be rated unsuitable for the job

Attachment B Example pro forma of a selection report

Selection Advisory Committee Report

Vacancy and advertising details

Title:

Classification:

Section:

The vacancy is an ongoing/non-ongoing employment opportunity (insert number of months for non-ongoing).

The vacancy was advertised by email to staff on (insert date) and in the Commonwealth Gazette of (insert date). The vacancy was also advertised on the Commission's website and these job boards.... on (insert date). Applications closed on (insert date).

Selection Advisory Committee Composition

Name of Convenor:

Title:

Classification:

Section:

Name of Member:

Title:

Classification:

Section:

Name of Member:

Title:

Classification:

Section:

Selection documentation

The duty statement and selection criteria are at Attachment A and accurately reflect the current duties of the job.

Applicants

(insert number) applications were received. (insert number) applicants were not interviewed for the reasons indicated on the Schedule of Applicants at Attachment B. (insert number) applicants were selected for interview.

Selection Process

The Selection Advisory Committee interviewed (insert number) applicants on (insert date). (The questions asked at interview are at Attachment C). Attached is an individual assessment against the selection criteria for each applicant interviewed. Referee comments were sought for all competitive applicants.

Comparative assessment

Applicants were assessed on their written application, interview and referees comments (where obtained). The following table compares the (insert number) applicants found suitable for the job.

Applicant Name	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5
	Excellent	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Very	Very	Excellent	Good	Good

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	Good	Good			
	Good	Good	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

The committee has established the following order of merit -

1. (insert name of recommended applicant)
2. (insert name of applicant rated second if applicable)
3. etc

(Insert name) was found unsuitable for the job and has not been ranked on the order of merit.

Recommendation

The committee recommend that (insert name) be employed as an ongoing/non-ongoing employee in the advertised vacancy. The committee recommends that the order of merit be utilised to fill any other vacancies of this job that may arise in the next 18 months.

.....

Convenor

Date:

.....

Member

Date:

.....

Member

Date:

Delegate's decision

The Selection Advisory Committee's recommendation is:

Approved in full / Not approved / Approved in part

Signature

Date.....

Title

Individual assessment report**Name:****Background:****Summary****Overall Rating – suitable/not suitable**

Attachment C Guidelines for interviewing applicants with a disability

The selection committee needs to ensure that any applicant identified as having a disability is given every opportunity through the selection process to demonstrate their capacity to do the inherent duties of the advertised job.

Prior to the interview, selection committee members can

- Take care not to exclude applicants during shortlisting on the basis of assumptions about that person's inability to perform the duties of the job. Applicants with a disability should only be excluded if they do not satisfy the essential requirements of the job
- Ascertain if it will be necessary to make special arrangements for the conduct of the interview itself, including pre-interview preparations, eg. planning questions, seating arrangements and interpreters if required
- Familiarise themselves with the principles of reasonable adjustment (see Attachment D)

During the interview, committee members can

- Shake hands even if the applicant has limited hand use or wears an artificial limb
- Look and speak directly to the applicant even if (as with a hearing impaired person), they are accompanied by an interpreter or aide
- Ask the applicant for guidance or clarification on pertinent issues if you have difficulty understanding the applicant or the issue
- Offer assistance with respect and without assuming that the applicant automatically needs it

Committee members should not

- Tell the applicant they admire his or her courage, express sympathy for them, or ask them how they acquired their disability
- Assume the person is too sensitive to answer any of the questions put to other applicants

- Ask questions that are not necessary and would not be asked of a person without a disability
- Assume that the applicant has no sense of humour

Attachment D The Principle of Reasonable Adjustment

Many forms of “adjustment” can be made to working arrangements or the work environment to enable people with disabilities to compete on their merits for recruitment and career advancement opportunities.

These include

- Provision of work-related aids or special equipment or appliances, or modification of existing arrangements
- Structural modifications to the workplace
- Re-arranging the physical layout of the workplace
- Providing essential information in formats suitable for people with sight and/or hearing impairments
- Providing appropriate forms of assistance, such as reader assistance for a sight-impaired person
- Accepting that there may be alternative ways of accomplishing a given task or objective
- Exchanging some parts of a job between a person with a disability and other staff

It should be noted that, more often than not, reasonable adjustment simply means changing the attitude of supervisors and co-workers. This is the most critical adjustment of all, as the provision of equipment will, by itself, do little.

Please see the “Reasonable Adjustment” Policy for more information on options available.

The Interview

It is important to understand that disabilities are not always static conditions and that they will affect different people in different ways.

