



Scheme Requirements

Disability Employment Services and Supported Employment Services (DES/SES)



Name of scheme

The name of this scheme is Human Services Scheme Part 3 - Additional requirements for bodies certifying Disability Employment Services and Supported Employment Services (DES/SES).

The following is a summary of aspects of the Human Services Scheme (Part 3) assessment process as detailed in requirements set out in approved procedures. Further detail is available from HDAA on request.

Process requirements

The assessment includes an assessment to the National Standards for Disability Services (NSDS) for certification in respect of the requirements of the DES/SES scheme.

NDIS and Supported Employment Services

For DES/SES providers with NDIS participants who are now obligated to undertake a (re)certification or surveillance audit by an Approved Quality Auditor in accordance with the NDIS AQA Scheme, objective evidence against the NDIS Practice Standards will be assessed (audited) by the CB for their conformity to these standards as per requirements for the NDIS AQA Scheme.

Separately, if there are participants also to be audited (assessed) under the DES/SES scheme, then the services they are receiving will be audited for conformity with the NSDS. Both the methodology and evidence for separate assessments will be documented. An audit report will be sent to the NDIS Commission only in respect to NDIS participants, and a separate audit report will be sent to DSS only in respect to DES/SES participants.

Existing service providers certified to the NSDS

Supported employment is transitioning to the NDIS. Commonwealth and State jurisdictions have agreed to maintain current quality and safeguarding arrangements until the new arrangements for NDIS provision are in place.

For supported employment service providers, the sampling methodology should apply to all outlets and sites:

- a) If the employee is being supported for employment under a NDIS plan, they should be considered as being within scope under the NDIS AQA Scheme
- b) If the employee is not under NDIS case-based funding, they should be considered as being within scope under the DES/SES Scheme.

New service providers registering under NDIS to provide Supported Employment Services

Until new quality and safeguarding arrangements are in place for the NDIS, on application for NDIA registration, new providers shall demonstrate evidence of a contract with a certification body for provision of certification to the NSDS. Provider registration shall be revoked if the provider cannot provide evidence of a certificate of conformity within twelve months of their registration date. HDAA is required to report to the Department of Social Services on new providers progress with certification:

- A new service provider achieving certification in a NDIS site
- Any service provider in a NDIS site with a notifiable issue

- Any service provider in a NDIS site which has its certification suspended or cancelled for any reason; and
- Any service provider in a NDIS site which formally disagrees with HDAA's assessment findings.

Assessment planning and coordination

Assessments shall be planned allow enough time and resources for the assessment activities to fully comply with the reporting requirements in this scheme. HDAA shall:

- begin assessment planning
- communicate the support needs of the selected consumers with the client
- send the client the list for consumer participation as early as possible.

HDAA will aim to provide the client with adequate time to arrange for consumer participation, consents to access files, and prepare for the assessment.

As part of the assessment planning, HDAA shall inform the client of the names of the members of the assessment team who will carry out the assessment, with enough notice to appeal against the appointment of any team member.

The assessment includes an initial assessment which is completed in two stages as well as periodic maintenance and recertification assessments of the client's policies, procedures, and practices relating to its services.

The Stage 1 assessment will generally occur off-site but may occur on-site if requested by the client; in which case a Consumer Technical Expert (CTE) will need to be present. The Stage 2 assessment shall take place at the client's site(s) and or outlet(s) as applicable. During the Stage 2 assessment, HDAA shall at evaluate information and evidence of conformity with all requirements of the standards.

At on-site assessments, the assessment team shall hold a closing meeting with the client's management and any people who wish to be involved, prior to concluding the on-site assessment.

A Consumer Technical Expert (CTE) shall be involved in the assessment, and this will include (but is not limited to):

- development and review of the assessment plan
- participating for the full duration of the stage 2 assessment (if the stage 1 assessment is done on-site, the CTE shall be present for the duration of the visit)
- planning and preparing for the different methods of consumer participation and engaging with consumers during the assessment to collect, examine and analyse evidence with respect to the NSDS
- reviewing consumer files or following up issues with consumers
- reviewing assessment findings, determining assessment ratings, and preparing the written assessment report
- in the opening and closing meetings and the certification decision-making process.

Assessment duration

The time allocated to the assessment shall be based on the type of disability employment or enterprise service (supported or open). The HSS Part 3 procedure provides minimum times for assessing sites and outlet services of various sizes. It indicates the number of assessor days to be spent on-site by HDAA for the stage 2 initial assessment, annual maintenance assessments and recertification assessment. Some clients may require more time than the minimum assessment times described in

the procedure (e.g., due to complexity or combinations of service types or assessment being conducted concurrent with other Standards.)

Assessment sampling

Sampling has been determined based on the Service Description provided and Scheme sampling rules. It is important that the Service Description directly aligns with scope of services to be assessed, as services not included in the Service Description may not be accurately sampled and could therefore be excluded from certification.

A client with multiple sites and/or outlets may be comprised of different types of services either registered with the NDIS or funded by the Department of Social Services:

- a) DMS - Disability Management Services, a Disability Employment Service
- b) ESS - Employment Support Service, a Disability Employment Service
- c) "Assistance to Access and maintain employment or higher Education" and/or "Specialised Supported Employment" under the NDIS.

The minimum number of non-central office sites and or outlets to be visited per assessment is:

- a) initial assessment and recertification assessment: not less than the square root of the total number of full-time and part-time sites and/or outlets ($y=\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number
- b) maintenance assessment: not be less than the square root of the total number of full-time and part-time sites and/or outlets with 0.6 as a coefficient ($y=0.6\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number.

