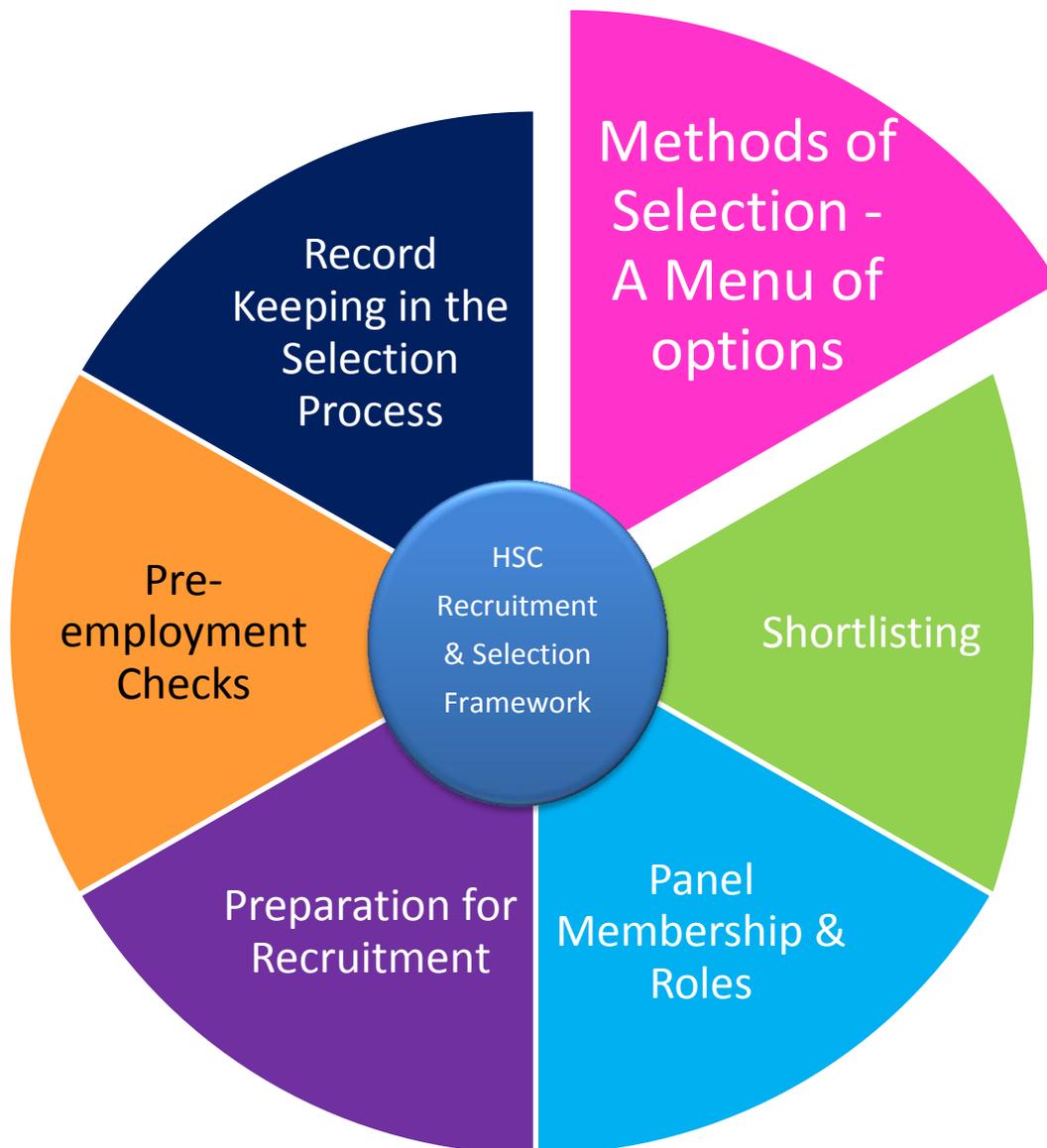




# Managers Guide to Methods of Selection

## A Menu of Options



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# INTRODUCTION

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The Selection stage of recruitment is an integral element and the importance of getting this right cannot be underestimated. **Finding the right people, with the right skills at the right time is key to the success of the HSC.** All elements of the Recruitment and Selection process must ensure any appointment made within the HSC is compliant with all current Employment and Equality legislation. This may include the need to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that those with a disability are not disadvantaged.