At the interview, aspects of the condition of an applicant with a disability that may affect their performance of the job should be addressed candidly but with tact. The selection committee may need to ask the applicant how they would perform the job, what sort of things they might require to enable them to do the job or if any adjustments

might be required to the work environment. People with disabilities may be aware of techniques or equipment that are unfamiliar to the committee.

The Selection

Selection pertaining to people with disabilities should be based only on merit. If they can perform the essential duties of the job, they should be assessed according to their relative suitability against the selection criteria. When recommending an applicant with a disability for the job, the committee should advise the delegate if any reasonable adjustments are required to the workplace or work methods.



GUIDE FOR SELECTION COMMITTEES

This guide is intended to support the Commission's Recruitment and Selection Guidelines and Procedure and provide an overview of the role of the selection committee chair and members.

The composition of the selection committee must be approved before the commencement of the selection process.

What is the role of a selection committee?

The role of the selection committee is to assess the suitability of candidates who have applied for the position(s) advertised as part of a merit-based selection process. The selection committee will also establish a merit pool and/or a merit list following the conclusion of a recruitment and selection process.

Selection committee members

A selection committee generally consists of 3 members who occupy roles classified at or above the level of the vacancy. At least one member should be from an independent functional area, the committee should also have gender balanced representation and diversity.

Selection committee members are responsible for:

- Ensuring they have completed the required [APS Recruitment and Induction](#) training.
- Declaring any [conflicts of interest](#), prior to shortlisting.
- Interviewing and assessing candidates.
- Completing [selection committee interview forms](#) for each candidate.
- Contributing to the recruitment and selection report.
- Ensuring the selection process is fair and based on merit.
- Always maintaining confidentiality in relation to candidates' information the selection committee may become aware of while undertaking a recruitment and selection process.

Chairperson

A chairperson of the selection committee is nominated by a Senior Manager.

The chairperson is responsible for:

- Consulting with the delegate and People & Culture (P&C) where required.
- Coordinating the members of the selection committee.
- Ensuring selection committee members have a clear understanding of the selection process and conduct themselves in accordance with the [APS Code of Conduct](#) and [APS Values](#).
- Ensuring conflicts of interest are appropriately declared and managed.
- Co-ordinating the recruitment and selection process in relation to shortlisting, scheduling interviews, arranging the completion of pre-employment checks including reference checks, preparing the recruitment and selection report and delegate approval briefs.
- Ensuring confidentiality is maintained at all times.



The assessment process

The Commission's Recruitment and Selection Guidelines and Procedure provides an overview of the recruitment and selection process including:

- 1) Approval to recruit / extend
- 2) Advertising and shortlisting
- 3) Interviewing and screening
- 4) Approval to select / appoint

As a brief overview

Once applications close, P&C will provide the selection committee with access to Talentlink, to view applications. Where a selection committee member has been nominated as a referee, they are to provide P&C with a completed referee report prior to assessing applications.

The selection committee then shortlists applications based on the candidate's written application, and where applicable any other assessment method e.g. on-line tests, written assessments etc. Consideration must be given to the role requirements and capabilities as outlined in the duty statement / position description. P&C can assist to extract a system generated shortlist report or alternatively refer to [Selection Committee Shortlist Form](#). Internal applicants not shortlisted should be notified in person by the chairperson before interviews are conducted.

Post interview, the chairperson is required to complete reference checks for suitable applicants and in consultation with the selection committee prepare a [recruitment and selection report](#) with recommendations for delegate approval. All applicants interviewed are to be verbally notified of the outcome by the chairperson upon approval of the recruitment and selection report and acceptance by the preferred candidate.

Further information and assistance

Refer to the People & Culture section of the Commission's Intranet portal.

The following checklist also provides a detailed step by step guide.



Checklist for Selection Committees

This checklist can be used by the selection committees as a quick reference guide for conducting competitive recruitment and selection processes. P&C are available to provide advice to the committee at any stage of the process.

1) Approval to appoint select		
Action	Responsibility	Complete
Review Position Description (Duty Statement) for the position in consultation with People & Culture (P&C). Refer to Position Description Template.	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish a suitable selection committee.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Review and understand role and responsibilities of the selection committee under the Commission's Recruitment and Selection Guidelines and Procedure.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
All members of the Selection Committee completed the APS Recruitment to Induction training. To access the training go to APSLearn to create an APS Employees login using your humanrights.gov.au email address.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider timeframes, market approach and agree on the recruitment and selection method.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare a CE HR Brief for approval to recruit.	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send CE HR Brief and Position Description to recruitment@humanrights.gov.au <i>Allow 5 days for approval</i>	Division Head	<input type="checkbox"/>

