Jobs and Skills Exchange

Robust Assessment Guidelines Recruiting for Growth Potential

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# Introduction and Purpose

1. These Robust Assessment Guidelines (RA Guidelines) should be read in conjunction with the Jobs and Skills Exchange (JSE) Recruitment Policy (JSE Policy).
2. To support the intent to develop and upskill the Victorian Public Service (VPS) workforce, all applications received for VPS roles from JSE-eligible candidates will undergo a robust, merit-based assessment consistent with the RA Guidelines. This assessment will include consideration of the growth potential of all JSE applicants.
3. The RA Guidelines support the following 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
* Common Policies on the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020[[1]](#endnote-2)
* *Recruit Smarter best practice guidelines for inclusive recruitment[[2]](#endnote-3)*
* *Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018-2025[[3]](#endnote-4)*
* *Barring Djinang Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector[[4]](#endnote-5)*
* Best practice recruitment activities in operation across the VPS

1. The RA Guidelines comprise of five sections to assist hiring managers undertake a Robust Assessment process:

* Section 1 – General standards (to support best practice recruitment)
* Section 2 – Robust assessment checklist
* Section 3 – Recruiting for growth potential
* Section 4 – Priority access for redeployees
* Section 5 – Review of action process

# Section 1 - General standards

## 1.1 How to support best practice recruitment processes

1. 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]](#endnote-6) It is a requirement that all recruitment processes adhere to the *Standards for the Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles* (VPS recruitment principles and standards).[[6]](#endnote-7)
2. The RA Guidelines and Checklist support the consistent application of the VPS recruitment principles and standards.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Where requested, reasonable adjustments will be made for candidates to enable them to participate equally in the recruitment process. [[7]](#footnote-2)
7. 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.*
8. For more information regarding recruitment practices and specific advice please refer to departmental recruitment policies and HR teams.

# Section 2 - Robust Assessment Checklist

1. The Robust Assessment process covers all stages of the recruitment cycle.
2. 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.
   1. Develop a position description, key selection criteria, application form and job advertisement that are consistent with the classification descriptors contained in the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020 (VPS Agreement) or the relevant enterprise agreement if the VPS employee is not covered by the VPS 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 people to apply for roles.
   2. 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).
   3. 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.
   4. Ensure all assessment processes comply with the [Standards for the Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles](https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/html-resources/standards-for-application-of-the-victorian-public-sector-employment-principles/).
   5. Evaluate a JSE applicant’s suitability for a role based on the key selection criteria and consider the growth potential of all JSE applicants. Assessment can take place at shortlisting, interview and when completing reference checks. There is no obligation to continue assessment beyond shortlisting (or interview, or reference checking) if it becomes evident that a JSE applicant does not possess the required skills and/or potential for development. The outcome of the assessment should be succinctly outlined in the selection report.
   6. Check whether any of the JSE applicants have priority access to vacancies, as part of the VPS redeployment process. Redeployees have priority access to be placed in vacancies that occur within the public service at their classification level and below their classification level, unless they are determined to be unsuitable for appointment to that vacancy by the prospective employing department or agency.[[8]](#footnote-3) Where a vacancy exists and a redeployee is determined to be suitable, and they are the only candidate or the best candidate amongst several redeployees and meet 70% of the requirements of the role, an offer will be made.
   7. 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.
   8. When considering applicants for jobs advertised through the JSE, confirm that shortlisted candidates are within the scope of Appendix A of the JSE Policy and eligible to apply.[[9]](#footnote-4)
   9. When advertising externally in the first instance, in parallel with JSE advertising, JSE applicants must be considered and assessed using the RA Guidelines prior to consideration of external applicants. If the hiring manager/recruiter becomes aware of JSE-eligible applicants who have applied via external jobs boards, they should, where reasonably practicable, be considered as JSE applicants (as per clauses 25 and 33 of the JSE Policy).
   10. JSE candidates who 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.[[10]](#footnote-5)
   11. Complete a selection report[[11]](#footnote-6) 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 JSE 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 applicants were not suitable.

