



Australian Government



Job Seeker Classification Instrument Guidelines

V 1.5

Disclaimer

This document is not a stand-alone document and does not contain the entirety of Disability Employment Services Program Providers' obligations. It should be read in conjunction with the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement and any relevant guidelines or reference material issued by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) under or in connection with Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement.

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Document Change History

Version	Effective Date	End Date	Change and Location
1.5	1 Jan 23		Updated pages 4, 6 and 9 with relation to updated advice on Job seekers who are experiencing Family or Domestic Violence. Added page numbers
1.4	1 Jul 22	31 Dec 22	Changed all references from jobactive to Workforce Australia. Removed Job Seeker Classification Instrument Form – See Standalone version.
1.3	13 Sep 21	30 Jun 22	Updated advice about evidence required to support downgrade of educational levels or qualifications in Q.4 and Q.5 (P13-14). Integrated footnotes into document text.
1.2	7 Dec 20	12 Sep 21	In Q.4, Q.5, and Q.6, if a Provider is unable to make any changes to these questions, to contact DES Admin via email, removing Services Australia as a contact for any changes to these questions.
1.1	9 Mar 20	6 Dec 20	DES providers are unable to downgrade the educational or qualification levels in the JSCI. See Q.4 (P.13) and Q.6 (P.14).
1.0	1 Jul 18	8 Mar 20	Original Version of document

Background

These Guidelines outline the role of the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) in Disability Employment Services (DES) and the process by which the JSCI must be administered by DES Providers.

The JSCI, in conjunction with other information is used to determine the DES 2018 Funding Level for Participants in DES (with the exception of Work Assist participants).

It is important that DES Providers check to ensure all JSCI information is completed for all DES Participants to ensure that the most appropriate Funding Level is calculated.

In DES, the JSCI is not used to determine if a referral for an ESAt is required. While DES Providers can refer Participants for an Employment Services Assessment (ESAt) without conducting the JSCI, it is considered best practice for the JSCI to be completed for all Participants.

About the JSCI

The JSCI is based on a statistical model that determines a Participant's relative level of disadvantage in the labour market and is used to assess a Participant's likelihood of becoming or remaining long term unemployed.

The JSCI has a fundamental role in the operation of Australian Government employment services. By identifying the individual Participant's relative level of disadvantage and referring them to the most appropriate level of assistance, the JSCI helps ensure that resources are directed to those who are most in need, in line with Government policy. The JSCI is also essential for ensuring that employment services operate within the budget parameters set by the Government.

The JSCI is an interview-based questionnaire which seeks to identify a job seeker's risk of becoming or remaining long term unemployed. The JSCI will also indicate if a job seeker may require further Assessment through an ESAt. The JSCI also indicates whether a Participant has identified multiple and/or complex barriers to employment that may require further assessment. Participants who require further assessment are referred for an ESAt.

In addition, the JSCI identifies Participants who have:

- disclosed domestic violence, family grief or trauma and may need to be referred to services appropriate to their circumstances. This includes state or national based services and Services Australia social workers. Social workers can provide short-term counselling, crisis intervention and information and referrals to other services to assist Participants.
- poor language, literacy and numeracy skills and may benefit from referral to the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program, administered by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.
- poor English language skills and may benefit from referral to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), administered by the Department of Home Affairs.

The JSCI can be conducted by employment services providers - including DES, Workforce Australia Enhanced services, Community Development Program - and by Services Australia.

Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement (Effective 1 July 2018) Clauses

- Clause 115—Change of Funding Level
- Clause 141—Funding Levels for Participants
- Annexure A—Definitions

Reference Documents relevant to these Guidelines

- Direct Registration Guidelines
- Referral for Employment Services Assessment Guidelines
- 2018 Funding Level Tool Guidelines
- JobAccess website

Explanatory Notes

All capitalised terms have the same meaning as in Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement.

In this document, “must” means that compliance is mandatory and “should” means that compliance represents best practice.

Conducting the JSCI

Brief Description	What is Required:
Step 1. DES Provider Conducts JSCI for the Participant	
Why conduct the JSCI	<p>All DES Participants need an active JSCI to ensure the most accurate Funding Level is calculated.</p> <p>Note: While the Funding Level for Work Assist Participants is determined without information from the JSCI, Providers should conduct and update the JSCI for these Participants as required to ensure the Participant’s current circumstances are recorded.</p>
When to conduct the JSCI	<p>There are two types of JSCIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial (or New) JSCI, and • Change of Circumstances Reassessment (CoCR) JSCI. <p>The Department’s IT Systems selects the type of JSCI for the job seeker. The Provider should ensure all job seekers have an active JSCI that reflects their current circumstances.</p> <p>An Initial JSCI should be conducted by the Provider when a Participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly Registers and is a Volunteer, • does not have a Centrelink CRN, or • does not have an active JSCI. <p>A Change of Circumstances Reassessment (CoCR) JSCI should be conducted by the Provider when, at any time during a Participant’s period of service, the Participant has had a change in their circumstances or discloses new or additional information such that their most recent JSCI is affected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that the Provider establish that a CoCR is required before actioning anything on the Department’s IT Systems. • Before undertaking a CoCR, the Provider must review the Participant’s current JSCI with the Participant to identify those questions and responses that relate to the changed circumstances or disclosed information. • Providers must only conduct a JSCI (including directly in the Department’s IT Systems or on Third Party Systems) where there is clear evidence or information from the job seeker of a change in their circumstances.
How to conduct the JSCI	<p>Providers are expected to conduct the JSCI process in a professional, sensitive and culturally appropriate manner.</p> <p>The JSCI must be conducted face-to-face with the Participant and in a private setting.</p> <p>In Exceptional Circumstances the Provider does not conduct the JSCI face-to-face with the Participant. In this case, the Provider must record in the Participant’s file or in the Comments section in the Department’s IT Systems, <u>the reason</u> for using the Exceptional Circumstances provision, <u>the date</u> and <u>the name of the person</u> recording the information.</p>

