



**NDIS Quality
and Safeguards
Commission**

Recruitment and Selection Guide for Providers



NDIS Workforce Capability Framework

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Introduction

This document is a downloadable version of the interactive [Recruitment and Selection Guide](#) available on the NDIS Workforce Capability Framework (the Framework) website. It is intended to be used by stakeholders who need to access the tool as a Word document on their computer or in print.

This resource describes how to recruit employees based on [the Framework](#).

Use this resource to help you find workers who are right for you, whether you are a provider looking for workers, a participant who is recruiting your own workers, or a participant who is involved in recruitment of workers managed by a service provider.

How this resource works

Information, templates and materials are provided for each stage of the recruitment process. All templates and documents can be downloaded and edited. You will find a link in the side-bar.

This resource sets out each step in the recruitment process and includes tips and links to templates to support the process.

For further information on using this tool, see the [FAQ document](#).

Identify a role vacancy

A position vacancy can arise for a range of reasons. The common ones include:

- Replacing a support worker who has left
- Growth in the number of supported participants
- Needing to deliver a new or specialised form of support.

Regardless of the reason, it is good practice to think about the role from a business and workforce planning perspective before taking steps to fill it: what are its responsibilities? How will it contribute to positive participant and business outcomes? Is it at the right level? Is this an ongoing or short-term requirement? Is it part time or full time? Should it be offered as a permanent or casual position? What induction, training, supervision and practice leadership arrangements do we need to have in place for this role? The [Workforce Management and Planning Tool](#) contains information about planning your workforce.

Once these questions have been considered, if the role already exists and has a position description, it is good practice to review it to make sure it reflects current needs. If your existing position description doesn't yet incorporate the Framework capabilities, this is a good opportunity to update the document to do that. If you need to go ahead without updating the position description, it's a good idea to look up the relevant Framework capabilities for the type of role you are filling so you can use them as a basis for your assessment. If it is a new role, a position description needs to be created. The NDIS Commission has a [Position Description \(PD\) Builder tool](#) available online which provides guidance on identifying relevant Framework capabilities and a step-by-step guide and template for creating a role description incorporating the Framework capabilities.

Position descriptions are important as they set out expectations for the role, create a shared understanding between the worker and their supervisor/ employer, and can be used for managing and supporting performance on the job. They provide the basis for job advertisements (ads), are an important part of your information package for the role and can be used as a guide to deciding on the screening and assessment methods for filling the job.

Plan the process

Plan your recruitment process before you start:

- Schedule the time you will need to read applications, conduct interviews, and run any other assessment process.
- Decide your application assessment methods/s.
- Decide who to involve, what they will do and when they need to do it.

By planning these steps early, you will be ready to start as soon as you receive applications and avoid unnecessary delays in getting new workers on board.

Assessment approach

The assessment approach you select will depend on the kind and number of positions you need to fill, their responsibilities, the capabilities they need and available resources. It isn't possible to assess all capabilities in a recruitment exercise without making it too long and too complex for both the candidate and the assessor. When designing your recruitment activities, a first step is to consider which of the capabilities from the NDIS Workforce Capability Framework, and any other requirements for the role, are your priorities for assessment. This will help you select the best approach and assessment methods.

There are two broad options for structuring an effective assessment approach. You can either assess applicants one at a time or in groups.

Regardless of which these options you choose, using more than one assessment method is likely to improve the reliability of your selection decision. An interview alone is not a strong predictor of candidate success in any role. It is especially limited when selecting people for roles that depend on communication and interaction as well as applied skills.

The headings below describe the individual and group assessment approaches and the pros and cons of using each.

Individual assessment

This is the most common approach when choosing between a small number of applicants. It normally involves shortlisting applications based on agreed criteria, interviewing each candidate in turn and asking them to complete one or more other assessment activities (described in the next section on selecting assessment methods) and conducting referee checks.

