

Jobs and Skills Exchange

Robust Assessment Guidelines – Recruiting for Growth Potential

The overall intent of the JSE Recruitment Policy is to develop and upskill the VPS workforce.

To support this intent, all applications received for Victorian Public Service (VPS) roles will undergo a robust merit-based assessment. This assessment will include consideration of the growth potential of all applicants.

These guidelines comprise of five sections to assist hiring managers undertake a Robust Assessment process:

- Section A – General standards to support best practice recruitment
- Section B – Robust assessment checklist
- Section C – Recruiting for growth potential
- Section D – Priority access for redeployees
- Section E – Review of action process

These guidelines support the existing policies and practices:

- The Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles
- Standards for the application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles
- Victorian Public Sector Commission publications relating to recruitment and selection
- VPS Enterprise Agreement Common Policy on Redeployment¹
- *Recruit Smarter best practice guidelines for inclusive recruitment*²
- *Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018-2025*³
- *Barring Djinang Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector*⁴
- Best practice recruitment activities in operation across the VPS



Section A

General standards to support best practice recruitment processes

Recruitment processes in the VPS must be fair, consistent and ensure that recruitment decisions are based on merit. Conducting recruitment in this manner ensures the highest performing candidate, when found suitable, is offered the role.⁵ It is a requirement that all recruitment processes adhere to the *Standards for the Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles*.⁶

The Robust Assessment Guidelines and Checklist support the consistent application of the VPS recruitment principles and standards.

It is recommended that hiring managers and selection panel members have access to adequate information, guidance, training and support, to undertake fair and consistent recruitment processes. This approach should include making training and information available on unconscious bias and preventing unlawful discrimination as part of the recruitment process.

A consistent recruitment process should be inclusive, and embrace a diversity of thoughts, capabilities and backgrounds so that the VPS reflects the communities it serves.

Any candidate for a VPS position can determine the extent to which they share personal information relating to a disability, cultural or linguistic background with the employer.

Where requested, reasonable adjustments will be made for candidates to enable them to participate equally in the recruitment process. ^a

All personal information obtained as part of a Robust Assessment process must be managed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

For more information regarding recruitment practices and specific advice please refer to departmental recruitment policies and HR teams.

^a For more information on inclusive recruitment processes and supporting resources, refer to the [VPSC website](#)



Section B

Robust Assessment Checklist

The Robust Assessment process covers all stages of the recruitment cycle. This checklist is a practical tool for hiring managers and recruitment teams to undertake a robust assessment when determining the suitability of a candidate for a role.

- Develop a position description, key selection criteria, application form and job advertisement that are consistent with the classification descriptors contained in the *VPS Enterprise Agreement*. These documents should make clear your expectations and make clear the inherent requirements of the role. It is recommended that key selection criteria be limited to five as research shows that minimising criteria encourages candidates to apply for roles.
- Consider whether the role could be filled under the special measures for disadvantaged groups set out in Section 12 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (consistent with the Victorian Government's commitment to diversity and inclusion).
- Be prepared to offer to all candidates the option to have information provided to them in alternative formats and provide any reasonable adjustments when inviting them to interview or participate in other assessment processes.
- Ensure all assessment processes adhere to the [Standards for the Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles](#) and are based on merit.
- Evaluate a candidate's suitability for a role based on the key selection criteria and consider the growth potential of all applicants throughout the recruitment process. This process should be outlined in the final assessment when selecting the preferred candidate.
- Check whether any of the JSE candidates have priority access to be offered an ongoing role as part of the VPS redeployment process. Where an ongoing vacancy exists for which a redeployee is suitable, and that employee is the only candidate or the best candidate amongst several redeployees and meets 70% of the requirements of the role, a valid offer will be made to the redeployee.
- Hiring managers have discretion to determine how many applicants should be shortlisted for interview. To identify potentially suitable candidates, hiring managers may also elect to interview candidates who are initially assessed as meeting less than 70% of the requirement of the role but whose application they believe warrants further consideration.