Brief Description	What is Required:
	<p>'Exceptional Circumstances' may exist where the Participant resides in an area affected by extreme weather conditions, natural disasters, public transport strikes or other conditions advised by the Department.</p> <p>A Participant can be accompanied by a nominee, including a family member, advocate, social worker or counsellor, for support when the JSCI is conducted. Interpreter services should be used where appropriate.</p> <p>Providers must inform the job seeker that the information provided is protected by the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i>. More information on privacy, confidentiality and access or disclosure of information is available from the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner or by calling 1300 363 992 or teletypewriter TTY 133 677 (ask for 1300 363 992).</p> <p>Providers should inform the Participant that some of the questions are voluntary disclosure questions which must be asked, but for which the Participant may choose to provide a response of 'do not wish to answer'. The Participant should be advised which questions are voluntary prior to the question being asked. The voluntary disclosure questions cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status • refugee status • disabilities and medical conditions • criminal convictions, and • any other personal factors or characteristics that may affect the Participant's ability to obtain and/or retain employment. <p>Providers should encourage the Participant to provide open and honest responses to all the questions to ensure that the JSCI accurately reflects their circumstances. The responses to the questions will allow Providers to deliver tailored services to best meet the Participant's needs.</p> <p>Providers must refer to the Explanation of the <i>Job Seeker Classification Instrument Questions – Advice Document (Attachment A)</i> when conducting the JSCI to ensure that the most appropriate response are provided. If a job seeker discloses a need for crisis assistance they must be referred to services appropriate to their current needs or to Centrelink for further assistance.</p> <p>Job seekers who disclose domestic violence, family grief or trauma and who require further assistance should be supported to connect with services appropriate to their circumstances. This includes support provided by a Services Australia social worker or another national or state-based organisation.</p> <p>Information to assist job seekers in crisis and information to assist job seekers affected by domestic and family violence is available on the Services Australia website.</p>
<p>Process steps for conducting the JSCI</p>	<p>The JSCI is completed on the Department's IT Systems. Where the Department's IT Systems are not available there is a Job Seeker Classification Instrument form available on the Provider Portal that can be printed and used as an interim measure to record the Participant's responses. The DES Provider must record all the information from the JSCI form in the Department's IT Systems as soon as</p>

Brief Description	What is Required:
Start a JSCI and select the Conducting Site	<p>possible and must retain on file the full JSCI signed by the Participant, either on the original paper form or a scanned electronic copy.</p> <p>The following sub-paragraphs describe the IT processes and steps. Providers should regularly check the Department’s IT Systems for any updates and ensure they use the latest IT advice available.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) From the ESSWeb menu select Job Seeker/JSCI. This will display the JSCI History panel, the JSCI Questions panel, and the JSCI Details panel. Select Add JSCI from the JSCI History panel. This will bring up the JSCI Questions Screen. b) The Provider must select the site at which the JSCI is being conducted from the Conducting Site drop down list and then click save. c) The Provider must select the Method of Delivery from the drop down list and then click save.
Record Participant’s answers to JSCI questions and review the answers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> d) For an Initial JSCI, the Provider must ask and record the Participant’s answers to all JSCI questions in sequence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Select the Pencil Icon  to record the Participant’s responses for each group of questions in the JSCI Summary Panel. This will then open up the individual questions for each group. Select the relevant response for each question then click the Save button to save the recorded responses before moving to the next group of questions in the JSCI Summary Panel. e) For a CoCR JSCI the Provider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) may either ask all JSCI questions in sequence and update the Participant’s answers where relevant, or ii) ask only those questions and record responses that relate to the Participant’s changed circumstances or disclosed information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Notwithstanding the reason for change, the Provider must document the nature and context of each change in circumstances in accordance with the instructions in the <i>Additional Information about documenting the changes made to the JSCI</i> section of this document. f) Select Save to save the recorded responses before moving to the next Question Panel. Move between Question panels as required. g) Selecting Cancel at any point throughout the JSCI process will terminate the JSCI and recorded responses/changes will not be saved. h) Corrections can be made if required before the JSCI is submitted. i) It is very important that the Provider reviews the recorded responses with the Participant to ensure they are correct prior to submitting the JSCI. A limit of two JSCIs per job seeker per day is applied by the Department’s IT Systems.
Submit the JSCI <i>Grant Agreement References:</i> • Clause 115	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> j) When all the answers have been reviewed and the Provider is certain they are correct, select Save, then select the Save drop down arrow and select Submit JSCI. This will display the JSCI ESAt Confirmation screen. k) The JSCI ESAt Confirmation screen will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ indicate in the ESAt may be required section if any factors that may require further assessment have been identified,