2) Advertising and shortlisting		
Action	Responsibility	Complete
Liaise with P&C regarding advertising. P&C will recommend a 2-week advertising period <i>Allow 2-3 days for processing by P&C</i>	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to vacancy file in SharePoint to be provided by P&C All recruitment documentation to be saved in vacancy file	People & Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange an initial meeting of the selection committee to discuss assessment methods, timeframes, responsibilities, expectations, other considerations (e.g. late applications, diversity issues).	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete a Conflict-of-Interest Form prior to shortlisting.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access applications via Talentlink (provided by P&C).	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>



Shortlist using a system generated shortlist report (contact P&C for assistance) or use Selection Committee Shortlist Form .	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirm the assessment strategy e.g. interviews, assessment tasks, references etc.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schedule interviews – consider placing placeholders in Outlook in advance.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>

3) Interviewing and screening		
Action	Responsibility	Complete
Prepare selection committee interview packs including interview questions and candidate applications. <i>Note interview questions are to be based on the Position Description capability and role requirements profile.</i>	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send candidates interview confirmations via email.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare an interview schedule.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct interviews and other assessment processes as appropriate.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete Selection Committee Interview Forms for each candidate.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schedule meeting with selection committee to discuss interview and assessment outcomes. Determine candidates to progress to reference and pre-employment screening.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collect and assess referee reports for the strongest candidates. Refer to Reference Check Form .	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish merit pool and/or merit list.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>

4) Approval to select / appoint		
Action	Responsibility	Complete
Prepare Recruitment and Selection Report for delegate approval.	Selection Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare CE HR Brief for approval to select / appoint.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send CE HR Brief and Recruitment and Selection Report to recruitment@humanrights.gov.au <i>Allow 5 days for approval</i>	Division Head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hiring Manager notified of delegate approval.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>



Hiring Manager makes verbal offer of appointment.	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notify P&C of outcome.	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notify all applicants interviewed verbally.	Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Liaise with P&C to commence onboarding of successful candidate.	Hiring Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>

Attachment A: Tips for Selection Committees

- Some committees use the written application only to shortlist applicants for interview. Committees should consider the content of the written application at all stages of the assessment.
- Assessment of candidates needs to consider the entire recruitment and selection process including written application, performance at interview and pre and post screening.
- While “scenario” questions may be useful in measuring the applicant’s thought processes, what applicant’s say they would do may bear no relationship to what they would do when confronted with a real situation. Committees should consider asking about past behaviour and achievements as a better indicator of future behaviour.
- The STAR method is recommended to assist candidates to respond to behavioural-based interview questions by outlining an example in relation to a situation, task, action and result. This method will assist to assess a candidate’s experience and behaviour in relation to the capabilities required within the role. It is recommended that candidates are informed of this approach prior to the interview and encouraged to draw upon examples from their experience using this method.
- To ensure candidates are provided the opportunity to perform at the best during interview, interview questions may be provided prior to the interview commencing. It is recommended candidates are advised to arrive early to accommodate this. For on-line interviews the interview questions can be placed in the chat and the candidate advised to turn off their camera and microphone for 10 minutes to review the interview questions.
- Committees often approach the issue of prompting at interview differently - some view prompting negatively, some do not prompt at all and some prompt freely. Committees should keep in mind that candidates may be nervous at interview and may not reveal their abilities or knowledge without prompting. Prompting can assist the committee in their enquiry when it assists the candidates with their opportunity to present their claims. It is also important to keep in mind that too much prompting of one candidate over another may not be fair. It is therefore important that the committee agree on a consistent approach before the interviews, with prompting questions included in interview forms for reference if needed.
- Referee reports can be useful, but they can also be unreliable and inconsistent. Referees should not be asked to rate the candidate using a standard scale alone as some referees may be more generous in awarding ratings than others. Committees may also be inclined to see a candidate whose referee is more detailed as more suitable than another candidate whose referee is more taciturn. The same information should be elicited from all referees.



- Sometimes it may be necessary to readvertise the position. Committees should not feel compelled to take a candidate from a selection just because that person in comparison to the rest of the field was the better candidate. Remember they still have to be able to meet the criteria for the position and be able to do the role.

Remember, it is costly to go through a recruitment process. It is important that sufficient time and resources are dedicated to ensure a candidate with the right skills, experience and capability is selected. This will ensure successful team and section outcomes are achieved. In addition, every successful candidate will be provided with a fulfilling career at the Commission.

Attachment B: Information for interviewing applicants with a disability

The selection committee needs to ensure that any applicant identified as having a disability is given every opportunity through the selection process to demonstrate their capacity to do the inherent duties of the advertised job.

