



# UNPLUGGED RECRUITMENT

## What is merit?

When you are employing a person under the *Public Service Act 1999*, all jobs must be filled on the basis of merit. This means that:

- all eligible members of the community are given a reasonable opportunity to apply; and
- selection is based, at a minimum, on an assessment of applicants against the requirements of the job. For ongoing jobs and jobs of more than 18 months, applicants must also be assessed against each other as part of a competitive process.

## Reasonable opportunity to apply

All vacancies must be brought to the attention of the community, for example through agency websites, job seeker sites, social media and/or making use of a Temporary Employment Register.

Ongoing jobs and jobs for a period of more than 18 months must also be advertised in the Public Service Gazette (the Gazette) on the APSjobs website.

## Assessing candidates

Applicants can be assessed in any way that suits an agency's operational environment and the nature of the job. For example, applicants may be asked to submit their c.v. and a written application. They can be asked to directly address the specific requirements of a job or to outline their suitability in a 'one page pitch'. There may be interviews and/or written or verbal testing, and referees may be contacted.

None of these steps are mandatory, and there are no restrictions on the types of assessment methods used, as long as candidates are assessed and compared fairly.

## The period of employment

**Where the duties of the job are not limited to a timeframe**—the job is ongoing and does not have a nominated end date.

**Where the duties of the job are required for a specified period of time**—the job is non-ongoing (temporary) and has a nominated end date.

- **For both Senior Executive Service (SES) and non-SES**, employment can be for an initial period of 18 months or less without advertising the vacancy in the Gazette.
- Employment can be extended up to a total period of three years.
- **For SES**, employment can be for a total period of five years, if the vacancy was originally advertised in the Gazette.

**Where the duties of the job are associated with a specified task**—the job is non-ongoing (temporary). The length of the employment contract is related to the completion of a particular task.

**Where the duties are irregular or intermittent (casual)**—these jobs are non-ongoing (temporary). They are usually required for one-off short term tasks or where there is no regular pattern of work.

## More information

More information is on the APSC website at Management Essentials.

See:

Recruitment *legislation*

Recruitment *guidelines*

Non-ongoing (temporary) employment *legislation*

Non-ongoing (temporary) employment *guidelines*

**Information on recruiting APS agency heads and statutory office holders is on the APSC website at Merit and Transparency**