Brief Description	What is Required:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ display in the Current ESAt/JCA Outcomes section information from a Current Assessment which is a Valid ESAt, and ◇ provide ESAt requested actions. The DES Provider may select: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 'Apply/Reapply' (Default option when the Participant has a current ESAt or JCA), or (2) 'Do not assess' (Default option when the JSCI does not identify any factors that may require further assessment), or (3) 'Request New' (Default option when the JSCI identifies any factors that may require further assessment). Note the option of 'Request New' should not be selected in the 'JSCI-ESAt/JCA Confirmation' screen for DES Participants. Selecting this option changes the JSCI status to 'Pending' and it will only become 'Active' after a new ESAt is submitted. ◇ If it is determined that an ESAt is required, DES providers can request an ESAt appointment by sending an email to Services Australia's FOCUS Response Team, at: FOCUS.RESPONSE.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au. Refer to Referral for an Employment Services Assessment Guidelines. ◇ The 2018 Funding Level Tool will only take into account the latest JSCI information for a Participant when the JSCI status becomes 'Active'.
<p>Print the JSCI Report from the ESAt Confirmation screen and obtain Participant confirmation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> l) From the ESAt Confirmation screen, select Print JSCI. Providers must give the printed JSCI Report to the Participant to check that the recorded responses are correct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Note that the JSCI Report printed from the ESAt Confirmation screen will disclose the changes made and the specified reason for the change, where applicable. This will assist in accurately addressing each change made to the JSCI in the required supporting notes. m) If the Participant has difficulty reading the printed JSCI report, the questions and responses should be read out loud. This should be done in private and interpreter services should be used as appropriate to the Participant's needs. n) If the Participant indicates that any responses are incorrect, return to the JSCI Questions and make the required corrections. o) Once the responses are agreed, the Participant must initial each page of the finalised JSCI report and sign and date the last page, to verify they have read the information or have had the information read to them and agree that the information is correct. Once the JSCI report is signed the Provider must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) provide a copy of the signed JSCI report to the Participant, ii) keep a complete signed printed or scanned copy of the JSCI report on file, iii) retain copies or originals of any documents provided by the Participant that support responses recorded in the JSCI, and iv) select the Job seeker has signed a printout (retain on file) check box on the ESAt confirmation screen. If the Participant cannot or refuses to sign the

Brief Description	What is Required:
	<p>printed JSCI report, the Provider must make an entry in the Comments tab of ESSWeb recording the reason and circumstances (as appropriate), include the date and the name of the person recording the information, and tick the <i>Job seeker has signed a printout (retain on file)</i> check box so that the JSCI can be finalised.</p> <p>v) Select OK. This completes the JSCI process.</p>
<p>Verify if the Participant may require referral to other programs or services</p>	<p>p) The JSCI provides a notification when the Participant's responses identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ that the Participant may require referral to the Skills for Education and Employment Program (SEE) or the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). This information is displayed in the JSCI Details panel. ◇ Disclosed domestic violence, family grief or trauma may need to be referred to services appropriate to their circumstances. This may include a Services Australia social worker. A message will display at the top of the ESAt Confirmation screen.
<p>Step 2. Services Australia</p>	
<p>Conducts the JSCI for Eligible Participant</p>	<p>Services Australia will conduct a JSCI to determine a Participant's level of disadvantage when a Participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Registers or re-Registers for employment services. <p>Services Australia will refer a Participant who requires further Assessment for an ESAt, as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Proceed to Step 4
<p>Step 3. Services Australia</p>	
<p>Assessor conducts an ESAt or JCA</p>	<p>Where the outcome of the ESAt is a recommended referral to DES-ESS or DES-DMS, the Assessor may conduct the JSCI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ if the Participant has disclosed new information, ◇ if the information provided during the ESAt is inconsistent with the existing JSCI, or ◇ if no JSCI exists for the Participant. <p>The Assessor (or a Services Australia customer service officer, as appropriate) will refer the Participant to DES or other recommended services as required.</p> <p>Information from the submitted ESAt report is copied automatically into the JSCI record on the Department's IT Systems. This information includes the Participant's work capacity in hours per week bandwidths, any permanent medical conditions, the impact of any personal factors, where the Participant has any workplace support requirements and the recommended employment service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Proceed to Step 4

Brief Description	What is Required:
Step 4. The Department's IT Systems	
<p>The Department's IT Systems</p> <p><i>Grant Agreement References:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 141 	<p>Certain information that has been recorded in the JSCI is used to determine the Funding Level for Participants in DES-ESS and DES-DMS (along with additional information from the most recent ESAt or JCA and information from the Services Australia's IT systems).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ If the Funding Level for a Participant changes following an update of the JSCI or a Change of Circumstances Reassessment, the Provider will be notified via an automated message on the Noticeboard in the Department's IT Systems. ◇ The Noticeboard message will remain on the Department's IT Systems for 14 days after recalculation. Refer to the <i>2018 Funding Level Tool Guidelines</i> for more information. ◇ End of process

Additional information about documenting the changes made to the JSCI

CoCR JSCI	<p>What information must be recorded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Providers must document the nature and context of each change in the Reason for Change(s) text box at the JSCI ESAt Confirmation Screen. <p><i>As an example, if caring responsibilities has been added to a JSCI:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Why has it been added now?</i> ➤ <i>Has the Participant become a parent for the first time since the last JSCI was conducted?</i> ➤ <i>Has a family member become ill and requires care since the last JSCI was conducted? Will this care be ongoing?</i> <p>The purpose of recording details of changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To ensure appropriate accountability on behalf of Providers for each change they make to a Participant's JSCI. This accountability applies even if the change made to the JSCI is perceived as a positive change for the Participant. ➤ To explain changes made and ensure accuracy and integrity of JSCI Participant information. ➤ To ensure the services provided to the Participant are reviewed, including updating the Job Plan, to reflect the change in circumstances.
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Summary of steps for the JSCI process

The following steps provide a summary of the JSCI process for DES.