This approach can be easier to organise and is a familiar process for many candidates. The main limitations are that it can be time-consuming and interviews may need to be

scheduled over a long time period; it is not the most effective way to assess how applicants communicate and interact in an authentic situation; and, when interviewing multiple applicants over a length of time, it can be difficult to accurately compare candidates.

How to get organised:

- **Decide on your assessment criteria:** Which capabilities or other requirements are most important for this position? Use this to decide on your criteria for shortlisting applications.
- **Select assessment methods to match your priorities:** refer to the section on assessment methods for information on options.
- **Choose your panel:** Having more than one person assess your candidate(s) allows you to obtain different viewpoints on an applicant. It is always good practice to include panel members with lived experience, and you may also choose to include people with HR knowledge, management experience and/or expertise in the role you are looking to fill.
- **Decide on interview questions and who will lead them:** Other assessors can prompt for further information.
- **Prepare for other assessment activities selected.**

Group assessment

Group assessments (also known as assessment centres) offer well-established benefits in terms of cost efficiency (all candidates are assessed at the same time) and better outcomes in terms of 'fit' and lower turnover. They typically involve inviting groups of shortlisted applicants to attend a session over a half or full day to undertake a range of individual and group activities, observed by several assessors.

Assessment centres are a good option when you have many applicants. Group processes are well suited to assessing capabilities such as collaboration, leadership and communication. Other advantages are that they are often more objective as a result of having several assessors observing different activities (see assessment methods for information on activities) and can be more time efficient as multiple applicants can be assessed at a time. The moderated scoring used for assessment centres gives appropriate weighting to the outcome of each activity.

Typically, this option is used by larger organisations. However, if you are a smaller organisation, have limited HR capability or resource constraints, you could consider pooling resources with one or more other organisations to run a group recruitment process. If you do this, make sure you have clear agreement on the process you will use to allocate suitable applicants to the different participating organisations.

To plan and manage an effective group assessment process you will need input from an experienced HR practitioner.

How to get organised:

- **Decide on your assessment criteria:** Which capabilities or other requirements are most important for the position/s you want to fill? Use this to decide on your criteria for shortlisting applications. You can download an interview assessment scoring sheet template from the provider resources online.
- **Select assessment methods to match your priorities:** refer to the section on assessment methods for information on options.
- **Choose your assessors:** The number of assessors you need will depend on the number of candidates and number of separate assessment methods you are using. As a guide, there should be at least 2 assessors to observe each method. It is always good practice to include members with lived experience, and you may also choose to include people with HR knowledge, management experience and/or expertise in the role you are looking to fill.
- **Prepare for assessment activities.** This will depend on the activities you choose, for example, you may need to prepare case studies, role plays etc

Choose selection methods

Good relationships and communication are critical for working effectively in disability. Using [the Framework](#) as your reference allows you to assess these 'soft' skills. Using more than one assessment method gives you the opportunity to gain different perspectives about candidate suitability.

A capability-based approach

- Assesses applicant attitudes, skills, and knowledge, rather than relying only on their qualifications or prior experience.
- Gives applicants a realistic sense of what the work involves and what is expected of them, using practical, easy to understand language and examples.
- Gives applicants from other fields the opportunity to demonstrate their transferable skills and aligned values.

The Framework is a good place to start to see which capabilities are important for the role you are recruiting. You can't assess everything so decide which ones are the priority and keep them in mind when designing assessment activities.

Structured interviews

To plan a structured interview, you can either ask candidates questions about their actual experience or describe a scenario relevant to the capability you want to assess and ask how they would respond. Think in advance about how your ideal applicant would respond to your questions.

[The Framework](#) provides many examples of practical behaviours you would expect from a capable worker. You can use these to develop your own questions.

Here's an example that draws on a candidate's actual experience to explore the capability 'Engage and motivate me':

- Tell me about a time when you had to encourage and support a team member or a friend to do something they didn't think they could do. How did you go about doing that? How did they respond and what happened?

