



TEAM NORSO

ASASO™ STANDARD 1:2026

Competence Requirements for Holistic Recruitment

Professional foundation for ASASO™ Certification for Recruitment Professionals

APPROVED AND IN USE

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Foreword

ASASO™ is TEAM NORSO's holistic recruitment method. It connects analysis, search, assessment, selection and onboarding in one coherent process. The standard is designed for people who plan, lead or carry out recruitment, whether they work as managers, HR professionals, internal recruiters, external advisers or in the staffing and recruitment industry.

The standard defines the overarching and practical competence an ASASO™ Certified professional shall have. It does not prescribe one detailed procedure that every organisation must follow. Organisations shall establish a way of working suited to their objectives, organisation, risk and resources. The professional requirement is that all steps are understood and considered, that choices and omissions can be justified, and that the process is documented in a simple and appropriate manner.

The document is owned by TEAM NORSO AS, and the first edition has been approved by the Managing Director. TEAM NORSO aims to establish the ASASO™ Professional Council in 2027. Once established, the Council will assume responsibility for professional administration of the standard.

Introduction

Recruitment has major consequences for individuals, the working environment, leadership, culture, finances and an organisation's ability to fulfil its mission. Even so, recruitment processes are often driven by time pressure, tradition, standard packages or an early impression of a candidate. ASASO™ is intended to support robust recruitment processes that can withstand critical questions, change and subsequent review.

- Analysis shall precede activity and method selection.
- Candidates shall be assessed against relevant and documented requirements.
- Must-have requirements shall be distinguished from competence that can be learned after appointment.
- Intuition shall be examined, not ignored and not allowed to stand alone.
- The candidate shall be treated as an equal party with responsibility for their own choices.
- The employer, candidate and recruitment professionals have mutual responsibilities.
- All 10 steps shall be considered, but need not be carried out to the same extent.
- Decisions, experience and feedback shall be used for learning.

Normative and informative text: Wording using "shall" specifies requirements. The Foreword, Introduction, notes, examples and reference list are guidance unless otherwise stated.

1 Scope

This standard specifies competence requirements for persons who are to apply ASASO™ as a holistic framework for recruitment. In principle, the standard applies to all types of positions and organisations. It must be used together with the laws, collective agreements, internal rules and specific requirements applicable to the situation concerned.

The certification documents competence in holistic recruitment. It is not a separate certification in interviewing, occupational psychological testing, security clearance, legal advice or other specialist areas. Where a step requires a specific qualification, the certified professional shall understand the limits of their own competence and involve appropriately qualified personnel.

2 Terms and Definitions

Term	Meaning in this standard
ASASO™	TEAM NORSO's holistic method consisting of five phases and 10 steps, from Job Analysis to Preboarding and Onboarding.
Recruitment professionals	Persons who plan, lead, carry out or advise on recruitment processes.

Term	Meaning in this standard
Robust process	A process with clear objectives, roles, assessments and documentation that can adapt to change without losing professional quality.
Must-have requirement	Competence or prerequisites required from the first working day and which cannot realistically be learned or established within an acceptable period.
Potential	A realistic capacity to learn, develop or apply competence in the relevant context.
Documentation	A proportionate record of assessments, decisions, actions taken, feedback and learning points.
Candidate	A person who is or may be considered for a position, including a person identified through Active Search.

3 ASASO™ as a Principle-Based Standard

ASASO™ consists of five phases and 10 steps. The steps provide a common starting point, but shall not be treated as a mechanical, identical procedure in every appointment. The certified professional shall assess the need within each step and adapt effort, method and sequence to the situation.

Letter	Phase	English name	Steps
A	Analysis	Analysis	1. Job Analysis
S	Search	Search	2. Advertising and 3. Active Search
A	Assessment	Assessment	4. Screening and 5. Digital Tools
S	Selection	Selection	6. Interview, 7. Assessment Centre, 8. Background Check and 9. Contract
O	Onboarding	Onboarding	10. Preboarding and Onboarding

A step may be omitted, simplified, expanded or carried out in a different sequence where this is professionally justified. The process documentation shall show that the step was considered and why the chosen approach is appropriate to the need.

4 Competency Levels

The requirements use three levels to describe the expected depth of competence.

