

# Administering and scoring assessments

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Hiring managers and other assessors have an important role in ensuring the selection process is fair and creates an environment where candidates have the opportunity to perform at their best.

A key principle is that assessments should be administered and scored in a consistent way to allow you to make well considered and defensible selection decisions. Providing the same instructions, and timing, scoring and interpreting the results the same way every time a particular assessment is administered allows you to fairly and meaningfully compare the results obtained by different candidates on a particular measure of role performance.

Scoring assessments is not just about choosing the candidate with the highest ranking. You need to consider all candidates who meet the standards and decide who is well suited to the role requirements.

## Administering assessments

Assessments need to be administered in a standardised way so that each candidate has the same opportunity to do their best.

For good practice tips on administering interviews, work sample exercises and psychometric assessments, see our guides:

- [Practical guide to interviewing](#)
- [Administering and scoring work sample exercises](#)

- Administering and scoring psychometric assessments.

## Workplace adjustment

The exception to the principle of standardisation is where one or more adjustments to the assessment process are needed to ensure that the assessment process is equitable for all candidates, including people with disability.

In these cases, changing the administration of the assessment, or the assessment itself, can remove barriers so that all candidates can complete the assessment on an equitable basis, including people with disability. The purpose of making adjustments is to provide equal opportunity so that all candidates can be assessed and compete for the role fairly and on merit.

## Preparing your process for workplace adjustment

It is good practice to mention to candidates at each stage of the process that they can request an adjustment or assistance with assessment activities.

If a candidate shares information about their disability prior to an assessment, it is your responsibility to talk to the candidate to understand what adjustments or assistance they need so that you can make arrangements in advance of the assessments. Be aware that this information is confidential and should only be used to organise an adjustment.

Be flexible about making adjustments because:

- candidates may not tell you until the day of the assessment that they need an adjustment
- candidates may not request an adjustment at all, yet it is apparent when the candidate attends for the assessment or completes a task that an adjustment is needed.

If an adjustment can be made and is reasonable, you should make it. Doing so reduces the risk of indirect discrimination and makes your recruitment process more inclusive. If an adequate adjustment cannot be made at the time, consider rescheduling the assessment after consulting with the candidate or seek advice from your HR team.

## Scoring assessments

This stage builds on your efforts to **set the standards and rating approach**. To maintain a fair and defensible process, it is important to score capability-based assessments in a consistent way.

Assessments such as cognitive ability tests and personality questionnaires are scored automatically or by an accredited expert using scoring keys. Interviews and work sample exercises require human judgment and can be affected by biases and errors.

To objectively rate a candidate's performance and reduce the possible impact of biases and errors it is a good idea to:

- use a response template to record responses – this should include the standards for assessment, such as the capabilities and behavioural indicators for interviews
- write down what was actually said when taking notes, rather than recording your impressions or making judgments
- use a common rating scale with definitions and apply it consistently to all candidates.

For good practice tips on scoring interviews, work sample exercises and psychometric assessments, see our guides:

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## Tips for good practice scoring

- be consistent in evaluating candidates
- consider all candidates who meet the benchmark for their suitability to the role requirements, not just the highest scorer
- be mindful of cultural differences and avoid over-interpreting behaviours that may be cultural – only behaviours that impact a candidate's ability to perform in the role, either adversely or positively, should be taken into consideration when scoring
- be prepared by familiarising yourself with the rating scale and behavioural indicators relating to each capability
- be aware of biases and how to manage these. Some biases are:
  - 'halo' effect – after one excellent answer, the candidate is seen as a strong overall
  - 'horn' effect – after performing poorly against one capability, the candidate is seen as weak overall
  - 'central tendency' – favouring middle ratings, eg. '3' or 'Meets Requirements'
- be aware of crediting:
  - statements about what the team or "we" did as evidence of what the candidate personally did
  - vague assertions as being fact – eg. "They were all pleased..."
- be aware of allowing:
  - stereotypes (e.g. gender, ethnic/cultural group etc.) to affect your judgment of a candidate's strengths and weaknesses
  - prior knowledge of a candidate to affect your judgment of their interview responses.