Step 1: DES Provider conducts JSCI for a Participant who:

- Directly Registers as a Volunteer (those without Mutual Obligation Requirements or) and elects to receive Program Services, or
- does not have a Centrelink CRN, or
- does not have an up-to-date JSCI (not all information will be updateable if the Participant is in receipt of Income Support Payments), or
- does not have a JSCI.

Go to Step 4

Step 2: Services Australia conducts JSCI for a Participant who:

- Registers or re-Registers for DES.

Go to Step 4

Step 3: Services Australia Assessor conducts Assessment, and where required:

- conducts a JSCI for a Participant who discloses new information or does not currently have a JSCI.

Go to Step 4

Step 4: End process—Information that is recorded in the JSCI is used by the 2018 Funding Level Tool in conjunction with information from Services Australia and the ESAt or JCA to determine the Funding Level for Participants in both the DES-Employment Support Service and the DES-Disability Management Service.

Note: This should not be read as a stand-alone document, please refer to the Disability Employment Services Grant Agreement, Effective 1 July 2018.

Attachment A - Explanation of the Job Seeker Classification Instrument Questions – Advice

Policy Intent

The following pages provide an explanation of the Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) questions to assist Employment Providers help job seekers complete the JSCI.

The JSCI questions collect information about factors that have a significant impact on a job seeker's likelihood to remain unemployed for another year.

Operational Process

The JSCI is conducted in the Department's IT Systems–Employment Services System (ESSWeb). DES Providers should select the Job Seeker's record/JSCI/Add a JSCI.

The JSCI comprises up to 49 questions. The number of JSCI questions displayed for a job seeker depends on various factors such as the answers provided to previous questions.

Generally, a job seeker who has a higher level of disadvantage will answer more questions. The minimum number of questions a job seeker will answer when completing the JSCI is 18.

JSCI Questions

Work Experience

Question (1) What have you MOSTLY been doing in the LAST TWO YEARS?

All job seekers are asked question 1, it determines the job seeker's main activity in the two years before the JSCI is conducted.

The main activity should be the activity that has occupied the greatest amount of time—not necessarily the most recent activity—irrespective of whether it occurred in Australia or overseas.

'Paid work' includes full time, part time or casual work, seasonal work or still working. Note: *This includes work undertaken with additional support as a result of a disability or medical condition where applicable but does not include supported employment with Australian Disability Enterprises.*

'Caring' is defined as providing constant care to a child or an adult who has significant care requirements.

'Parenting' is defined as providing regular care to a dependent child or dependent children.

'NOT working and NOT looking for work' includes time spent in hospital, in psychiatric confinement or in prison or other detention (if not working while in prison or other detention) or overseas (if not working or looking for work while overseas).

Job seekers who are participating in programs like Work for the Dole must be recorded as 'Unemployed (not working but looking for work)'.

Question (2) In your most recent job, how many hours did you mostly work per week?

Job seekers who answered 'Paid work' to question 1 are asked question 2 to determine the number of hours worked per week. For job seekers who worked variable hours per week, it is appropriate to record the average number of hours worked in a typical week. You may prompt the job seeker based on the responses available; the answer does not have to be exact (for example, how many hours did you *mostly* work?).

If the job seeker had several jobs, record the total number of hours mostly worked each week in all jobs.

Casual employment with irregular hours must be recorded as 'Irregular or seasonal'.

Question (3) Have you done any paid work at all in the last two years?

Job seekers who did not answer 'Paid work' to question 1 are asked question 3, which refers to any paid work regardless of how many hours worked or duration of the job. This includes any employment overseas within the last two years.

 Any additional support a job seeker with a disability or medical condition may have received in order to undertake their paid work **should not** be taken into account when answering these questions because it is not relevant to this section and is covered in another question.

Education—Qualifications

Question (4) What is the highest level of schooling you have COMPLETED?

All job seekers are asked question 4 to identify the highest level of schooling they have completed.

For job seekers educated overseas, you may prompt them for the age they left school. This may indicate the equivalent level of schooling.

Some job seekers may have returned to school at a later age. Record the highest level completed, even if schooling was not continuous.

 Some job seekers may have completed their schooling up to Year 12/13 (or equivalent) in a special school or support unit in a school *with a tailored curriculum*. Where this is the case, the response '**Special school/support unit in a school**' must be selected. Other job seekers with a disability or medical condition may have completed Year 12/13 (or equivalent) in a public or private school with additional support but they have completed the same curriculum as other students. Where this is the case, the response '**Year 12/13**' must be selected. Services Australia will determine if a young person is classified as an Early School Leaver

 When conducting a CoCR, Providers are unable to deselect (downgrade) the response to this question. If the displayed education level is not correct, forward a request to change this response to the DES Technical and Administrative Team at desadmin@dss.gov.au for approval. You must provide independent supporting evidence (i.e. correspondence from the relevant State/Territory schools authority). Please note: verbal confirmation from a Participant or statutory declarations are not considered acceptable supporting evidence.