- When advertising exclusively through the JSE, confirm that shortlisted candidates are VPS employees (who have an employment contract with a VPS department or entity as defined by the JSE Recruitment Policy) or are otherwise eligible to access the JSE.^b
- Applicants that meet 70% of the overall requirements of the role, including all mandatory requirements, at the completion of the assessment process (i.e. post referee checks) and are first in the order of merit must be deemed suitable for the role.^c
- Complete a selection report^d detailing the merit-based selection process, justifying the selection outcome and clearly defining the criteria against which the successful candidate met the requirements to a greater extent than others shortlisted. In circumstances where the recruitment process was unsuccessful in selecting a candidate, the selection report must outline how a shortlisted candidate not recommended for appointment fell below 70% of the overall requirements of the role. The report should also provide a statement summarising the key reasons why other candidates were not suitable.

^b Given existing legislative provisions, teachers are considered members of the VPS when applying for jobs through the JSE. Access to the JSE is also being given to VPS employees for twelve months after they depart the VPS if they: identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and/or identify as a person with disability; and/or are a participant of one of the following VPS employment pathways: (i) Youth Employment Scheme (youth); (ii) Youth Cadetship Scheme (youth); (iii) Stepping Into Internships (disability); (iv) CareerSeekers Internship Program (asylum seekers and refugees); (v) CareerTrackers (Indigenous).

^c Departments may implement their own rating scales to determine how candidates meet 70% of the overall requirements of the role. How departments use rating scales is not prescribed by these Guidelines.

^d Selection report is the document that records the final decision of the panel to appoint and includes which candidates did not meet the criteria, a ranking of preference and the rationale for the decision.



Section C

Recruiting for growth potential

What is growth potential?

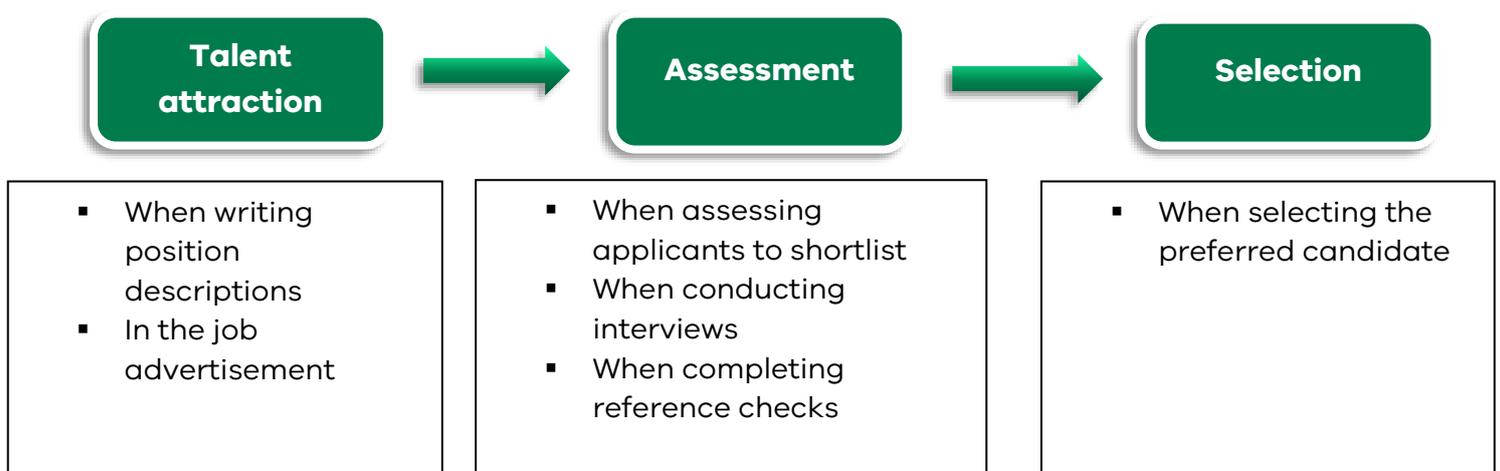
Best practice recruitment in the VPS encourages assessment of a candidate's current skills and their potential for development. Growth potential is the ability to develop, adapt to and grow into a role and environment. Given the appropriate managerial support and feedback, and a reasonable level of alignment between the employee's skills and the requirements of the role, it is expected that employees will be able to fulfil their growth potential.