Any selection method used should be based on the Job Description and Personnel Specification and aim to establish the candidates'

- ability and skills to do the job;
- ability and skills to make a valuable contribution to the organisation.
- potential for development.

Recruiting managers should remember that they can use either competency assessment; value based assessment or a 'blended' approach incorporating both.

**Competency Based Selection** is based on the premise that past performance is the best indicator of how someone will perform in a similar situation in the future. During the selection process evidence will be sought through examples of past behaviours, in certain situations or conditions, which provides firm evidence that the applicant has the necessary competencies to succeed in the post applied for.

**Value Based Recruitment** is a process adopted by the HSC to attract and select employees on the basis that their individual values and behaviours are aligned to the HSC Collective Leadership Strategy. It focuses on the 'how' and 'why' people do what they do. Candidates who are shortlisted for interview will need to demonstrate at interview that they have the required knowledge, skills, competencies and values to be effective in this new role. In answering the value based questions candidates have the opportunity to share examples of when they have demonstrated values relevant to the HSC.

The focus of this document will be to review the selection methods available which are summarised in the table below. Managers should be aware that whilst these methods can be used independently, combining selection methods can improve the validity of the overall process.

# MENU OF OPTIONS

Recommended Methods →						
Skills To be Assessed ↓	Panel Interview	Multi Mini Interviews	Occupational Based Written Assessment	Assessment Centres – Group exercises	Assessment Centre Individual exercises	Stakeholder Event / Presentations
Communication / Interpersonal Skills	X	x		x	X	x
Leadership Skills	X			x		x
Analytical Skills			x		X	
Planning & Organisational Skills		x	x		X	
Critical Thinking			x		X	
People Management Skills	X			x	X	
Teamwork	X	x	x	x	x	
Technical knowledge & Skills	X	x	x		X	

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## PANEL INTERVIEWS

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The panel interview process remains the most commonly used form of selection. For the employer the interview is an opportunity to assess the candidates' knowledge, skills and experience against the Personnel Specification; and their ability to perform in the role and suitability for the team / organisation.

A structured interview can help improve the ability of the panel to predict the candidates' performance on the new job and it is important that all interviews are conducted in an objective and systematic manner.

- Questions should be planned and carefully drafted prior to before the interview and must be based on criteria contained within the Personal Specification.
- Questions should focus on the knowledge, skills, experience, attributes and behaviours required for the job.
- All candidates should be asked the same questions and
- Answers are scored against an agreed rating system;

Please remember that structured interview does not mean rigid as there may be a need to probe further to gain a full understanding of the candidate's response.

**Competency Based Questions** Competency based questions are designed to reveal a candidates capabilities and skills on a number of competencies related to the specific job being recruited to.

When preparing the Personnel Specification at the outset, the Healthcare Leadership Model can be used for this purpose especially in the recruitment of senior appointments. Panels are advised to consider all elements of the Healthcare Leadership Model and identify those components which are most closely related to the post applied for. Further information on the Leadership Framework can be found at <https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NHSLeadership-LeadershipModel-colour.pdf>

Having established the key elements of the Healthcare Leadership Model and the level of competence required, the questions should be designed to ensure that the candidate has the opportunity to demonstrate how they are and or / would be competent in the particular quality.

## **Value Based (VB) Questions**

VB questions seek to identify the right candidate for the post by gathering evidence from responses to a set of questions which are aligned to the HSC Collective Leadership Strategy and exploring the work behaviours that are likely to be demonstrated if the candidate was appointed.

VB questions focus on how and why an applicant has made certain choices in their work. They seek to explore the associated values and behaviours via a series of probing questions designed to provide an insight into an applicant's values or what they consider to be important in the workplace. It provides an insight into their motivation and drive of their behaviour.

***Case Study A*** – A Lead Nurse Band 8A post for Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services is being recruited to. The Team for which this appointee will be responsible has had a significant amount of change in the past 18 months and requires strong leadership skills and team development. The client group requires a well experienced Nurse with robust communication and interpersonal skills together with the resilience to manage the team.

***The selection method chosen*** - A traditional style interview with 3 panel members and an assessor using a blended approach to determine both leadership and clinical skills. Value based questions will be included to ensure the appointee's approach is aligned to identified values.

