

Bulk Recruitment

- **What is it?**

Bulk recruitment is a method of recruitment used by some Agencies in order to maximise efficiencies in Recruitment systems and processes. How exactly bulk recruitment is done will vary. Outlined below are some general principles and FAQ's

- **Why do Agencies choose Bulk Recruitment?**

When done correctly and in the right circumstances, bulk recruitment can be efficient; saving time and resources. Some common uses of bulk recruitment may include recruiting a large number of policy officer roles at various levels for work across an Agency. Some Agencies choose to undertake recruitment activities concurrently, where these needs may align.

- **How is bulk recruitment different?**

All APS recruitment is subject to the same rules of merit (see merit in recruitment) This applies to both singular vacancies and to bulk processes.

There are some differences that arise due to the nature of processing and assessing a large number of applicants for multiple positions.

- **How should we assess applicants across different levels?**

Assessing applicants at multiple levels can be complex, while the specifics of each bulk recruitment round will differ, the aim remains the same; to ensure that while the principles of merit are being maintained flexibility and agility in process is retained.

The simplest way for Agencies to assess a bulk round will often be to invite applicants to 'nominate a preferred level' the applicants the Agency will then be free to merit list applicants for all levels for which they are suitable while taking into account the applicants preference.

This offers the most flexibility to Agencies and strikes a balance between employer and employee. However it may not be suitable for all situations.

In some situations it may be desirable for the recruiting Department to not offer applicants a preference or choice. This may be desirable in that it gives the Agency maximum flexibility but it removes a level of control from the applicant. The Agency will be free to assess and merit list each candidate and make offers as they are suited.

In some circumstances it may be preferable for an Agency to ask applicants to 'nominate' or 'apply' for one or multiple levels if this is the case the applicants can only be assessed at the levels they

have nominated. If an applicant has nominated multiple levels they will need to be assessed and merit pooled at each level separately.

While this option may seem to remove flexibility and be resource intensive. It may be desirable in some circumstances as it has the advantage of removing ambiguity both during and after the assessment process.

- **We have run a recruitment activity for a number of different roles, can they be assessed for all of these roles?**

The question of whether or not an individual can be assessed at all of the roles being advertised in a recruitment activity is a question over how that recruitment action has been constructed.

Where an applicant has nominated a particular role, they are assessed against all other applicants who nominated for that role.

- If, the construction of the recruitment action, however is such that an applicant has not nominated for a specific role then they must be assessed against applicants for all of the roles.
- An applicant in this scenario may be included on a merit list for any role where they have been assessed as suitable.

- **Are we able to use more than one selection panel?**

It is possible to use more than one panel to assess applications in a during a bulk recruitment exercise; where the applicant pool is being split between panels for efficiency it is important to consider how you might approach moderating each panels assessments to ensure that applicants are being comparatively assessed across panels.

- **Can Affirmative measures and Bulk Recruitment be used together**

Yes; Bulk recruitment can be run in conjunction with affirmative measures recruitment. Before any recruitment action commences Agencies should set clear Aims and goals of the recruitment activity.

Ideally this would include identifying a vacancy or the number of vacancies that are to be made available through either or both of the Affirmative measures regimes.

- **Can we advertise a vacancy with no closing date**

No; If a closing date is not specified, it is not possible to conduct a fair and merit based selection process. With no closing date , it would not be possible to comparatively assess all applicants for the role, only a cohort whose applications have been received by an arbitrary date will be assessed against one another. This may lead to perverse outcomes where, if only one application is received when the panel wish to conduct another round of assessments they will be assessed against no one.

- **Can we begin making offers to applicants while the selection process is still underway**

No, An Agency is unable to make offers to applicants while the selection process is still underway. This would not be compliant with the Public Service Act 1999, specifically 10(A)(1)(a) and (c) and 10(A)(2)

Applicants would not have been fully and comparatively assessed thus this approach would fail on the basis of merit.