



Recruitment and Selection Guidance – Schools

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1. Aim of this Policy

This guidance provides information on how to apply the Recruitment and Selection Policy. It applies to the recruitment of all employees whether permanent, temporary, casual/fixed term or volunteer.

When a vacancy arises consideration should be given regarding whether the post(s) needs to be filled or if alternative arrangements can be made, such as reallocation of duties, deletion or redesigning of the post.

2. Job Criteria and Vacancy approval

If the vacancy is to be filled the job description and person specification must be reviewed and where appropriate be reevaluated.

The main duties and responsibilities of a post must be clearly outlined to provide applicants with a clear idea of what is expected of them.

The job description and person specification form part of the contract of employment. They reflect the position at the present time only and may be changed at management's discretion in the future, including things such as changes in job content, undertaking other duties or working at different locations.



Where the role requires that the post holder will come into contact with children and families, there must be a statement included that recognises the responsibilities around safeguarding children and improvements in outcomes for children.

Job purpose

A short description of what the post holder is expected to do in order to fulfil the purpose of the job.

Main Areas of Responsibility

Each main task should be described as clearly as possible.

Essential Criteria

Essential criteria must be reviewed to ensure they are relevant and justifiable. Skills, knowledge, abilities and experience or qualifications must be necessary to carry out the duties of the post.

Skills and ability

Must be of a practical nature such as typing, keyboard, shorthand, desk top publishing, negotiating skills, languages and define the level required, for example writing standard letters, writing detailed reports, check an invoice, manage a budget, communication in meetings, the public, governors, employees and children, leading a team, completing documentation, writing, facilitating training courses etc.

Education/qualifications

Specify the educational level or qualification requirements of the post.

Ability to drive

Unless driving is a necessary function of the post e.g. minibus driver, It is much better to be specific "an ability to attend meetings throughout the district" or "a willingness to travel".

Behaviours

The type of behaviour that the person would need to demonstrate in order to do the job well.

Appropriate line of questioning and careful probing at interview should be used to demonstrate appropriate behaviour. An example scenario could be provided to an applicant that they may encounter in the job and they would explain how they would deal with it.

The essential criteria should form the basis of the advertisement as this allows applicants to self-select. It also provides the recruitment panel with the criteria to shortlist applicants and to structure interviews in an objective and effective way in order to select the most suitable applicant.

Where the post necessitates specific physical (lifting, standing, climbing, carrying etc.), or sensory (sight, touch, smell, speech) requirements, care should be taken when reflecting this in the criteria.

It is important that people with a sensory disability are not discriminated against when communication via an alternative means could be possible with the appropriate aides/adaptation or support.



Consider the specialist nature and professional content of the post, for instance, a job that needs high-level experience of the intricacies of child care legislation. Decide what previous experience the person will actually need in order to be successful in the post.

Be prepared to be flexible if a good applicant needs special support in order to perform the job satisfactorily. For instance, if a job requires a person to answer the telephone "occasionally" it should not be a reason for excluding deaf people from the interview shortlist.

3. Role of the Recruitment Panel

The recruitment panel must comprise a minimum of two people, usually the line manager and other appropriate person. In certain circumstances where it is deemed appropriate a HR representative may be able to attend to offer guidance and support throughout the recruitment and selection procedure. Occasionally, representatives from external agencies may be invited to attend selection interviews.

All recruitment panel members should ensure a fair, objective and equitable process is followed and be trained in the recruitment and selection process ensuring the recruitment and selection policy is followed. At least one member of the recruitment panel must have completed Safer Recruitment training.

The Chair must ensure recruitment panel members are clear on their role e.g. advisory, technical and that the interview times and venue are arranged and recruitment panel members and applicants are informed. They must also ensure applicants are informed of the outcome and offered feedback. It is their responsibility to ensure correct documentation is completed satisfactorily and kept in line with Data Protection legislation and that all pre-employment documentation is completed and forwarded to HR and payroll.

Individual Recruitment panel Members

Must complete their own assessment after each stage of the recruitment and selection process (i.e. the shortlisting matrix and interview scoring matrix).

It is best practice that the recruitment panel members jointly agree the assessment process and reach a consensus decision.

4. Attract

The aim of recruitment advertising is to attract appropriate and eligible applicants and promote the School as a good employer. The recruiting manager should take time to consider the impact of the advertisement and word it in such a way that attracts suitable applicants.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Nothing in the advertisement should also be indirectly discriminatory against men or women, or against people from a minority racial group. Images should not exclude a certain group or create a stereotypical image. Ageist terminology should be avoided, for example, 'mature', 'energetic', 'recent graduate'. The advertisement should not state or imply that the work is unsuitable for a disabled person, or that the job requires physical fitness or energy.



Advertisements must always include the closing date for applications and the proposed interview date.

Use of Media Where a post is to be advertised externally consideration should be given to the cost of advertising and reaching the target audience.

All Headteacher vacancies should be advertised externally unless there is good reason not to. Guidance can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/668949/Recruiting-a-headteacher-v2.pdf

5. Assess

Shortlisting

Each member of the recruitment panel should view the applications and Job Description/Person Specification and agree the short-list. The criteria for shortlisting must be consistently applied to all applicants against the essential criteria.

It is the policy of the Local Authority not to re-employ employees previously dismissed for misconduct/gross misconduct.

Prior Knowledge of an applicant

Where there is some prior knowledge of an applicant it should be declared to the other members of the recruitment panel.

All forms used in the recruitment and selection process will be retained for 12 months by the recruiting manager adhering to current data protection legislation.

Selection Methods

The minimum recruitment assessment method is an interview, but this may be supplemented by further selection methods.