Level	Competence	Expectation
A	Awareness	Recognise concepts, describe their purpose and provide relevant examples.
B	Understand and assess	Explain relationships, strengths, limitations, risks and when the knowledge is relevant.
C	Apply and adapt	Apply the knowledge independently, justify choices, handle problems and adapt the approach to the situation.

5 General Competence Requirements

5.1 General Professional Practice

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
5.1.1	perform the recruitment role with integrity, professional independence, respect and awareness of their responsibilities towards the employer, candidates and affected parties.	C
5.1.2	understand recruitment as a management responsibility and an organisational process, not merely an activity to fill a vacancy.	B
5.1.3	establish a robust process that can withstand change, provides predictability and makes key assessments reviewable.	C
5.1.4	clarify roles, decision-making authority and mutual responsibilities between the employer, recruitment professionals, candidates and others involved.	C
5.1.5	identify and manage impartiality concerns, conflicts of interest and pressure that may undermine a sound assessment.	C
5.1.6	understand how candidate experience is affected by information, involvement, progress, respect, rejection and feedback, and adapt communication to the situation.	B

5.2 Evidence-Based and Holistic Assessments

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
5.2.1	distinguish between observation, interpretation, documented information and assumptions when assessing candidates.	C
5.2.2	use requirements and criteria relevant to the role and assess candidates as consistently and comparably as the situation allows.	C
5.2.3	treat intuition and gut feeling as possible signals, examine what those signals are based on, and not allow them to replace documentation and professional judgement.	C
5.2.4	understand basic concepts such as relevance, reliability, validity, sources of error and systematic bias, and apply this understanding when selecting methods.	B
5.2.5	assess overall competence, motivation, attitudes, ability to collaborate, ability to learn, adaptability and potential where relevant to the role.	C
5.2.6	distinguish between competence that must be in place from the first working day and competence that can realistically be developed through training and onboarding.	C

5.3 Legal and Ethical Framework

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
5.3.1	understand and apply key rules on discrimination, collection of information, privacy and processing of candidate data.	C

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
5.3.2	prevent direct and indirect discrimination and assess how requirements, channels, methods and decisions may create unreasonable barriers.	C
5.3.3	process personal data for clear purposes, limit collection to what is necessary, secure the information and ensure appropriate deletion or continued retention.	C
5.3.4	understand that consent is not always a sufficient or appropriate legal basis in a relationship involving dependency, and clarify controller responsibility and the applicable legal basis.	B
5.3.5	adapt the process to special rules applying to the organisation or position concerned, including in the public sector and for background checks regulated by law.	B

5.4 Technology and Artificial Intelligence

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
5.4.1	explain how digital tools and artificial intelligence can support different parts of the recruitment process and assess actual value before a tool is used.	B
5.4.2	assess risks relating to privacy, discrimination, information quality, lack of transparency, automation and excessive reliance on technological outputs.	C
5.4.3	quality assure content and assessments produced or supported by artificial intelligence and ensure meaningful human oversight.	C
5.4.4	communicate in an understandable manner when technology affects the candidate or the basis for a decision, to the extent required by the situation and applicable rules.	B

6 Competence Requirements for the 10 Steps

The requirements in this section describe holistic competence within each step. They do not constitute specialist certification in the methods that may form part of a step.

6.1 Job Analysis

Analysis | Step 1

The purpose is to understand the organisation's real need before search and assessment begin.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.1.1	analyse the purpose, tasks, responsibilities, objectives and most important contribution of the position to the organisation.	C
6.1.2	obtain relevant insight into strategy, direction, organisation, team, culture, workflow, leadership and operating conditions.	C
6.1.3	involve relevant people and manage differing or conflicting expectations of the role.	C

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.1.4	assess whether the position should continue as it is, be changed or be organised in a different way.	C
6.1.5	develop a clear and prioritised requirements profile that distinguishes between must-have requirements, desired competence and matters that can be learned after appointment.	C
6.1.6	plan which methods, taken together, can provide a relevant and proportionate basis for decision-making.	C