Consideration of a candidate's growth potential within a recruitment process involves assessment of whether a candidate has a commitment to self-improvement, shows signs of coachability and an ability to learn from mistakes. These indicators can be assessed as part of all key selection criteria.

When can growth potential be considered?

Growth potential may be considered throughout the entire recruitment cycle beginning with consideration of the mandatory requirements of the role, and after appointment to a role as part of the learning and development process.

Recruiting for Growth Potential across the Recruitment cycle



How is growth potential considered?

Growth potential should be given appropriate consideration throughout a merit-based recruitment process and should be considered when assessing the attributes and skills demonstrated by candidates against all requirements of the role.

What are some of the interview questions that can be asked to assess growth potential?

When conducting interviews, ask questions that will assist the panel to assess an applicant's growth potential and for examples of when they have learned new skills, bridged a gap in knowledge and skill and how they manage their own development.

- For example: *"Tell us about a time you were given a task that required you to learn a new skill? How did you go about this task?"*

How can I consider growth potential in key selection criteria?

You should assess growth potential across all key selection criteria for a role. However, you may choose to draft a specific key selection criterion that particularly seeks to assess potential.

- You could choose to include a key selection criterion that directly speaks to the ability to learn and pick up tasks quickly, to problem solve, demonstrate adaptability and to work with others.

When does growth potential not need to be considered?

While growth potential can still be considered for all roles, hiring managers can determine not to consider growth potential for short-term roles of 6 months or less where the time frame and resources to develop required skills may not be available.



Section D

Priority access for redeployees

In accordance with the *VPS Redeployment Policy*, an employee whose position has been declared surplus, will have priority access to be placed in an ongoing vacancy within the VPS at the redeployee's classification level and below their classification level, unless that employee is determined to be unsuitable for appointment to that vacancy by the prospective employing agency.^e

Where:

- an ongoing vacancy exists for which a redeployee is suitable,
- that employee is the only candidate or the best candidate amongst several redeployees, and
- that employee meets 70% of the requirements of the role,

a valid offer will be made to the redeployee. This process is consistent with the provisions of the VPS Enterprise Agreement 2016 and the VPS Redeployment Policy.

The standards and processes in these guidelines will be used to evaluate the suitability of redeployees for a vacant role.

^e To avoid employees being retrenched and paid a separation package, redeployment to an ongoing role would be needed, however, appointment to a fixed term role can serve as an interim measure while searching for an ongoing role.



Section E

Review of actions process

All VPS employees are entitled to apply for a review of an action or decision related to their employment that they consider is unfair or inconsistent with the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Act) and/or the *Standards for the Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles* (Standards).

A VPS employee making a selection-based grievance may only do so on the grounds of a significant deficiency in the selection process in order to have an initial review undertaken.

An initial review is conducted under the *Public Administration (Review of Actions) Regulations 2015* and will assess whether the selection process was unfair or inconsistent with the Act or Standards.

An initial review must be lodged by an employee within seven days of being notified or becoming aware of a proposed appointment or promotion.⁷

For more information about policies and procedures relating to request for a review of an action, please see the Review of Actions Towards Common Practice and the Victorian Public Sector Commission Review of Actions Resources.

References

¹VPS Enterprise Agreement Common Policy on *Redeployment*.

²*Recruit Smarter: Report of Findings 2018*, Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria and The Centre for Ethical Leadership, University of Melbourne.

³*Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018-2025*, Victorian Public Sector Commission.

⁴*Barring Djinang Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector*, Victorian Public Sector Commission.

⁵*Public Administration Act 2004* section 8(a).

⁶Victorian Public Sector Commission Standards for the *Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles* issued under the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

⁷VPS Enterprise Agreement 'Towards Common Practice' Common Policies *Review of Actions*, p.3.

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