If Participants do not have required documentation, Providers should support Participants to obtain required evidence. Understandably, some Participants who have undertaken education in a country outside of Australia may be unable to obtain evidence of schooling. In these cases, the DES Technical and Administrative Team should be consulted to determine the appropriate outcome.

If you require additional information relating to this process, contact the DES Technical and Administrative Team. As changing this question in the JSCI may allow Full Education Outcomes to be claimed, you may be required to submit an assessment of the Participant's suitability for an Education Placement.

Question (5) Have you COMPLETED any other qualifications?

All job seekers are asked question 5 to determine if they have completed any qualification(s) at school or since leaving school, for example—university degree, TAFE certificate, forklift licence, Responsible Service of Alcohol course, or First Aid certificate. This does not include a standard driver's license or motorcycle license as these are covered in a following section.

If the response to this question needs to be updated and Providers are unable to, Providers should forward a request to change this response to the DES Technical and Administrative Team at

desadmin@dss.gov.au for approval. You must provide independent supporting evidence (i.e. a copy of the Participant's Academic Transcripts, correspondence from the relevant Registered Training Provider, correspondence from the relevant Apprenticeship/Traineeship authority and/or for courses commenced after January 2015 - the participant's Unique Student Identifier (USI) transcript to substantiate the request). Please note: verbal confirmation from a Participant or statutory declarations are not considered as acceptable supporting evidence.

If Participants do not have required documentation, Providers should support Participants to obtain required evidence. Understandably, some Participants who have undertaken education in a country outside of Australia may be unable to obtain information on qualifications. In these cases, the DES Technical and Administrative Team should be consulted to determine the appropriate outcome.

If you require additional information relating to this process, contact the DES Technical and Administrative Team. As changing this question in the JSCI may allow Full Education Outcomes to be claimed, you may be required to submit an assessment of the Participant's suitability for an Education Placement.

Question (6) What are they? What qualification(s) have you completed?

This question allows you to record multiple responses where required and you should record all qualifications held by the job seeker, not just the highest level. Recorded responses for qualifications include:

'Tradesperson's qualification' includes Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III or IV or equivalent.

'Other non-trade VET Certificates II' includes Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate II or equivalent.

'Other non-trade VET Certificates III or IV' includes Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate III or IV or equivalent.

'VET Certificate 1 or industry licence/ticket' includes Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate I or equivalent.

'Course run by private or community organisation' includes courses organised by Employment Providers.

Qualifications held by the job seeker should not be removed completely from the JSCI when conducting a Change of Circumstances Reassessment (CoCR). If a job seeker considers a qualification cannot or should not be used to assist them to find employment, questions 7 and 8 should be answered. These questions address whether or not a qualification can still be used or what may be preventing the job seeker from using their qualification.

 When conducting a CoCR, DES Providers are unable to deselect (downgrade) any responses to this question, except "Other non-trade Vocational Education and Training Certificates II" or "Vocational Education and Training in Certificate I or other industry-specific licence or ticket". DES users are able to increase the level of education in this question (for example from "Masters Degree or equivalent" to "Doctoral Degree or equivalent").

If the displayed qualification is not correct, and a response needs to be deselected (downgraded), or removed, forward a response to the DES Technical and Administrative Team at desadmin@dss.gov.au for approval. You must provide supporting evidence (i.e.: a copy of the qualification to substantiate the request). If you require additional information in relation to this process, contact the DES Technical and Administrative Team.

Question (7) Do you think any of these could be work-related?

Question 7 identifies whether any of the qualification(s) could be work related or vocational.

In general, a qualification should be considered to be work related if it is recognised and offers an advantage to the job seeker in obtaining employment, irrespective of whether or not the job seeker wants to use that qualification or can still use that qualification.

The following are examples of qualifications that are considered to be work related:

- educational qualifications that have a vocational orientation (such as a nursing or architecture degree compared to a general arts degree)
- trade qualifications required for particular occupations (such as plumbing and electrical trade certificates)
- other non-educational qualifications required for particular occupations (such as special licences for driving a bus, forklift or truck)
- tickets (such as a seaman's ticket and other technical qualifications), and
- short courses that are formally accredited or generally recognised by employers and constitute the basic prerequisites for entry to a particular occupation (such as a Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate).

For the purposes of this question, Occupational Health and Safety tickets and First Aid certificates or similar are not considered to be work related qualifications. It is valuable training to have in a workplace but is not work related or vocational in nature.



The answer to this question should be based ultimately on the job seeker's assessment.

Question (8) Can you still use any of these (work-related qualifications)? and,

Question (9) What is preventing you from using your qualification(s)?

Questions 8 and 9 identify whether the work related qualification(s) can still be used and if not, why not. More than one response can be selected for question 9.

For questions 8 and 9 the responses should cover qualifications that the job seeker may not wish to use but could. For example, the job seeker may have completed an apprenticeship as a mechanic but indicates in response to this question that they no longer want to be a mechanic. These questions are about identifying work related qualifications which potentially offer an advantage to the job seeker in obtaining employment in general. The type of job preferred by the job seeker is something that should be discussed separate to the JSCI process.