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# MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEWS (MMI)

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The MMI is an interview format which uses short independent one-to-one assessments which take place in a timed circuit to obtain an aggregate score of each candidate's skills. Interviews remain the widest used format of selection; however the MMI can offer a variation to the traditional panel interview and open up the opportunity to assess distinct elements of the job requirements in an environment which many candidates find more relaxed. For this reason it can be particularly suitable for high volume recruitment activity.

***Case Study B*** –A manager seeks to create a Band 2 Porters waiting list and there is a minimal qualification / experience criteria for the posts. Typically the Trust receives in excess of 300 applications. The core skills required are:

- ⇒ *Excellent Communication / Interpersonal skills;*
- ⇒ *Ability to work in a Team work;*
- ⇒ *Empathy for patients and clients*
- ⇒ *Ability to work flexibly with a commitment to deliver high quality service.*

*A number of managers are involved as this is a Trust Wide recruitment exercise and all want to input into the recruitment process.*

***The selection method chosen*** - *It is not practical to do traditional interviews which would take multiple days and multiple panels. As a result they agree that the use of Multi Mini Interviews is more appropriate.*

*As the panel approach normally involves a minimum of four questions to cover each of the core skill requirements, it is agreed that a large room will be used with four 'stations'. There will be four managers who will each take the role of an interviewer and will take one station each at which they will meet candidates to interview them.*

*The candidates will be invited into the Interview room four at a time. Each candidate will be directed to of the four 'stations' where they will be interviewed on a one-to-one basis.*

*This process will be timed by an administrative support worker who will ring a bell / sound a buzzer when it is time to move to the next 'station' Each candidate will*

*move systematically around each of the 'stations'. This process will take 16 minutes of actual interview time and up to 4 minutes are allowed for the changeover between each 'station' and entering / leaving the room. Overall 4 candidates can be seen every 20 minutes. In a 7 hour day this means 4 managers can between them assess up to 84 candidates. Ideally there would be two large rooms available or one very large room which can be split into two sets of 4 workstations. If the latter can be achieved the whole process can be concluded in 2 working days.*

*Prior to the commencement of the interviews, expected responses are agreed for each question in the normal way. A minimum score should also be set by the panel in advance of the multiple mini interviews.*

*At the end of this process, the scores for each candidate and for each station are totaled to provide an overall score for each candidate. This will be plotted onto the Summary Score Sheet which will determine the overall ranking for each candidate.*

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# TOOLS TO SUPPORT SELECTION

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## **ASSESSMENT CENTRES**

Assessment centres require candidates to complete a number of different tasks and they often combine behavioural and cognitive personality assessments to obtain an overall score.

The tasks set should relate closely to the Personnel Specification and reflect the reality of the job. They must be administered in a systematic way with candidates being given the same types and numbers of tasks to complete in the same time so that they have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Assessment centres must be conducted by qualified persons and for purposes of HSC would often be accessed through the HSC Leadership Centre.

**Group exercises** should be as realistic as possible, have clear goals and be clear if there is a set time frame in which they are to be completed. Typically they will require candidates to perform an activity or share information and reach a decision. They may also encourage cooperation or competition to test for creativity or the ability to build on the ideas of others in a productive manner.

**Individual Exercises** will typically reflect key aspects of the post such as report writing, information handling and/or practical IT skills, such as interrogating a spreadsheet or computerised system. As with the group exercises, clear instructions and time frames must be provided as the ability to follow and adhere to instructions given can also be tested during the exercise. Role play can also be used, this could be to test customer service skills or even media skills for more senior posts.

***Case Study C*** – *There are vacancies for Graduate Trainees, these positions can be anywhere within the organisation and are a middle management band. The successful applicants will have a wide range of duties and will be expected to undertake a number of projects as well as completing a formalised education programme, usually a Post Graduate Diploma. As there are a high volume of applications and a high expectation of the successful candidates it is important to hold comprehensive and rigorous selection processes*

***The selection method chosen*** - *Assessment centres form part of the selection process and have been designed to test a number of competencies:*

