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Conduct pre screening

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Application pre-screening is about identifying the candidates who are most likely meet the requirements for the role.

Legal requirements

Comparative assessment ([GSE rule 17](#)) and suitability assessment ([GSE rule 18](#)) require screening for [essential requirements](#) and a resume review. A comparative assessment also requires reviewing an application and resume. [GSE rule 26](#) allows for amendment to these processes to facilitate the employment of eligible persons from designated groups.

[Section 54](#) of the GSE Act sets out conditions of engagement that employees may be subject to. Requirements relating to these conditions are defined in the GSE Rules as follows:

- probation periods ([GSE rule 5](#))
- citizenship or residency ([GSE rule 6](#))
- formal qualifications ([GSE rule 7](#))
- security and other clearances ([GSE rule 8](#))
- health assessment ([GSE rule 9](#)).

About pre-screening

Application pre-screening is the first stage of the assessment process and is done once the advertising period closes. The aim is to shortlist candidates who meet the **essential requirements** and are likely to have the **knowledge, experience or capabilities** being considered at this stage.

Some or all of these elements may have been included in your application form and will be the basis for deciding whether or not to shortlist candidates:

- responses to questions on **essential requirements** (optional, but recommended)
- a resume (required)
- a cover letter (optional)
- responses to up to two **targeted questions** (optional).

There are also times when pre-screening includes another form of assessment such as a phone screen interview or a cognitive ability test. See **guidance on assessing candidates** in these situations.

Minimum standards are needed so that each assessor evaluates applications in a consistent way. A simple benchmark approach of 'met' or 'not met' is a good option in the pre-screening stage. For more differentiation you could choose a 3- or 5-point rating scale. See **guidance on rating scales**.

Reviewing responses to pre-screening questions

The first step is to screen out candidates who do not meet **essential requirements** such as holding a qualification, having the right to work in Australia, or identifying as Aboriginal for an Aboriginal identified role.

You can do this using **gross negative disqualifiers** (or disqualification questions) in your organisation's recruitment system (e.g. Taleo). Alternatively, you can create your own questions in the application form.

Gross negative disqualifiers

Gross negative disqualifiers (or disqualification questions) are built into the application form to allow candidates to self-select out. Candidates who do not meet the requirements cannot complete their application.

You may need to confirm that candidates meet an essential requirement at a later stage if the requirement is a condition of engagement. For example, you may need to verify that the successful candidate does in fact have the right to work in Australia. To minimise the potential for discrimination based on age or other irrelevant considerations, **screening checks**, including service checks, police checks and qualification checks, should be done after a verbal offer is accepted. See: **Pre-employment screening** for more information.

Application questions

You can also include questions in the application form (see: [Designing the application form](#)) to help screen out candidates who do not meet [essential requirements](#) for the role. These questions may include targeted questions. (See: [Reviewing the resume and application](#)).

Shortlisting

When you have completed your review you need to decide which candidates to [shortlist](#).