If the job seeker answers '**Low English language proficiency**' then they may require referral to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) or the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program.

If the job seeker answers '**Qualification(s) not recognised**' then they may require further information about the Assessment Subsidy for Overseas Trained Professionals (ASDOT).

Language

Question (10) Did you speak English as a child? and,

Question (11) What language(s) did you first speak as a child?

Question 10 applies to all job seekers and determines their first language spoken as a child.

Job seekers who did not speak English as a child are asked question 11 to determine what languages were first spoken as a child. Up to two languages can be recorded.

Question (12) Do you consider you speak English – Very well, Well, Not Well, Not at All?

Question (13) Do you consider you read English – Very well, Well, Not Well, Not at All?

Question (14) Do you consider you write English – Very well, Well, Not Well, Not at All?

All job seekers are asked questions 12, 13, and 14. The purpose of these questions is to identify the job seeker's ability to speak, read and write English.

If the job seeker has a sensory, speech or physical disability, the answers to these questions should take into account their English language ability. For example, a vision impaired job seeker who can read large print English very well should be recorded as reading English very well.

 The answers to these questions should be based on the job seeker's assessment of their ability in addition to your observations. However, you should discuss your observations with the job seeker and, if necessary, review the answers to these questions with their agreement. For example, a job seeker may answer that they can read English very well but you notice during the course of the JSCI that they found it difficult to understand questions and communicate answers.

Where a job seeker has achieved qualifications such as trade certificates, special licences etc. in the English language (as outlined in the Education/Qualification tab) then this should also be taken into consideration when assessing the job seeker's English ability.

The job seeker may have also asked for help with reading or understanding the forms. For some job seekers it might be useful to ask them to read a short passage of text, such as a newspaper article, to help in assessing their ability.

Question (15) Have you done any courses or classes to help improve your English language skills in the last six months? Question 15 applies to any job seekers who answered 'Not well' or 'Not at all' to questions 12, 13, and 14. Its purpose is to find out if job seekers have undertaken any courses to help improve their English language skills in the last six months. These job seekers may require referral to AMEP or SEE.

Job seekers who have a sensory, speech or physical disability who have answered 'Not well' or 'Not at all' to questions 12, 13, and 14 should only be referred to the AMEP or SEE if they would benefit from these programs. For example, a vision impaired job seeker who has difficulty reading a newspaper but can read large print, and has no other problems with functional English, would not benefit from referral to the SEE program. However, a migrant job seeker who is vision impaired and can read large print but has difficulty making himself understood in spoken English may benefit from referral to the AMEP.

Descent—Origin

Questions 16 and 17 apply to all Australian born job seekers and determine the Indigenous status of job seekers.

Question (16) Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION - Employment Providers should inform the job seeker this is a voluntary disclosure question before they ask the question, and advise the job seeker that they may choose the response of ‘Do not wish to answer’. Employment Providers should encourage the job seeker to fully disclose their circumstances to ensure they receive the most appropriate employment services and support)

Question 17 Indigenous status: More than one response can be selected for question 17. The job seeker may identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

 The responses selected should be based on the job seeker’s self-identification as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The following questions display for non-Australian born job seekers.

Questions 18, 19, 20 on refugee status apply to all non-Australian born job seekers.

Question (18) Did you arrive in Australia on a refugee/humanitarian visa OR were you granted a refugee/humanitarian visa when you arrived in Australia? (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION)

For job seekers who indicate they have a refugee/humanitarian visa you must record the country from which the job seeker is a refugee or humanitarian entrant—not the last country the job seeker lived in. For example, a job seeker who is a refugee from Afghanistan may have arrived in Australia from Indonesia. In this case, ‘Afghanistan’ should be recorded as the response.

Work Capacity

Question (21) Do you have any disabilities or medical conditions that affect the HOURS you are able to work? (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION)

Question 21 applies to all job seekers and identifies those who have any disabilities or medical conditions that affect the number of hours they can work.

Disabilities or medical conditions include:

- injuries
- health conditions
- intellectual, mental, sensory or physical disabilities, and
- addictions.

Question (22) What is the most NUMBER OF HOURS a week you think you are able to work?

Question 22 identifies the most number of hours the job seeker thinks they can work per week.

You must record the number of hours the job seeker thinks they could work in a typical week (that is, over five consecutive days). It is the job seeker’s assessment that should be recorded.

A job seeker who is affected by an intermittent disability or medical condition, such as asthma or mental illness, should answer this question based on their current circumstances.

Work Capacity: ESAt/JCA Report Reference at Question (22) is auto-populated with the job seeker’s last Employment Services Assessment / Job Capacity Assessment (ESAt/JCA) reference number—if one exists. You are not required to complete this question.

Question (23) Do you have any disabilities or medical conditions that affect the TYPE OF WORK you can do? (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION)

Question 23 applies to all job seekers. The purpose of this question is to determine if the job seeker has any disabilities or medical conditions that affect the type of work they can do, regardless of whether it affects the hours of work they can do. It is the job seeker's assessment that should be recorded.

 If a job seeker has a current ESAt/JCA with an assessed work capacity of less than 30 hours, relevant information from the ESAt/JCA is copied into the JSCI and will contribute to the JSCI score. In this process, the JSCI answers to questions 21 and 23 will be set to 'Yes' and 'Not sure/Don't know', respectively, to ensure the appropriate number of JSCI points are allocated to this factor.