In all assessments, the central office shall be visited at least once, in addition to a sample of sites or outlets. The size of the sample may be increased where there are special circumstances such as might apply to any of the site and or outlet selection criteria.

The number of consumers to engage in the assessment is drawn from those consumers who were receiving a service at the time the sample was drawn, plus the previous 12 months or clients. The sample shall be drawn no earlier than 3 months prior to the projected assessment date. The of current consumers to engage with per assessment is:

- a) initial assessment and recertification assessment: not less than the square root of the total number of current consumers at the site/outlet ($y=\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number
- b) maintenance assessment: not be less than the square root of the total number of current consumers at the site/outlet with 0.6 as a coefficient ($y=0.6\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the upper whole number.

HDAA aims to have one to one face to face contact with 50% of the proposed sample of current consumers. HDAA shall be mindful of the possibility of others accessing conversations and shall take steps to ensure confidentiality is maintained. If the 50% ratio cannot be achieved, HDAA shall document its justification for the sampling approaches used. The other 50% of the sample may be engaged via other means (such as a group meeting), the method for engaging the full sample will be included in planning and documented in the report.

HDAA aims to interview two exited consumers and review 5 files of exited consumers (or all files, if there are less than 5 consumers), per service (or per site or outlet, if applicable). The sample size may be reduced if consumers do not wish to participate in the assessment. HDAA shall document such a reduction in the assessment report.

If the client has only one physical site or outlet which comprises different types of services, or there are separate service groups of consumers with similar disabilities and the service's procedures and policies vary according to the different groups, separate populations of consumers shall be considered to exist within that one site or outlet, and HDAA shall apply the consumer sampling formulas to each population.

Where DES/SES assessments are conducted in conjunction with other Standards, the relevant sampling adaptations in HSS Part 3 shall be followed and procedure shared with the Service Provider.

Assessment report

The content of all reports shall include:

- a) the service types provided by the organization
- b) the number and roles of stakeholders consulted at each site, and methods of consultation
- c) ratings of conformity against each standard in accordance with the rating scale
- d) an adequate description of the main evidence and assessment trails used to support the ratings of standards.

HDAA will provide a draft written report to the client within 10 working days of completing the on-site component of the assessment (for a single site service) or 20 working days (for a multiple site service), even if the draft decision is not to certify.

The client shall have 10 working days from receiving the draft written report in which to provide a response to HDAA. HDAA shall consider any response provided by the client, make the final certification decision, and provide the final report to the client and the department within a further seven working days, even if the decision is not to certify. If the client formally disagrees with HDAA's assessment findings, HDAA shall notify the department within 10 working days of learning of the disagreement if it has not been resolved in that time.

Non-conformities

HDAA shall ensure that in the instance of a major non-conformity:

- a) evidence of a corrective action plan shall be presented to HDAA within 5 working days of the date of issue of the major non-conformity
- b) close out shall normally require a follow-up visit by HDAA within three months.

Failure to close out the major non-conformity within three months of the date of issue or take action enough to downgrade the major non-conformity to a non-conformity, shall result in automatic suspension of certification. If a major non-conformity is downgraded to a non-conformity, that non-conformity shall be closed out within a further three months (maximum of six months from the date of issue to fully action a major non-conformity).

In the instance of a non-conformity:

- a) the non-conformity is closed out before certification or re-certification
- b) non-conformities shall be closed out within six months of the date of issue
- c) failure to close out a non-conformity within six months of the date of issue will result in a major nonconformity being raised.

Ongoing requirements

An extension to certification may only be considered if a client organisation needs to delay a recertification due to 'Acts of God' beyond their control (including flood, fire, earthquake, cyclone, or other natural disasters), interruption of electricity or telephone service. An application for extension needs to be jointly considered by the Department and JAS-ANZ on a case-by-case basis.

Surveillance includes maintenance assessments in the first and second years of a three-year certification cycle. Once certification is achieved, the date of the first maintenance assessment shall not be more than 12 months from the date of the last day of the on-site component of the certification or recertification assessment. The second maintenance assessment shall be conducted not more than 12 months after the last day of the first maintenance assessment.

Maintenance assessments shall include NSDS 1, 3 and 6; and at least one other standard, chosen according to the results of the previous assessment, complaints, or significant change.

Information and Communication Technology Auditing (MD4:2018)

HDAА is authorised to complete assessments to MD4:2018 which enables a greater use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the auditing activities. ICT is the use of technology for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analysing, and transmitting information. It includes software and hardware such as smartphones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology, artificial intelligence, and others. The use of ICT may be appropriate for auditing both locally and remotely. The use of ICT during audits may include but is not limited to:

- Meetings; by means of teleconference facilities, including audio, video, and data sharing,
- Audit of documents and records by means of remote access, either synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (when applicable),
- Recording of information and evidence by means of still video, video, or audio recordings,
- Providing visual/audio access to remote or potentially hazardous locations.

The use of ICT shall be mutually agreed upon with you by HDAА prior to the audit commencing. HDAА and the service provider shall ensure that security and confidentiality is maintained throughout audit activities and activity is in accordance with information security and data protection measures and regulations before ICT is used for audit purposes. In the event systems to be used, security and or data protection measures are not able to be fulfilled or agreed the assessment will be conducted on site.