The second example below uses a scenario to explore how the candidate would respond in a situation that requires the capability 'Build my capacity to participate':

- *Situation: I have just moved into a new area. I am really interested in making new friends, but I don't know many people.*
- *Action: Tell me what you would do to support me in this situation.*

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- *Tell me why you think that is the best approach. What do you hope the results will be?*

Find [further information](#) about developing interview questions, and some further [examples](#), in the provider resources online.

Values-alignment is an increasingly important factor for both employers and employees. You may want to explore this aspect as part of your interview process or as a separate informal follow up.

Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

- *How would you describe your ideal workplace?*
- *Why do you want to work with us? What motivates you?*
- *What are your long-term plans?*
- *How would your co-workers describe you?*

Work simulation activities

In the disability sector, assessment methods that closely mimic the real-life working conditions or scenarios can be very effective. They can improve your assessment outcomes without taking up much extra time if you prepare in advance. Check out the tips at the end of this section.

Based on the capabilities you want to assess, decide what kind of work simulation you want to use. Examples described in this section include:

- Role plays
- Scenarios
- Group discussions

Role plays

Role plays are useful to provide insight into how the candidate is likely to react in different situations. Design a role play to test the capabilities you want to assess.

For example, if it is important to test how a candidate will check in with participants you could set up a role play that involves an actor in the part of a participant who expresses their frustration with not being able to participate in a music lesson because it is held in a building with steps.

Think in advance of what your ideal candidate would do. For example, if they suggest they will take control, a better response would be to support the participant to take action to raise the issue themselves.

More complex role plays are useful for testing multiple capabilities.

Scenarios

This option involves providing the candidate with a written or verbal description of a scenario they may encounter and asking them to describe how they would respond. Requesting a written response is useful for roles that will require literacy skills. Requesting a verbal presentation can help assess communication and interaction skills.

You can download more information on using scenarios from the provider resources online.

Group discussion

If you are using a group-based assessment approach and want to test capabilities such as effective communication and collaboration, you could set up groups to undertake an activity such as solving a given problem or discussing how to handle a challenging situation.

Tips

The methods described above can be scheduled alongside the interview to make best use of time. Some practical suggestions are:

Scenarios

- Provide candidates with materials and instructions in advance

Presentations

- Ask candidates to come in before the interview to allow time to prepare their presentation.
- Select options to suit the communication needs of the role. For example, if a role doesn't require extensive written skills, avoid asking for written responses.

Involve more than one assessor

- In any assessment activity, it is a good idea to involve more than one assessor. It is always good practice to involve a person with lived experience when assessing candidates.
- Agree in advance on the criteria and methods to be used by each assessor and check for consistent application.
- Multiple assessors are needed to assess group activities in order to observe how each candidate performs.

Psychometric testing

Psychometric tests are evidence-based tests that can provide insight into a candidate's capabilities and personality traits. Examples of abilities and personality traits that can be tested include EQ (or emotional intelligence), motivations, communication style as well as cognitive abilities.

Psychometric testing can increase the validity and reliability of selection decisions when used in conjunction with other assessment methods. It does involve costs, and is most often used when recruiting for more specialised and/or management roles. You may want to use psychometric testing as the final method when choosing between preferred candidates.

Reference checking and worker screening

Worker screening is a way to help check that the people who are working, or wish to work, with NDIS participants don't present an unacceptable risk to people with disability. [Worker screening](#) is an important tool in the recruitment, selection and screening processes of an NDIS provider, and assists in the ongoing review of the suitability of workers.

Requesting information from referees provides valuable information because past performance is widely recognised as a good predictor of future performance. Reference checking is an important element in making a decision and shouldn't be treated as simply confirming a decision you have already reached.

It is a good idea to start reference checking in parallel with the other assessment methods so that all the information is available at the decision point.

Remember to seek the candidate's agreement to do checks as they may not want their current supervisor told they are applying elsewhere unless there is a strong chance they will be appointed. If this is the case, you could start by checking other referees nominated by the candidates.

