



# Assessment Centres in NATO's Recruitment Process

## WHY does NATO use assessment centres?

- Assessment centres are mostly used for G22/A5 posts and above, for candidates short-listed for the final interview.
- The assessment centre increases the amount of relevant information for the selection panel in their assessment of candidates and the decision-making process.
- It uses a rigorous approach that respects the concepts of fairness, equal opportunities and increased objectivity.
- It is learning experience for candidates, for their further growth and development.

## WHAT is assessed?

The assessment centre assesses each candidate in relation to a set of competencies defined by NATO as key to the job in question. These competencies are mentioned in the vacancy notice (e.g. Initiative, Change leadership).

## HOW is it assessed?

The assessment centre uses a standardised methodology and process that permits a systematic assessment of all candidates against a clearly defined set of key behavioural competencies. Trained assessors observe the behaviour of candidates in response to a variety of situations and tasks, where each competency is assessed with at least two different assessment activities.

## Set-up and Running of the Assessment Centre

- Step 1: The external assessment centre provider analyses the job description and set of competencies mentioned in the vacancy notice. They also have a meeting with the hiring manager and representatives from NATO's HR department to discuss the context and expectations of the job.
- Step 2: The provider designs the assessment centre programme and chooses the activities in relation to the competencies to be assessed. These may include: an interview, a personality questionnaire, a reasoning ability test and simulation exercises such as making a presentation, holding a meeting with a team member, or drafting a report.
- Step 3: Candidates are invited to the assessment centre day and receive an information brochure about what to expect. They may be invited to complete some online questionnaires in advance.
- Step 4: During the assessment centre day the candidates take part in the activities. They are guided by the assessors throughout the day and given instructions for each activity. Trained assessors observe candidates' behaviour and document their findings throughout the day.
- Step 5: After the assessment centre day, the assessors meet to integrate the data they have collected and discuss their findings.
- Step 6: The assessors prepare an individual report on each candidate, describing their strengths and identifying areas where there is room for development, in relation to the pre-defined competencies. They share and present these reports to the NATO selection panel in a meeting.
- Step 7: Candidates are invited for an individual feedback session with one of the assessors during which they receive a copy of the assessment centre report.



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## Tips for Candidates

- Read the vacancy notice carefully and pay attention to the key competencies mentioned.
- Understanding how NATO has defined each competency will help you prepare for the interview part of the assessment centre. Be prepared to give recent examples of how you have demonstrated these competencies.
- More information about NATO's definitions of competencies for their international civilian staff can be found here: <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/87157.htm>
- Make sure you are well rested before the assessment centre and give it your full focus throughout the day.
- Listen carefully to the instructions for each activity and be aware of the time limits to make the best use of your time.
- Be yourself and approach each activity as you would in real life.