Prior to the interview, selection committee members can

- Take care not to exclude applicants during shortlisting based on assumptions about that person's inability to perform the duties of the job. Applicants with a disability should only be excluded if they do not satisfy the essential requirements of the job.
- Ascertain if it will be necessary to make special arrangements for the conduct of the interview itself, including pre-interview preparations, e.g. planning questions, seating arrangements and interpreters if required.
- Familiarise themselves with the principles of reasonable adjustment (see Attachment C).

During the interview, committee members can

- Shake hands even if the candidate has limited hand use or wears an artificial limb.
- Look and speak directly to the candidate even if (as with a hearing-impaired person), they are accompanied by an interpreter or aide.
- Ask the candidate for guidance or clarification on pertinent issues if you have difficulty understanding the applicant or the issue.
- Offer help with respect and without assuming the candidate automatically needs it.

Committee members should not

- Tell the candidate they admire his or her courage, express sympathy for them, or ask them how they acquired their disability.
- Assume the person is too sensitive to answer any of the questions put to other candidates.
- Ask questions that are not necessary and would not be asked of a person without a disability.
- Assume that the candidate has no sense of humour.



Attachment C: The Principle of Reasonable Adjustment

Many forms of “adjustment” can be made to working arrangements or the work environment to enable people with disabilities to compete on their merits for recruitment and career advancement opportunities.

These include

- Provision of work-related aids or special equipment or appliances, or modification of existing arrangements.
- Structural modifications to the workplace.
- Re-arranging the physical layout of the workplace.
- Providing essential information in formats suitable for people with sight and/or hearing impairments.
- Providing appropriate forms of assistance, such as reader assistance for a sight-impaired person.
- Accepting that there may be alternative ways of accomplishing a given task or objective.
- Exchanging some parts of a role between a person with a disability and other staff.

It should be noted that, often reasonable adjustment simply means changing the attitude of supervisors and co-workers. This is the most critical adjustment of all, as the provision of equipment will, by itself, do little.

For more information refer to the Commission’s [Providing an inclusive workplace and service free from discrimination Guidelines](#) and [Guide to Recruitment and Selection Reasonable Adjustments](#) (for candidates)

The Interview

It is important to understand that disabilities are not always static conditions and that they will affect different people in different ways.

At the interview, aspects of the condition of a candidate with a disability that may affect their performance of the job should be addressed candidly but with tact. The selection committee may need to ask the candidate how they would perform the job, what sort of things they might require enabling them to do the job or if any adjustments might be required to the work environment. People with disabilities may be aware of techniques or equipment that are unfamiliar to the committee.

The Selection

Selection pertaining to people with disabilities should be based only on merit. If they can perform the essential duties of the job, they should be assessed according to their relative suitability against the selection criteria. When recommending a candidate with a disability for the job, the committee should advise the delegate if any reasonable adjustments are required to the workplace or work methods.



2014

Diversity Committee

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Terms of Reference

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1. Introduction

In 2013, the federal government mandated that all agencies would develop and implement an Agency Multicultural Plan. The Commission took this opportunity to review the range of internal diversity related committees that were in place and to streamline these into a single 'Diversity Committee' with broad oversight for the AMP, the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the Disability Action Plan (DAP) and the Workplace Diversity Program. Each of these plans have actions and measurements that crossed over the other plans, it is anticipated that over time there may be opportunities to distil these reports into an overarching Diversity Report with sub-sections that cover internal and external reporting commitments and greater focus on meeting outcomes and objectives. These terms of reference are intended to assist the Diversity Committee to meet Commission expectations across diversity interest areas including employment, engagement, service delivery and education.

2. Chair and Membership

The Diversity Committee will be chaired by the Executive Director. The initial membership of the committee will comprise (where interest continues):

- up to 2 members from the current RAP Committee
- up to 2 members from the current DAP Committee
- representation from the Investigation/Conciliation section
- representation from the Policy/Discrimination/Scrutiny & Evaluation teams
- representation from Human Resources
- representation from the Community Engagement/Communications teams

The Executive Director will determine the final membership of the committee ensuring balanced representation across the Commission where expertise and interest exist and where possible.

Where a nominated member repeatedly fails to attend scheduled meetings or does not make a positive contribution to the work of the committee, the Executive Director may replace that member as necessary.

The membership of the committee may be refreshed every 2 years, upon membership vacancy and/or as determined by the Executive Director.

A meeting quorum will be a minimum of 5 members.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Director will chair the Diversity Committee and will ensure that the committee meets as per the terms of reference and that the discussion is focussed on activities, achievements and outcomes under our diversity frameworks.