Advertise

Advertising includes not only a job advertisement but also an information pack for potential applicants who want to know more. If you are recruiting for several roles or you would like to have a list of suitable applicants you can draw on over time, you can also consider running a group information session before the closing date. The information you provide in the advertisement, the information pack and the group session should describe both the rewards and the challenges of the job to avoid encouraging unsuitable applicants to apply (a costly waste of their time and of yours), improve the likelihood of suitable persons applying, and to reduce the likelihood of early turnover after appointment.

What will you say in your ad?

A job advertisement is often the first touch point with a candidate. Effective advertising means presenting the right information in a place where suitable, quality candidates will see it. An effective job ad, backed up by an information package, will give potential applicants a true sense of the role while also providing information about the benefits of taking on the role.

A job ad should be short and simple. The ad should provide summarised information and the information pack should expand on the points. The areas of information to cover include:

- **Title of role:** it's a good idea to use common language, for example disability support worker.
- **Key duties:** Describe what you want them to do in a few words that give a ~~good~~, practical picture of the job. For example, "support participants with personal care and social activities".
- **Hours and type of role:** State how many hours of work you are offering, whether these are regular or variable/ negotiable, and whether the role is casual or permanent, part-time or full-time, etc. For example: "Casual role, 15 hours per week, negotiable timing."
- **Salary or hourly rate:** Ads that state the salary or rate for the role upfront receive more applications than ones that don't.
- **Location:** Indicate where the work will be located so prospective workers know what to expect in terms of travel.
- **Essential requirements:** Your ad needs to tell applicants if there are any essential requirements to avoid getting applications from people who don't have them. For example, do they need their own vehicle or to have training or experience in delivering a particular kind of support? Do they need a National Criminal History Check or an NDIS Worker Check? Make sure you only include requirements that

really are essential. If there are other things that would be ‘desirable’, list these separately so you don’t screen out otherwise good applicants.

- **Capabilities required:** Capabilities are the attitudes, skills and knowledge required to do the job well. Attributes like punctuality, patience, listening or discretion are just as important to include as going shopping or helping with cleaning. If you used the [position description tool](#), you will find a list of relevant capabilities for the role you described. If not, go to [the Framework](#) to see which capabilities you might want to include. Only include key capabilities, for example, “You need to be a clear communicator and work collaboratively with others in the participant’s support team.”
- **Workforce diversity:** You could encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply. It’s also a good idea to ask applicants to let you know if they require adjustment to the interview setting, the assessment process or the role itself.
- **Benefits and opportunities:** Candidates want to know if there are particular benefits or opportunities in the role in areas such as:
 - Positive organisational values
 - Training and professional development
 - Salary packaging
 - Negotiable hours
 - Opportunities for advancement
 - A chance to join a great team of passionate professionals, like you

For example: You will be working for an organisation committed to supporting people with disabilities to live their best life. We are looking for workers who share our passion and, because we are only as good as our workers, you will have access to a range of benefits, including *(describe benefits your organisation provides)*.

- **How to apply:** Tell candidates what you expect, for example, email a 2-page CV and a short covering letter saying why they are interested in the job. Let them know if you also want them to attach any other information such as evidence of a Working with children check or current drivers licence. Provide a realistic closing date.
- **Contact for enquiries and further information:** Let potential applicants know where they can get further information about the job.
- **Information session:** Conducting a group information session is an opportunity to provide more information about the job and invite question from potential candidates. You can encourage candidates to check capabilities in the Framework and also complete the [Self-assessment tool for potential workers](#). Inviting people with lived experience to participate as experts in these sessions and offer their perspective on what makes a good worker is a good way to give potential candidates a better understanding of the people they might work with.

You can download the [Job Advertisement template](#) in the provider resources online to create your advertisement.