# Section 3- Recruiting for growth potential

## 3.1 What is growth potential?

1. 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 JSE candidates who are assessed during recruitment to have met 70% (or more) of the requirements of a role will be able to fulfil their growth potential.
2. Consideration of a JSE candidate’s growth potential within a recruitment process involves assessment of whether the 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?

1. 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.

## 3.3 Recruiting for Growth Potential across the Recruitment cycle

**Assessment**

**Selection**

**Talent attraction**

* When writing position descriptions
* In the job advertisement
* When assessing applicants to shortlist
* When conducting interviews
* When completing reference checks
* When selecting the preferred candidate

## 3.4 How is growth potential considered?

1. 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 JSE candidates against all requirements of the role.

## 3.5 What interview questions can be asked to assess growth potential?

1. When conducting interviews, ask questions that will assist the panel to assess JSE candidates’ growth potential and ask 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?*”

## 3.6 How can growth potential be considered in key selection criteria?

1. Growth potential should be considered across all key selection criteria for a role. However, a question on a specific key selection criterion could be included that particularly seeks to assess potential:

*For example, 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.*

## 3.7 When is assessment of growth potential complete?

1. There is no obligation to continue assessment beyond shortlisting (or interview, or reference checking) if it becomes evident that a JSE candidate does not possess the required skills and/or potential for development.

## 3.8 When does growth potential not need to be considered?

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

# Section 4 - Priority access for redeployees

## 4.1 Applying the Redeployment Common Policy

1. In accordance with the Redeployment Common Policy, an employee whose position has been declared surplus has priority to be placed in vacancies that occur 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 department or agency.
2. Redeployees have priority access to all vacancies, including temporary internal assignments and/or secondments so a redeployee should note their redeployment priority status on any applications.
3. Where a Redeployee has been referred for a vacancy and has been assessed by the Hiring Manager as being suitable, and is the only Redeployee candidate, or is the best Redeployee candidate, the Redeployee will be given priority access to the vacancy.
4. In assessing a redeployee’s suitability to be placed in a vacant position, the hiring manager should consider whether the redeployee has the skills, capabilities, experience and/or qualifications, or would be able to undertake the requirements of the position within a reasonable timeframe with reasonable and relevant training.
5. Refer to Section 2 for guidance on how to assess a redeployee’s suitability according to the Robust Assessment process.
6. The standards and processes in these RA Guidelines will be used to evaluate the suitability of redeployees for a vacant role.

# Section 5 - Review of actions process

1. 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).
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. An initial review must be lodged by an employee within seven (7) days of being notified or becoming aware of a proposed appointment or promotion.[[12]](#endnote-8)
5. For more information about policies and procedures relating to request for a review of an action, please see the Review of Actions Common Policy and the Victorian Public Sector Commission Review of Actions Resources.

# References

1. VPS Enterprise Agreement Common Policy on *Redeployment*. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. *Recruit Smarter: Report of Findings 2018*, Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria and The Centre for Ethical Leadership, University of Melbourne. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. *Getting to work: Victorian public sector disability employment action plan 2018-2025,* Victorian Public Sector Commission. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. *Barring Djinang Aboriginal Employment Strategy for the Victorian public sector,* Victorian Public Sector Commission. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic) section 8(a). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. Victorian Public Sector Commission Standards for the *Application of the Victorian Public Sector Employment Principles* issued under the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. *For more information on inclusive recruitment processes and supporting resources, refer to the* [*VPSC website*](https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
8. For more information, refer to the [Redeployment Common Policy, June 2022](https://www.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/Redeployment.pdf) in the [Common Policies on the Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020](https://www.vic.gov.au/common-policies-victorian-public-service-enterprise-agreement) (Redeployment Common Policy). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
9. *Given existing legislative provisions, teachers are considered members of the VPS when applying for jobs through the JSE. The JSE Policy provides periods of extended access to the JSE to a range of VPS and public entity employees after they depart the VPS. It is important to check under the “JSE access and eligibility” heading within the JSE Policy for an up-to-date list of categories to determine applicants’ eligibility.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
10. *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.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
11. *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.* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
12. VPS Enterprise Agreement ‘Towards Common Practice’ Common Policies *Review of Actions* p.3.

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    [↑](#endnote-ref-8)