



# Guide for managing candidate use of AI in Recruitment

## About this guide

With the increase of candidate use of AI in recruitment, it's important that recruiting managers are supported and equipped when undertaking recruitment.

This guidance is intended to provide practical tips to assist agencies to manage candidate use of AI while maintaining fair, effective and merit-based recruitment processes and should be read in conjunction with the Principles for agency use of AI in recruitment and Principles for candidate use of AI in recruitment.

Complementary to this guide are the:

- Principles for agency use of AI in recruitment, and
- Principles for candidate use of AI in recruitment

This guidance has been developed taking into account the:

- [AI Plan for the Australian Public Service 2025 | digital.gov.au](https://digital.gov.au)
- [Policy for the responsible use of AI in government | Digital Transformation Agency](#)
- [Australia's Artificial Intelligence Ethics Principles | Department of Industry Science and Resources](#)
- [Guidance material for using AI-assisted recruitment tools | Merit Protection Commissioner](#)

## Understanding how candidates use AI

Before we can effectively manage candidate use of AI, we first need to understand where and how they are using it. Candidates are most likely to use AI for:

- resume / CV writing
- written applications
- interview prep (mock interviews, pre-prepared responses)
- online assessments not monitored by human oversight including during interviews for real-time answers and/or to prepare written exercise responses.



## Tips for managing candidates use of AI

### Set Clear Expectations

Setting clear expectations upfront with candidates is important to maintaining transparency and integrity in a recruitment process. Agencies must either:

- link to, or provide a copy of the Principles for candidate use of AI in recruitment, either in the candidate pack or agency recruitment system advertisement, or
- where agencies have developed their own principles, link or provide a copy of their agency specific principles.

Agencies should also clarify expectations of candidates as it relates to use of AI to support their participation in recruitment. This could be by advising candidates which stages of the process require authentic, unaided input.

### Encouraging AI use and assessing candidate capability

The [AI Plan for the APS](#) seeks to improve service delivery, policy outcomes, efficiency and productivity by increasing the safe and responsible use of AI in government.

This means most roles in the APS are going to require employees to have the ability to use AI to assist them in their day-to-day role. When advertising a role, agencies should consider what level of AI capability is required for the role and whether this needs to be included in the selection criteria and in turn, how capability will be assessed.

Agencies assessing a candidate's AI capability as a part of the recruitment process may wish to include transparency questions in the application form to capture which candidates have opted in to using AI. This disclosure will support recruitment panels to have discussions with candidates regarding their use of AI. A sample candidate transparency question is provided below.

**Sample candidate transparency question:** *We are supportive of candidates using artificial intelligence (AI) tools and technologies to support the preparation of their application. To assist us in assessing your capability to use AI tools and technologies, we kindly ask you to disclose if any part of your application (including your CV, resume, or written response) has been prepared or assisted by the use of AI tools. This includes, but is not limited to, AI-based writing assistants, resume builders, or other AI technologies.*

1. *Has AI been used in the preparation of any part of your application?*  
[ ] Yes  
[ ] No



*If you answered yes, please provide a brief description of the AI tools or technologies used and specify which parts of your application were assisted by AI.*

**Optional addition:** *Please note if you have not used AI tools to assist with your written application or CV / resume, there will be a further opportunity to demonstrate your AI capability later in this recruitment process.*

## **Focus on outcomes, not inputs**

A candidate's ability to demonstrate their relevant work-related qualities is ultimately more important than how polished their resume looks or how well their written application reads.

When assessing a candidate's work-related qualities against the work related-qualities genuinely required for the role you are recruiting for it's important that you look past the polish and assess whether the candidate has adequately demonstrated their work-related qualities through detailed examples of their experience and the results they have achieved.

Agencies may wish to consider whether asking for a 500-700 words pitch is the most effective method to assess a candidates capabilities and experience, as this often leads to broad, general statements that make it challenging for selection panels to differentiate between candidates. As an alternative, agencies could consider asking candidates to respond to two or three targeted questions that are directly aligned with the key requirements of the role they are applying for.

If a candidate chooses to and discloses that they have used AI to assist in preparing for a recruitment process, this shouldn't be viewed as a negative. What does matter, is whether the candidate is able to demonstrate relevant / transferrable experience. Have they:

- provided examples of work they have done and the impact of these outcomes
- outlined challenges they faced and the strategies they used to navigate these challenges
- adequately demonstrated relevant or transferrable capabilities and experience that will allow them to succeed in the advertised role?

**Remember** a strong resume or written application is not the same as a strong candidate who has adequately demonstrated relevant or transferable skills and experience.

## **Validate candidate claims**

To ensure the integrity of the recruitment process, it's essential to validate the claims made by candidates in their applications, resumes, other submitted materials and/or during interview. This step helps confirm that the skills and experiences demonstrated by a candidate throughout the recruitment process are genuine and not fabricated. Validation can



be achieved through a combination of targeted questioning, reference checks, and practical assessments.

### Conduct Targeted Interviews

Interviews provide an opportunity to delve deeper into a candidate's claims. Use pointed questions to probe specific examples from their resume or written application. For instance:

- **Ask the candidate to elaborate on a particular achievement:**  
*"Can you take us through the specific steps you took to achieve the outcome described in your application, why you took those steps and include any challenges and how you overcame them?"*
- **Explore the context behind their experiences:**  
*"What was your individual contribution to the project you mentioned, and how did it impact the team's overall success?"*

### Engage Referees for Verification

Contacting referees is a critical validation tool. It is not necessary (nor is it good practice) to restrict reference checks to a standard set of questions. Prepare specific questions based on the candidate's submitted content to gather corroborating data points. Examples include:

- *"Can you confirm the candidate's role in the project they described and provide details on the outcomes they achieved?"*
- *"How did the candidate handle the challenges outlined in their application? Were there any strategies they employed that stood out?"*

## What to do when candidates use AI inappropriately

In cases where a candidate is found to have used AI inappropriately, such as failing to disclose its use when asked, misrepresenting their own work, or violating agency policies or guidance, the response should be proportionate and documented.

This may include follow-up questions to the candidate to clarify their involvement or additional validation measures to confirm their ability to perform the job duties.

Steps to consider include:

- **Immediate Review:** Pause the candidate's progression in the recruitment process if the misuse is detected early, and review all submitted materials for authenticity.
- **Candidate Notification:** Inform the candidate of the concerns and provide an opportunity for them to respond or clarify.
- **Disqualification:** If the misuse constitutes providing false or misleading information, remove the candidate from the process. For APS employees, this may also result in sanctions under the [APS Code of Conduct](#).



- **Documentation and Reporting:** Record the incident and the steps taken for the recruitment delegate to consider as part of their overall consideration of the recruitment process outcome.
- **Process Improvement:** Use the experience to review and refine agency policies and guidance, such as enhancing candidate disclosure statement or training panels on detection of AI use by candidates.

There may be instances where inappropriate use of AI by a candidate during the recruitment process is identified after the successful candidate has commenced in the role. In such cases, agencies should refer the matter to the relevant conduct or integrity team for further assessment and investigation.

By addressing inappropriate use firmly but fairly, agencies can uphold the principles of merit while deterring future violations.