Additional tips for advertising and attracting applicants

- **Emphasise the NDIS capabilities:** The Framework capabilities are focused on supporting and enabling. Use language and terms from the capabilities that are relevant to the role you are advertising. Using words such as support, facilitate and enable will attract candidates with those values.
- **Write in plain English:** Many great workers come from non-English speaking backgrounds. Make sure your job advertisement can reach them.
- **Emphasise transferable attitudes, values, and skills:** Many highly suitable workers come from other sectors such as hospitality, cooking, or construction.
- **Be honest and upfront:** Although you may get more responses by omitting the more challenging aspects of the role, for example personal care, you may receive a large number of applications from unsuitable persons and/or select a person who does not have a complete understanding of the role and resigns within the first few months. Not only does this mean starting again, it is also costly, as new starts require induction and more intensive support in the first few months of work. Negative feedback from disillusioned workers could also have a negative effect on your reputation as an employer if they share their dissatisfaction, for example on social media.

Where to advertise?

There are many different places to advertise, and the best for you depends on your situation. Having a considered, diverse strategy for advertising roles will allow you to reach a broader audience and find your perfect candidate. Traditional methods such as job boards are still some of the best methods for advertising roles. A lot of organisations also find success through social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook as well as their own organisation website and networks.

- **Social Media:** Placing your job ads on your own social media pages is cheap and easy. It is also highly likely that people who follow your pages already have an interest in the type of work that you do. Consider asking your current workers to share the job on their social media networks.
- **Online job boards:** Traditional job boards such as Seek, Ethical jobs, JobActive, Care Careers, LinkedIn or Gumtree offer a large audience of potential workers. However, the large number of adverts on these platforms makes them very competitive. Make sure your advertisement contains terms suitable applicants are likely to search for. These may include task descriptors such as disability support but also value-based terms such as 'respect for clients', 'collaboration', 'person-centred', 'participation', etc.

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- **Relationships with local training colleges:** Students who are finishing Certificate 3 or 4 in Disability or Individual Support (or similar) need to complete a job placement prior to graduating. A paid placement can be very attractive to students and can lead to ongoing employment. To build relationships with local providers, you could look for organisations delivering certificates in disability through [MySkills](#).
 - **Recruitment fairs and university career days:** Many students are studying with the aim of working in the health or disability or aged sectors and are looking for opportunities to gain practical experience in relevant industries. Others studying in unrelated areas can simply be looking for jobs that pay well and offer flexibility in hours while they study. Recruitment fairs or university career days can be a great place to get exposure to these potential candidates. Each university will have a community or student careers liaison officer you can contact to find out more.
 - **Internal Referrals:** Your current staff may be a great source of new, suitable, staff. Encouraging your existing workers to use their networks to refer workers can be a good way to find new staff who are a good 'fit' for the role. Existing employees are more likely to provide a realistic impression of the work they do and are more likely to refer people who have similar values and attitudes.

Shortlist and conduct assessment

Shortlist your candidates against essential criteria

Your advertisement may attract a large number of applications or only a few. In either case, start by screening your candidates to ensure they meet your essential requirements. This will avoid wasting your time and resources, and theirs.

The desirable criteria can be used if you need to decide between two or more otherwise equally suitable candidates.

Implement your assessment plan

You should now be ready to implement your assessment plan based on the methods you selected. Here are a few good practice tips:

- Arrange a time and place free from interruptions.
- Give your candidates and assessors reasonable notice about when, where and what will happen.
- Check if they have any requirements to participate in the interview.
- Send out any background information to candidates in advance.
- Brief your assessor panel on what they need to do and an agreed consistent approach to scoring different assessment methods. You can download a templates to support you [assess](#) and [shortlist](#) your candidates and prepare a selection report to assemble and weigh up the outcomes of the different assessment methods you used.

Make an offer

Making an offer to your preferred candidate and letting unsuccessful candidates know provides an opportunity to demonstrate how your organisation treats its workers.