6.2 Advertising

Search | Step 2

The purpose is to make relevant people aware of the opportunity and provide a realistic basis for interest.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.2.1	assess whether advertising is appropriate, which target groups should be reached and which channels are suitable.	C
6.2.2	create clear, inclusive and targeted communication based on the Job Analysis.	C
6.2.3	provide a realistic description of the role, expectations, working environment and key terms without overselling the position.	C
6.2.4	assess how language, requirements and channel selection affect diversity, reputation and who chooses to apply.	B
6.2.5	comply with relevant rules and remain aware of forthcoming requirements that may affect information about pay and employment terms.	B

6.3 Active Search

Search | Step 3

The purpose is to identify and contact relevant people who may not apply on their own initiative.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.3.1	assess the need for Active Search in light of the candidate market, resource use, time required and expected value.	C
6.3.2	define a search strategy and search criteria based on the Job Analysis.	C
6.3.3	contact potential candidates respectfully, relevantly and openly without creating false expectations.	C
6.3.4	understand how Active Search may affect the employer's reputation, the candidate and the candidate's relationship with their current employer.	B
6.3.5	process information about potential candidates in accordance with privacy requirements and established deletion procedures.	C

6.4 Screening

Assessment | Step 4

The purpose is to make an initial, documented prioritisation before more resource-intensive assessments.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.4.1	check must-have requirements first and distinguish them from matters that can be learned, developed or compensated for.	C
6.4.2	assess available information against the same requirements profile and document the basis for further prioritisation.	C
6.4.3	avoid treating a CV, application, name, background or single impression as a stronger indicator than its information value warrants.	C
6.4.4	identify the need for further clarification and plan which methods should be used for each candidate or candidate group.	C
6.4.5	communicate rejection and next steps respectfully and in a manner suited to the process.	B

6.5 Digital Tools

Assessment | Step 5

The purpose is to assess whether digital assessments or tools can provide relevant information.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.5.1	assess whether a digital tool provides sufficient added value in the recruitment process concerned.	C
6.5.2	explain key advantages and limitations of personality tests, ability tests, skills tests and other digital assessments.	B
6.5.3	understand the importance of documented quality, relevant norm groups, fair administration and use by a qualified test user.	B
6.5.4	avoid using test results or automated assessments as a stand-alone basis for decision-making.	C
6.5.5	safeguard information, privacy and the candidate's need for an understandable explanation and relevant feedback.	B

6.6 Interview

Selection | Step 6

The purpose is to obtain relevant and comparable information through a structured conversation that supports trust.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.6.1	plan the interview based on the requirements profile and clarify what the interview is intended to investigate.	C

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.6.2	use a structure that gives the candidate room to explain while ensuring that key topics are assessed consistently.	C
6.6.3	ask relevant follow-up questions and distinguish between the candidate's descriptions, concrete examples and the interviewer's own interpretations.	C
6.6.4	create a respectful setting that supports honest answers while maintaining the necessary professional and critical assessment.	C
6.6.5	document information and assessments in a way that supports the overall decision.	C
6.6.6	understand the limits of their own interview competence and recognise that ASASO™ certification is not specialist certification in interview methodology.	B

6.7 Assessment Centre

Selection | Step 7

The purpose is to allow the candidate to demonstrate relevant competence through tasks resembling the work situation.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.7.1	assess whether work samples, cases or an Assessment Centre are necessary and proportionate.	C
6.7.2	design or select tasks relevant to the role and provide candidates with reasonable and comparable conditions.	C
6.7.3	define assessment criteria before delivery and distinguish between observation and interpretation.	C
6.7.4	assess skills, collaboration, communication, learning and approach without placing unreasonable weight on presentation style alone.	C
6.7.5	respect the candidate's time, need for reasonable adjustments, confidentiality and fair treatment.	B

6.8 Background Check

Selection | Step 8

The purpose is to verify relevant information and reduce uncertainty before a decision is made.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.8.1	assess which checks are relevant, lawful and proportionate for the position concerned.	C
6.8.2	conduct structured reference interviews using questions based on the requirements profile and earlier assessments.	C
6.8.3	distinguish between verifiable information, the referee's assessments and information that should not be given weight.	C

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.8.4	understand that credit checks, police certificates, security clearance and other checks require a specific legal basis and cannot be used routinely.	B
6.8.5	inform the candidate and handle information obtained confidentially and in accordance with applicable requirements.	C