Question (24) Do you think you need additional support to help you at work as a result of your condition(s)?

Job seekers who have reported disabilities or medical conditions or who are '**Not sure/don't know**' are asked **question 24** about whether they think they need additional support at work as a result of their disabilities or medical conditions. Additional support includes modifications to the workplace, changes to the job requirements or having someone else come in on a regular basis to assist the job seeker with their work duties.

Question (25) How long will your condition(s) affect your ability to work? – DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSES. Select the most appropriate response based on the job seeker's answer.

Question 25 aims to identify for relevant job seekers how long they think their disabilities or medical conditions will affect their ability to work. The question intends to capture whether or not the job seeker has an ongoing disability or medical condition which will affect their ability to find employment over the longer term.

A job seeker who is affected by an intermittent disability or medical condition, such as asthma or mental illness, should answer this question based on their current circumstances.

Job seekers who report temporary conditions should be advised that they *may* be eligible for an activity test exemption from Services Australia. If they want to seek an activity test exemption the job seeker should be advised to lodge a medical certificate with Services Australia.

Question (26) What is/are the conditions?

Question 26 asks job seekers to list their disabilities or medical conditions. You can select up to ten disabilities or medical conditions. Each type of disability or medical condition should be recorded only once. It is important that you try to find the disabilities or medical conditions in the list available. The response of '**Unknown**' should only be used as a last resort.

 Any permanent and temporary medical conditions (lasting 91 days or greater), and disabilities identified in a job seeker's ESAt/JCA, where applicable, are merged into the list of disabilities or medical conditions identified by the job seeker in their JSCI—the JSCI will identify where the data was derived from an ESAt/JCA.

Living Circumstances

Question (27) Have you been living in secure accommodation, such as rented accommodation or your own home, for the last 12 months or longer?

Question 27 applies to all job seekers. The purpose of this question is to find out if job seekers have been living in secure accommodation for at least 12 months at the time the JSCI is conducted. For example, a job seeker who has been:

- living in secure accommodation for the whole 12 months preceding the JSCI being conducted must answer **‘Yes’**.
- living in secure accommodation for 11 months and emergency or temporary accommodation for 1 month in the 12 months preceding the JSCI being conducted must answer **‘No’**.

For the purposes of this question, secure accommodation is defined as having a reasonably fixed, regular and adequate place to stay. It includes rented or owner-occupied accommodation which may be a house, flat or caravan. Secure accommodation is not necessarily about living in the one place (e.g. a job seeker may have moved twice in the last 12 months from one form of secure accommodation to another form of secure accommodation).

 The answer to this question should be based on the job seeker’s assessment.

Question (28) Are you currently staying in emergency or temporary accommodation? and

Question (29) How often have you moved in the last year?

Question 28 applies to job seekers who answered ‘No’ or ‘Not sure/don’t know’ to question 27. The purpose of Questions 28 and 29 is to identify job seekers who are homeless or living in unstable accommodation at the time of the JSCI.

For the purposes of the JSCI, job seekers can be identified as primary homeless or secondary homeless. Primary homelessness is defined as staying in a squat, sleeping out or having nowhere to stay. Secondary homelessness is defined as staying in a refuge; staying in emergency, transitional or support accommodation; staying in a hostel, boarding house or rooming house; staying in a hotel; short stays in a caravan park; temporarily staying with friend.

Stability of residence can vary in a short period of time. For job seekers identified as homeless at the time of the JSCI, Employment Providers must verify periodically (at least every three months) if their circumstances have changed and update the JSCI accordingly.

 The JSCI also takes into consideration under *Personal Factors* if a job seeker living in secure accommodation or who is currently not homeless is, due to personal circumstances, at risk of homelessness. More details are provided under the *Personal Characteristics* tab in this document.

Question (30) Do you live alone? and

Question (31) Who lives with you?

The purpose of questions 30 and 31 is to identify the job seeker’s living arrangements and family status, including any parenting responsibilities or caring for adult responsibilities. You can select more than one response for **question 31** if the job seeker does not **‘Live alone’**.

‘Live alone’ means that the job seeker lives alone for most of the time. If a job seeker is living in a supportive share house they are considered to be living with others.

Question (32) Are you the main care-giver to this child/these children? and

Question (33) What is the date of birth of your youngest child?

Question 32 and 33 applies to job seekers who answered **‘Dependent child/children under 16 years of age’** to question 31. Its purpose is to identify job seekers who have parenting responsibilities.

‘Date of birth of your youngest child’ refers to the youngest child for whom the job seeker has caring responsibility (regardless of whether the job seeker is the main care giver or the responsibility is shared equally).

Transport

Question (34) Do you have a valid driver’s licence?

Question 34 applies to all job seekers and determines if a job seeker has a valid driver’s licence. Valid means that the driver’s licence is paid for and not cancelled or suspended.

An answer of **‘Yes’** may be recorded for this question if the job seeker has a learner driver’s licence (or its equivalent) for a motorcycle providing the learner driver’s licence is valid and as long as the job seeker can use their motorcycle learner driver’s licence to travel independently.

An answer of **‘No’** must be recorded if the job seeker indicates that they are too young to have a driver’s licence or have a learner driver’s licence (or its equivalent) for a car.

Question (35) Do you have your own car or motorcycle that you can use to travel to and from work?

