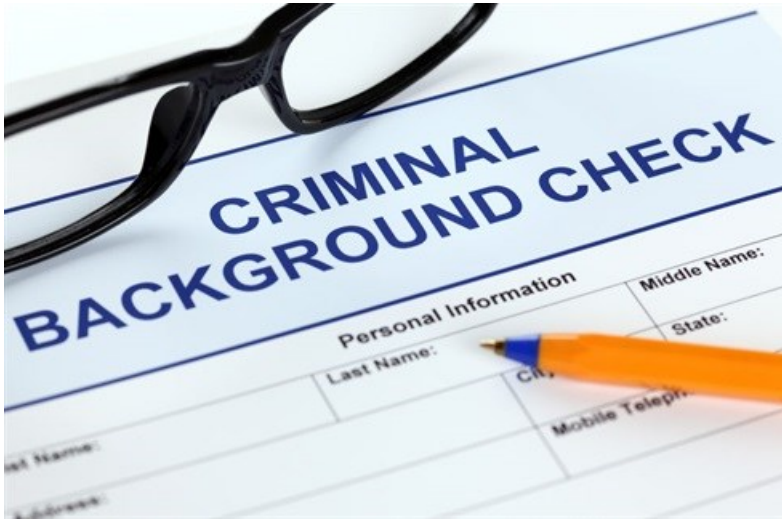


# In-depth background profiling essential in recruitment process

The public and private sectors are plagued by fraudulent education qualifications and dishonest behavior by employees, which starts with an unethical CV. What is required is in-depth background profiling before the candidate is employed.



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The far-reaching consequences of employees fraudulently obtaining or laying claim to university degrees or qualifications are not hard to imagine. This is not only about the bottom line, but can result in loss of life, customers, employees, contracts and other manifestations, such as theft of company products and equipment, lying, taking excessive breaks, leaving early, intentionally working slowly, poor quality of work and the destruction of property, to name a few.

"The recent prevalence of fraudulent qualifications has certainly made employers more circumspect before offering a job to a candidate. Just because a qualification or accomplishment is in a curriculum vitae, does not make it true. ICAS Southern Africa, a leading provider of behavioural risk management services to the business community, has observed more HR executives, across a broad range of industries from mining to finance, need such services. The main output is based on confirming qualifications, references and checking a candidate's criminal record before making a final decision on whether or not to employ someone. Requesting all candidates to participate in integrity testing is also growing in prominence across the country," explains Erna Penning, Manager for Human Risk Assessments at ICAS.

## Integrity testing

"In-depth integrity assessments help companies hire competent people with positive work ethics. Conducting in-depth background profiling prior to appointing someone may be costly, but not nearly as costly as losing company assets, putting your company's reputation at risk or having to cope with staff members who conduct their work with low or no integrity."

Although the practice of integrity testing is not new in South Africa to multi-national organisations, medium to large organisations are starting to understand the benefit of ascertaining whether an individual is honest, norm abiding, punitive towards rule breaking, responsible, trustworthy and has integrity.

The industry standard adheres to the principles and approach outlined by the South African Integrity Scale (SAIS), so job applicants with at least a grade 10 education, at non-managerial level (considered the norm group) or above, can be tested.

#### **South African Integrity Scale:**

- **Honesty:** the view that lying, stealing and rule breakings are uncommon
- **Norm abidance:** a positive attitude towards rules and norms
- **Punitiveness:** the belief that individuals who break rules should be punished
- **Responsibility:** not considering rule breaking, dangerous, careless and impulsive acts
- **Trustworthiness:** sustaining a reputation of being a conscientious and reliable individual

"Unfortunately fraudulent degrees are being termed a 'growth industry' in South Africa and as a result positive result integrity testing is on the increase. The government has already declared its intention to crack down on qualification fraud in the public sector, with some calling for a name and shame register to be set up. Employers are going to have to implement better screening and testing of future employees if they want to sustain their businesses, and safeguard the livelihoods of existing employees and the community," concludes Penning.

For more information, go to [www.icas.co.za](http://www.icas.co.za).

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