

Assessing values in the selection process

Using different assessment tools

Many organisations rely on interviews as their only selection tool, but evidence shows that when you use a range of different selection tools and involve different people in the recruitment process you are more likely to recruit the right person for your role. It's important for an inclusive and equitable recruitment process to give applicants the opportunity to show their potential to different people and in different ways

It can be challenging for employers to find time to involve more people or spend more time assessing candidates, but there are creative ways to approach these challenges.

What are selection tools?

They are different activities and exercises you can use to find out about candidates' values, motivations, skills, and competencies. They enable you to identify people who are likely to be successful and happy in your role and workplace.

Values can be assessed in lots of different types of selection tools such as values-based interviews, written activities, work trials and meetings with people with lived experience.

A simple assessment day made up of three different exercises such as an interview, a written exercise and an interaction exercise, perhaps including the people you support, where candidates are seen by more than one interviewer or assessor, is the most effective way of selecting the right candidates than relying on an interview alone.

Best practice when designing values-based selection tools for your assessment process

1. Before designing any selection tools, look at the job description and person specification and think about what makes the difference between good and poor performance in the job, and what are the key values and behaviours you need in the role. Then, produce a set of values-based criteria to assess all candidates against, such as:
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- **caring** – being kind and giving emotional support to others.
- **dignity and respect** - being considerate towards colleagues and people who use our care and support service.
- **learning and reflection** - improve on future performance by analysing what you have learned and how far you have come.
- **commitment to quality care and support** - continuous safe, compassionate care for every person who uses and relies on our care and support services.

2. Define these criteria in terms of positive and negative indicators of what assessors would expect to see and not want to see candidates demonstrating for each exercise to enable them to fairly assess all candidates. These should be linked to your values and behaviours which you should have defined in your values and behaviours framework (see our guidance on how to Articulate your values). For example:

Dignity and respect - Being considerate towards colleagues and people who use our care and support service	
Positive Indicators	Negative Indicators
You spend time listening to people to get to know them and their needs.	You ignore people and don't make time to welcome them or to get to know them and their needs.
You respect people's right to make their own choices and decisions about how they want to be supported.	You don't respect people's right to make their own decisions. You believe you know what they need better than they do.
You help people to retain their dignity and respect their privacy when delivering personal care to them.	You don't respect people's dignity and privacy, shouting across rooms and leaving doors open when delivering personal care.
You communicate with people in a clear, open and straightforward way using appropriate language.	You use jargon when communicating with people and talk to people in a patronising, childlike or inappropriate way.
You are sensitive to the needs and concerns of families and carers.	You are not aware of or interested in the needs and concerns of families and carers.

3. Thinking about the requirements of the job and what the job involves, decide which selection tools are the most appropriate, such as:
- A written exercise is only appropriate if the role involves a significant amount of writing.
 - A role play is appropriate if the role involves one on one conversations with people drawing on care and support and their families.

Choose selection tools which are relevant to the role and give candidates a realistic preview of the job, but care must be taken to ensure these do not disadvantage candidates who may have no previous experience of this type of work or require any prior knowledge. It is also important to consider how inclusive the selection tool is of all candidates.

Example values-based selection tools and activities for care sector roles

Exercise	Example
<p>Group exercise</p>	<p>You are a group of care workers who have been asked to attend a focus group by your employer. The aim is to think about how the organisation can better market itself to people who may not have thought about going into care work.</p> <p>Your manager has asked you as a group to create a list of reasons why you think people should come to work for your employer and to work in care, particularly the values that are important to have.</p> <p>Develop a list of ideas for how the employer could better market themselves to potential recruits.</p> <p>You have 15 minutes for your discussion and to make notes on the flip chart provided. At the end of the discussion, hand in your written suggestions to the assessors.</p>
<p>Roleplay</p>	<p>You have been asked to meet with the son of one of the people you support, Margaret Ward. Margaret's son is concerned that his mother is not getting everything she needs from her care package and he wants to discuss some ideas and concerns he has with you. You have been given a profile of Margaret and the care she has been receiving over the past 6 months.</p> <p>Your task is to meet with Margaret's son and to listen and respond to his concerns.</p> <p>The meeting will last 10 minutes. There will be a role-player acting as Margaret's son and an assessor in the room making notes who will not be contributing to the discussion.</p>
<p>Written exercise</p>	<p>One of the people you support, John, is going to be moving into a care home in the next few weeks and you have been asked to provide a one-page summary of his care needs and the service you have been providing him with, for the past two years so it can be sent in his file to the care home.</p> <p>You have been provided with several pieces of information about the work that you have been doing with John. Your task is to summarise this into the one-page report. You have 20 minutes to complete this task.</p>
<p>In tray</p>	<p>You have been on holiday for two weeks and return to a backlog of work that you need to prioritise and then start to work through. You have been provided with several documents including emails, phone messages, reports and letters which relate to your work and the people you are responsible for supporting.</p> <p>Your task is to read through the different documents and to decide which are the most and least urgent and how you will respond to each.</p> <p>You should complete the prioritisation plan you have been provided with, starting with the most important priority and how you will deal with that and finishing with your least important priority and how you will deal with that. You have 20 minutes to complete the task.</p>

[‘A Question of Care: A career for you’](#) is an online, interactive video challenge based on real-life scenarios from the social care sector that you could also consider using if your selection process to enable candidates to share their values in relation to a role in care. At the end of the challenge it provides a detailed personal profile that tells people whether they have what it takes to work in social care.

4. Think about how you will assess candidates values against the criteria in each selection exercise. It is helpful to produce an assessment matrix, so you know you are assessing each criterion at least twice in different exercises and activities.

For example

Values Assessment criteria	Exercise		
	Interview	Written exercise	Roleplay
Dignity and Respect	X	X	
Caring	X		X
Commitment to quality care and support	X		X
Learning and reflection	X	X	

5. Ensure everyone involved in the selection process have clear briefs for each exercise, including what the candidates are required to do and what criteria they are assessing the candidates against. Where possible assessors should be trained or at least briefed in detail on what is required of them when assessing candidates. Assessors should not also be role players as it is difficult to focus on role-playing and assessing at the same time.
6. A rating scale should be developed and applied consistently to each exercise to allow candidate's performance to be compared across different exercises. The British Psychological Society recommends using a scale of between 5 and 7 points.

For example

Poor	Below Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
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7. It is important to plan the logistics of the day in advance to ensure you have sufficient rooms available and staff available to assess candidates. It is helpful to do a timetable of the day for each candidate so they are aware what will be happening to them and the assessors are aware who they are seeing at different points in the day.

For example

Time	Exercise	Room / Assessor
9.30am	Arrival and paperwork	JC, Room 3
9.45am	Interview – values and skills	KN & GT, Room 6
10.30am	Meet the clients exercise	LK, JH, ED, Room 4
11am	Group exercise	JC, Room 3
11.30am	Finish	

8. Details of what will happen during the recruitment process should be sent to candidates in advance with any information they need to prepare for the assessments if relevant. Candidates should also be asked if they have any requirements for reasonable adjustments to be made to the assessment day to enable them to participate fully.