Question 35 is to find out whether job seekers who hold a valid driver’s licence own a car or motorcycle that they can use to travel to and from work.

The job seeker may not necessarily own the car or motorcycle but they may have unrestricted access to a car or motorcycle that they can use to travel to and from work. For example, a parent or relative may have loaned a car to the job seeker to use for an extended period of time. If this is the case, the job seeker must answer **‘Yes’** to this question. If the job seeker answers **‘No’**, you will need to ask further questions to find out the most appropriate response.

Question (36) What can you use to travel to and from work?

Question 36 is asked of job seekers who do not own or have unrestricted access to a car or motorcycle to determine what mode of transport they are able to use to travel to and from work.

The job seeker should have sufficient or adequate access to these forms of transport. For example, if the job seeker can only access **‘Other private transport’** on weekends then another response should be selected. Similarly, if they can only access public transport to reach limited locations then a more suitable response should be selected.

Criminal Convictions

Questions (37 - 45)

Criminal Convictions questions vary depending on the age of the job seeker. Job seekers aged 22 years of age or younger/ Job seekers aged 23 to 27/Job seekers aged 28 years or older.

All Criminal Convictions Questions are VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTIONS, which must be asked, but to which the job seeker may respond ‘Do not wish to answer’.

The purpose of these questions is to identify job seekers who have had a custodial or non-custodial sentence within a specified period of time. The answer to these questions should be based on the job seeker’s assessment.

It is important to reassure the job seeker that you are not seeking information about the nature of their offence but only whether they have a criminal conviction (that is, they have been convicted of a criminal offence) and the length of any custodial sentence that was imposed.

The definition of a criminal offence under Commonwealth law includes:

- indictable offences which are punishable by imprisonment for a period exceeding 12 months, unless a contrary intention appears.
- summary offences which are (a) punishable by imprisonment for a period not exceeding 12 months or (b) are not punishable by imprisonment.

A criminal offence would have involved the case being referred to a court. Criminal court action pending, on bail or on remand may be recorded under *Personal Characteristics* where appropriate.

Personal Circumstances

Question (46) Does the following sentence apply to you? – At least one of my parents or legal guardians was regularly in paid employment when I was in my early teens. (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION - must be asked, but job seeker may respond ‘Do not wish to answer’)

Question 46 applies to job seekers aged less than 45 years. Its purpose is to identify job seekers who are or who may have been a member of a jobless family or affected by intergenerational disadvantage while in their early teens (that is, 13 to 16 years old). Job seekers should answer the question based on the parent or legal guardian they lived with the most during their early teens (that is, 13 to 16 years old). Job seekers who were not raised by a parent or legal guardian (for example, where they were raised by a grandparent but the grandparent was not their legal guardian) should have the answer ‘**Not applicable (for example, I was raised in an orphanage)**’ recorded.

Question (47) Are there any other factors which you think might affect your ability to work, obtain work or look for work that we haven’t already discussed? (VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE QUESTION)

Questions 47 identifies any other factors which job seekers think might affect their ability to work, obtain work or to look for work which has not already been discussed while conducting the JSCI or has already been discussed **but has not been recorded elsewhere in the JSCI** and you consider they should be recorded in the JSCI.

It would be appropriate for a person conducting a JSCI to provide some context by using examples of the types of factors that might be recorded in this area. The Employment Provider should not ask direct questions about personal factors or specific condition/s but rather ask a general question/s about other factors that have not already been identified that the job seeker believes may impact on their ability to participate in employment.

Question (48) Please specify the factors: DO NOT READ OUT RESPONSES

Select the most appropriate response based on the job seeker’s answer.

The Employment Provider should not read the drop down responses out loud but select the appropriate response(s) based on the job seeker’s answer. More than one response can be recorded for question 49.

Question (49) For any other factors not included in the above list, please provide details:

Only record other factors for **question (49)** if they are not adequately covered by the factors in the drop down list and they do not relate to other questions contained in the JSCI.

It may be necessary to review and change previous responses based on your discussion of questions 48 and 49 with the job seeker. Please note:

- conditions such as addictions, depression, anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (including refugee experiences of torture and trauma) and other disability, health or medical issues should be recorded under *Work Capacity* if they are expected to last three months or more.

- **short term or temporary medical conditions should not be recorded here** and the job seeker should be advised to lodge a medical certificate with Services Australia.
 - criminal record should be recorded under *Criminal Convictions* but criminal court action pending, on bail or on remand should be recorded here.
 - not having a valid driver's licence or access to adequate private or public transport should be recorded under *Transport*.
 - English language difficulties should be recorded under *Language*.
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- lack of recent workforce experience should be recorded under *Work Experience*.
 - living in secure accommodation or staying in emergency or temporary accommodation should be recorded under the *Living Circumstances* tab.

 If a job seeker indicates that in the immediate future they will be unable to continue living in secure accommodation and will have to move into emergency or temporary accommodation or have nowhere to stay, they must be recorded as at 'Risk of homelessness' under the *Personal Circumstance* tab. Examples may include job seekers in housing stress, leaving violence or leaving state care who will in the immediate future have no other option but to stay in a refuge, in emergency, transitional or support accommodation, in a hostel, boarding house or rooming house, a hotel, or for a short period in a caravan park or with friends, stay in a squat, sleep out or have nowhere to stay.