<b>Exercise</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<i>Group Exercise</i>	<i>To test:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How applicants interact in a pressurised situation</i></li> <li>• <i>Prioritisation skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Persuasion and negotiation skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Ability to focus on task at hand</i></li> <li>• <i>Ability to listen to others and act on this</i></li> </ul>
<i>Individual Exercise</i>	<i>To test:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Report writing/ written communication skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Time management skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Organisation skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Ability to identify key information</i></li> <li>• <i>Ability to identify the importance of information</i></li> </ul>

*Group exercise: On the day the candidates are given a brief and a role, they have 30 minutes to read the brief and 1 hour to collectively discuss the situation, come to an agreement and prepare a statement for media*

*Individual exercise: Candidates were a set of instructions, a number of documents on a PC and a calculator. They were asked to create a briefing paper for an upcoming meeting. They had 1 hour to complete this task.*

*Each task was marked against the Health Care Leadership framework competencies being assessed and the marks added to marks from the other processes.*

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Presentations are often used to support the interview process and can be used to assess the organisational and communication skills of an applicant. Aside from being used in the interview setting, it can also be used as an independent tool such as through a stakeholder engagement scenario event.

Key components - Presentations assess an applicant's ability to organise their thoughts and ideas in logical form and present these clearly and succinctly to a defined audience.

## **SEEN OR UNSEEN**

Panels have the option of providing the presentation topic in advance of the interview, or inviting the applicant to attend for a preparation period and then make the presentation either to the panel or to a stakeholder group. For senior posts, presentations to a stakeholder group may also involve a section for questioning.

In all events presentations should be time limited to ensure that each applicant has the same amount of time to both prepare and deliver their presentation. If using this style of activity, panels must be clear as to how they will score and should seek to assess not only the content, but also the communication skills used during the activity.

**Case Study D** – *There is a vacancy for a new Learning & Development Officer Band 5. The successful candidate will be expected to deliver training to a range of staff throughout the organisation.*

***The selection method chosen*** - *The panel agree the candidate should be asked to make a 5 minute unseen presentation at the start of the interview which will account for 15% of the total marks available for the interview.*

*On the day, the candidate will be asked to arrive 45 minutes prior to their interview commencing to undertake preparation. They will then be invited to deliver their presentation to the panel at the start of the interview process. The panel will score both content and communication skills as these are both core components of the post.*

## **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Stakeholders can make a valuable contribution to the selection process. There are a range of ways in which stakeholders can be engaged and this will be determined by the post in question. This may include but is not limited to the following examples.

All stakeholders must be trained on the selection process so that they are clear what their role entails and their responsibilities within it. This will include as a minimum a briefing on the rules around confidentiality and equality of opportunity within the organisation.

**Case Study E** – A vacancy has arisen for a Transformational Lead Band 8B. This post will typically involve the need to engage with a range of stakeholders including staff from a variety of professions, trade union colleagues and service users.

As part of the selection process the panel have decided that a presentation should be made by candidates to a group of stakeholders to assess their ability to engage with stakeholders and ensure effective communication leading to specific action plans for successful outcomes.

***The selection method chosen*** – The panel agree that they wish to involve a range of stakeholders in this process to fully assess the candidates ability to engage with a broad range of stakeholders.

A stakeholder group will be arranged and a task will be decided upon. Following this process they will be required to provide feedback to the main interview panel based on the assessment criteria and the interview panel will have the final say.

The stakeholder panel will be representative of the typical stakeholders engaged on a day to day basis in the post.

**Case Study F**– A vacancy has arisen for a support worker for teenage mums. The successful candidate must be capable of developing a good rapport with this group of stakeholders.

***The selection method chosen*** - The panel agree to engage a number of teenage mums in the selection process as key stakeholders.

The candidates will be asked to meet with three different mums on a one-to-one basis and they will be required to score each of the candidates on a range of interpersonal skills in terms of how comfortable they felt with the candidate. The discussion will be based around scenarios which potentially could arise within the post applied for.

Each of the 3 mums will be asked to rate their overall experience of the candidates against key criteria and this information will be feed into the overall performance assessment for each candidate. Feedback will be provided following the formal interview to ensure there is no bias at the interview stage.

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# OCCUPATIONAL BASED ASSESSMENTS

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**Occupational based** assessments which can include **Psychometric testing** have become an important part of the selection process which can be applied in various ways.

Only tests which have been validated are in current use. The HSC is currently exploring the options for the development and application of occupational based assessments in a range of areas.

Further information will be published in a Managers Guide when available.