As a group, the committee will be responsible for:

- fostering collaboration
- making a positive contribution to discussion around a range of diversity issues
- Communicating activities and progress with other staff
- Responding to requests for information or feedback in a timely manner
- Allocating sufficient time to prepare for meetings by completing required reading, information gathering or collection of feedback
- Seeking to use the Commission's resources as efficiently and effectively as possible
- Actively participating and supporting diversity activities

4. Decision Making

The Executive Director will have overall decision making responsibility as delegated by the President.

5. Meetings

The Diversity Committee will meet quarterly and an annual meeting schedule will be developed at the beginning of the year to encourage the maximum participation and availability for all members to attend.

All members will participate in the meetings with a view to achieving the best diversity outcomes for the Commission within our resources.

Meetings should have a clear agenda and purpose and be contained to one hour or less in the interests of an efficient and productive use of staff time.

As necessary, the Executive Director may circulate information or material for consideration, comment and/or action out of session.

6. Reporting

The Diversity Committee will report to the Commission meetings each quarter to advise progress against targets as identified across each of the diversity commitments.

The Committee will determine how external reporting will occur and where that responsibility will sit within the Committee or whether additional resources such as a secretariat role will be required.

7. Support

The Commission will provide resources and support to the Diversity Committee to enable it to meet its reporting obligations as determined by the Executive Director.

Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the Executive Director to committee members for each meeting. Minutes will be posted on the intranet as soon as possible after approval by the Executive Director.

Australian Human Rights Commission
Diversity Committee Terms of Reference - 2014

Diversity Calendar 2014

Month	Date	Event	Lead Responsibility
January			
February			
March	08/03/13	International Women's Day	SD Commissioner
	21/03/14	Harmony Day	HR
April			
May	Late May/early June	National Reconciliation Week, National Sorry Day	President
June			
July		Naidoc Week	ATSISJ Commissioner
August			
September			
October			
November			
	25/11/14	White Ribbon Day	Male staff
December	03/12/14	International Day for people with a disability	President
	10/12/14	Human Rights Day	Communications

Australian Public Service
and
Australian Human Rights Commission
Code of Conduct, Values and Employment Principles

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct requires that an employee must:

- behave honestly and with integrity in connection with APS employment
- act with care and diligence in connection with APS employment
- when acting in connection with APS employment, treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment
- when acting in connection with APS employment, comply with all applicable Australian laws
- comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the employee's Agency who has authority to give the direction
- maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the employee has with any Minister or Minister's member of staff
- take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with the employee's APS employment; and disclose details of any material personal interest of the employee in connection with the employee's APS employment
- use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner and for a proper purpose
- not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the employee's APS employment
- not improperly use inside information or the employee's duties, status, power or authority:
 - a) to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or an advantage for the employee or any other person; or

b) to cause, or seek to cause, detriment to the employee's Agency, the Commonwealth or any other person.

- at all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and Employment Principles, and the integrity and good reputation of the employee's Agency and the APS
- while on duty overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of Australia
- Except in the course of his or her duties as an APS employee or with the President's express authority, not give or disclose, directly or indirectly, any information about public business or anything of which the employee has official knowledge
- Commission employees who participate in a private capacity in public discussions must ensure that the audience is clear that the public comment is being made in a private capacity and that the staff member is not speaking on behalf of the Commission or the Government; and;
- Ensure that the public comment cannot be seen as compromising his or her ability to continue to carry out his or her official duties in an unbiased and apolitical manner and;
- Not make public comment in circumstances where the employee's status or other reasons will make it difficult for the audience to believe that the comments are being made in a private capacity
- Comply with any other conduct requirement that is prescribed by the regulations.

Values

- **Impartial** - The APS is apolitical and provides the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.
- **Committed to Service** – The APS is professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and works collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.

- **Accountable** – The APS is open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.
- **Respectful** – The APS respects all people, including their rights and their heritage.
- **Ethical** – The APS demonstrates leadership, is trustworthy, and acts with integrity, in all that it does.

Employment Principles

The APS is a career based service that:

- Makes fair employment decisions with a fair system of review; and
- Recognizes that the usual basis for engagement is as an ongoing APS employee; and
- Makes decisions relating to engagement and promotion that are based on merit; and
- Requires effective performance from each employee; and
- Provides flexible, safe and rewarding workplaces where communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees on matters that affect their workplaces are valued; and
- Provides workplaces that are free from discrimination, patronage and favouritism; and
- Recognizes the diversity of the Australian community and fosters diversity in the workplace.

Agency Heads are bound by the Code of Conduct in the same way as APS employees and have an additional duty to promote the APS values.