The process of making an offer

1. **Making the offer:** Once you have made your decision it is important to let the successful applicant know as soon as possible. A phone call is an easy way to do this. If they agree to accept the offer, you can start discussing practicalities such as a start date and next steps. You should then follow up this conversation with a formal offer confirming the details, which you can do in writing or by email.
2. **Sending the formal offer:** A formal offer should include the position title, salary, location, and any conditions or arrangements such as agreed hours of work. Even if the applicant has responded verbally, it is useful to ask them to accept your offer by replying to your email (you can nominate a due date for this).
3. **Informing successful candidates of next steps:** When you send the formal offer letter you should let the candidate know about any remaining pre-start steps, and what to expect for their on boarding and induction process.

You can download a [letter of offer template](#) from the provider resources online.

Managing unsuccessful candidates

The way you manage unsuccessful candidates is important and can influence how people view your organisation. There may also be applicants with skills and knowledge suited to other roles, even if they were unsuccessful on this occasion. The process for letting them know the outcome will influence their decision to apply for future positions.

Here are some tips for managing unsuccessful candidates.

- **Provide timely notice:** Let them know the outcome as soon as possible. That way, they are not left waiting and can get on with considering other options.
- **Thank the candidate:** for taking the time to go through the process. Many will invest time and effort in preparing for their application and for the interview.
- **Provide open and honest feedback:** If they request it, provide the candidate with feedback. Be as honest and specific as you can about why they were unsuccessful. Point out where they did well and where they could have done better. Highlight areas they could work on to improve their chances in the future (are there qualifications or experiences that they are missing, is it as simple as a compliance check?). Candidates will appreciate it.

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- **Ask if you can contact them in the future:** If you think they might be suitable for other roles that become available, ask if you can reach out to them.
 - **Invite them to follow you on social media:** Invite them to follow your social media so they can see what your organisation is doing and future roles that open up.

You can download guidance on responding to both [successful](#) and [unsuccessful candidates](#) in the provider resources online.

Welcome your new worker

Effective on boarding of new workers sets the foundation for good performance and engagement with your organisation. A well-structured induction process is an essential starting point to introduce new recruits to your organisation, your values, and way of working. As part of their induction, all new workers should complete the [NDIS Worker Orientation Module: 'Quality, Safety and You'](#), if they haven't already done so.

Once the initial induction process is complete, the approach you take to on boarding will depend on the role. Often new recruits to entry level roles, especially those with little or no experience working in disability, need more intensive support.

Providing effective support for new recruits can influence how they engage with the organisation and whether they stay on in the role.

Essential points to cover:

- **Organisational structure and responsibilities:** This builds on the position description. New recruits need to know what is expected of them, who they will be working with and who to go to if they are unsure or need support.
- **Capabilities for the role:** As a service provider you are responsible for making sure workers have the capabilities they need for the work they are asked to do. Encourage new workers to refer to the capabilities in the Framework for their role (for example General Support Work) for a clear idea of expected attitudes, skills, and knowledge.
- **Organisational policies and procedures:** In addition to capabilities, new recruits need to know about the policies or procedures they need to follow. For example, what does a zero-tolerance policy mean for them in the role they are performing? Or, for tasks such as PEG feeding that need to be done in a particular way, what is the procedure they need to follow for the individual receiving support.
- **Orientation to practice:** This will depend on the role. A new support worker will need an introduction to the person they are supporting and the activities they will be carrying out. 'Shadow shifts' or 'buddy shifts' are a common method to introduce new workers to the role. When using this approach, make sure the experienced worker can demonstrate and explain the key requirements and check that the new recruit is able to follow their lead. Workers also need opportunities to touch base and ask questions, especially in the first few months after appointment. Make sure each worker knows who they can contact for advice.
- **Ongoing support:** Lack of support is a common reason for early worker turnover, particularly where workers are working 1:1 in participants' homes. Consider how to provide regular points of connection and contact with both peers and supervisors.

Congratulations on reaching the end of your recruitment process! Remember to re-visit these tools and templates next time you need to recruit a new worker.