

How the Financial Services Authority (FSA) created a Financial Crime and Intelligence Division with the best analyst talent

Keywords: Analyst role, assessment centre, role analysis, sifting tool, interactive exercises, wash-up sessions.

→ The challenge

We have worked with the FSA for over eight years. Recently, they tasked us with designing and delivering recruitment solutions for filling analysts positions for the new Financial Crime and Intelligence Division.

→ The solution

We quickly agreed a framework involving an interactive exercise, an interview and a psychometric test. In detail our 'duties' involved:

- Sifting tool
- Competency based interview
- Interactive exercises
- How the framework could work for 42 assessors assessing 30 candidates in one evening
- Training the assessors and interviewers

Based on the job description and person specification, we carried out extensive role analysis and identified a set of competencies ranging from analytical to communications skills. We then established which tool would address which competency by using an assessment grid.

With the application process already set up, we needed to create a sifting tool that was practical to use and time-efficient whilst structured, fair and robust. With time, the client realised the tool also needed to differentiate between two levels of candidates.

For the interactive exercise, our wealth of experience and specialism in this area allowed us to design 3 case studies from which the client could choose the one that most fitted their needs. As with all other tools, this was developed in close

collaboration with the client to ensure that all ground had been covered in a structured, fair and objective style.

As 42 assessors had to use the tools, the biggest challenge was to ensure that the tools were simple to use, but still sophisticated enough to measure the required skills, whilst differentiating between varying levels of experience.

The following day a wash-up session was held to review results and identify successful candidates.

→ The achievements

- All 9 positions were filled in one round of assessment
- A wide range of candidates - the oldest being 68 - were recruited thanks to a fair and objective approach
- 1 month from start to end of project
- 30 interviewers and 15 assessors were successfully briefed in two hours to meet the time constraints

This work allowed us to build on the experience in recruiting for analysts' roles that we previously developed with organisations such as HMRC Intelligence Analysis and MI5.