6.9 Contract

Selection | Step 9

The purpose is to create a secure, clear and planned transition from decision to an agreed employment relationship.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.9.1	clarify at an early stage what relevant candidates need in order to consider and sign an offer.	C
6.9.2	plan the offer stage and clarify decision-making authority, realistic terms, progress and possible obstacles before an offer is made.	C
6.9.3	understand that an offer may be used in negotiations with the candidate's current employer and handle counteroffers, time for consideration and changing motivation professionally.	C
6.9.4	ensure that information provided throughout the process is consistent with the offer and the employment relationship actually being offered.	C
6.9.5	communicate respectfully with both the selected candidate and other candidates once the decision has been made.	B

6.10 Preboarding and Onboarding

Onboarding | Step 10

The purpose is to make the appointment work in practice through a secure transition, clear expectations and planned learning.

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.10.1	explain the difference between preboarding and onboarding and how the phases affect psychological safety, integration, learning, performance and retention.	B
6.10.2	transfer relevant findings from the recruitment process into an appropriate plan for starting and development, within privacy requirements and agreed boundaries.	C
6.10.3	clarify responsibilities between the manager, new employee, colleagues, HR and others contributing to the start.	C
6.10.4	plan how competence that was not required from the first day will be learned and followed up.	C
6.10.5	use relevant milestones and feedback to adjust expectations, support and development.	C

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
6.10.6	use 100 days as recommended best practice, not as an absolute requirement, and adapt the duration and intensity.	B

7 Documentation, Evaluation and Learning

7.1 Process Documentation Requirements

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
7.1.1	ensure that all 10 steps are considered and that choices, omissions and material adaptations are documented.	C
7.1.2	adapt documentation to the size, risk and needs of the process without making it more extensive than necessary.	C
7.1.3	document key requirements, methods, decisions, responsibilities and rationales so that the process can be understood and reviewed.	C
7.1.4	record relevant feedback and experience during and after the appointment, including where they show that the process did not work as expected.	C
7.1.5	safeguard privacy, access control, confidentiality and deletion across all process documentation.	C

7.2 Continuous Improvement

Req.	The certified professional shall	Level
7.2.1	evaluate the process against its purpose, the candidate experience, the basis for decision-making and the new employee's development.	C
7.2.2	identify what worked, what did not work and which assumptions or decisions should be examined more closely.	C
7.2.3	use experience to improve subsequent Job Analyses, method selection, assessments, communication and onboarding.	C
7.2.4	share relevant learning with involved parties without breaching confidentiality or privacy.	B

8 Legal and Professional References

The list is informative and not exhaustive. The certified professional shall always verify which rules apply to the organisation, position and processing of personal data concerned.

8.1 Current Norwegian Rules

- The Norwegian Working Environment Act, particularly Chapters 9 and 13 and the provisions relating to employment.
- The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act, particularly the prohibition of discrimination in employment and restrictions on obtaining certain information.

- The Personal Data Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), including the principles of lawfulness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimisation, accuracy, storage limitation and security.
- The Freedom of Information Act, the Public Administration Act and the State Employees Act where recruitment takes place in the public sector.
- Special rules on police certificates, health information, security clearance, authorisation and other checks where such requirements apply to the position.

8.2 Relevant Regulatory Developments

The EU Artificial Intelligence Act, Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, and Directive (EU) 2023/970 on pay transparency are relevant regulatory developments. At the time this edition was published, neither had been generally implemented as Norwegian law. Their requirements must therefore not be described as current Norwegian law until incorporation and implementation have been verified. Existing rules on privacy, discrimination and employment apply regardless.

8.3 Guidance and Professional Sources

- The Norwegian Data Protection Authority: guidance on privacy in the workplace and background checks before employment.
- The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud: guidance on discrimination in working life.
- The Norwegian State Personnel Handbook: the qualification principle, vacancy announcements and applicant lists in state-sector appointments.
- Current research on structured interviews, work samples, test quality, candidate experience, artificial intelligence and decision-making in selection.

Professional responsibility: The standard does not replace legal advice or specialist competence. In cases of doubt, the certified professional shall obtain the necessary assistance.