There are a variety of methods available to help in the selection process, including interviews, tests (practical or psychometric), assessment centers, role plays, in-tray exercises, team exercises, presentations. Using a range of methods can result in a more successful recruitment programme.

Interviewing and Weighting

All applicants must bring appropriate Identification to the interview with them, which should be checked by the recruitment panel.

The interview should be an exchange of information, which will help assess the applicants against the essential criteria.

The validity of the interview process is reliant on the recruitment panel member's ability to listen, probe, assess and, above all, be objective and fair.

The recruitment panel should agree a set of core questions designed to assess the ability of the applicants to meet specific criteria and plan the format and structure of the interview.



Interviewers should take care not to make assumptions about the applicant's style of dress. Where appearance is an important part of the job, any concerns about the appearance of an applicant at interview should be dealt with sensitively prior to appointment if they were the most suitable applicant in all other regards.

Bias and prejudice can occur because applicants do not conform to the interviewers own idea of social or cultural behaviour. Applicants from different cultural backgrounds will vary in their approach to the interview and interviewers should be aware of this and be careful to assess the applicant in relation to his/her skills and experience to do the job.

Interviewers must not stereotype an applicant based on first impressions rather than objective evidence.

It is important that all interviewers keep notes to ensure that a properly reasoned assessment can be made as to whether an applicant meets the essential criteria. At interview stage explore any gaps in employment that may not be covered by explanation on the application form.

Questioning Techniques

The recruitment panel must give the individual time to answer. If the applicant shows signs of struggling to answer a question, the recruitment panel can ask if the applicant wishes the question to be repeated or offer to return to the question later. Questions should be clear and concise.

Open ended questions should be asked to encourage applicants to express their views fully and to gain as much information as possible. Use questions pre-fixed by when, where, how, why, tell me, :- e.g. "Tell me about a time when you have had to manage a difficult situation". "Give me an example when you have dealt with a customer complaint".

People generally feel it appropriate to give a "text book" answer to hypothetical questions. The purpose of the interview is to try and establish what it is the applicant would actually do i.e. "Tell me about a project you have been involved in?"

Avoid asking questions which may invite the applicant to respond with a "yes" or "no. Some applicants will not have any work experience therefore examples from their home, school or college experience can be given.

All applicants should be asked the same core questions.

Supplementary questions may be asked by any recruitment panel member, it may be necessary to ask further follow-up questions in order to probe the answer originally given.

Weighting

A well-planned and clearly understood scoring system must be agreed. The use of a weighting system involves identifying aspects of the vacancy that are considered to be particularly important and giving them greater weight in the scoring process.

Any documentation used to record assessment and selection decisions may be used in applicant feedback, in the event of a recruitment complaint or in the event of any legal action taken by an unsuccessful applicant. As such information will, therefore, be retained for a



period of 12 months by the Chair of the recruitment panel or recruiting manager in line with Data protection legislation.

The recruitment panel should ensure that clarification on any gaps in the employment history is established and make a note of the explanation provided.

The recruitment panel should also use the interview to explore the applicant's attitude to children and their perception of the boundaries of acceptable behaviour towards them.

Psychometric Tests

Use only tests that are approved by the British Psychological Society (BPS). A selection decision must not be made using psychological tests alone.

These types of tests would normally be used for more senior roles within the Council.

Exercises and Tests

Typing tests or tests and exercises are available from various external providers or have been developed by Council departments.

Assessment Centre Process

This method of selection includes a variety of different tests, such as occupational tests, aptitude tests, presentations, group exercises, written tests, and interviews to aid a final decision. In relation to the more technical and complex aspects, it is important that people involved in designing and running an assessment centre process should be appropriately trained and, where necessary, registered or guided by advisors who have expertise in this area.

6. Select

The recruitment panel must aim to reach a consensus, using the interview scoring matrix. Applicants must be assessed on the basis of who best demonstrated their ability to meet the essential criteria and the applicant who scored the highest mark is the successful candidate. Where no applicant has reached the required benchmark, the recruitment panel should consider internal applicants who may have narrowly missed the benchmark and may be appointable subject to further training or development opportunities.

Inability to Reach Agreement on which applicant to Appoint

If the recruitment panel feels that two or more applicants are equally appointable; a further selection test can be introduced.

Where there is disagreement between the recruitment panel members on which applicant to appoint the chair of the recruitment panel will make the final decision.

It is advisable to have a second choice of candidate, i.e. the applicant who scored the second highest score, should the first choice withdraw or turn down the offer.

If there are no appointable applicants, the post will need to be taken back through the recruitment process.



Informing the Applicants

The Chair of the recruitment panel is responsible for ensuring that applicants are informed of the outcome of the interview. The second choice candidate should not be told they were unsuccessful until the successful candidate has accepted the offer of appointment. The offer of employment is subject to satisfactory references and pre-employment checks. The offer can only be on the terms originally advertised and approved.

The appointed candidate should always be appointed to the bottom point of the pay grade except in special circumstances.

Applicant Feedback

It is good practice to offer applicants feedback on either their application or interview performance. Feedback should be objective and honest. Asking questions such as “How did you feel you performed during the interview?” can be helpful.

7. References and Pre Employment Checks

(Further information is available from

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>)

Best practice is to send for references prior to interview. Offers of appointment for external vacancies will be made subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the current or last employer. Offers of appointment for internal vacancies will be made subject to a minimum of one satisfactory reference which must be from the current line manager.

There is a standard format for requesting references for applicants, one must be received from the applicant's current or where this is not possible, their most recent employer. However, there are circumstances when this is not always applicable, such as if the applicant has not previously been employed, a reference would normally be requested from their last educational establishment or if the applicant has recently been unemployed or self-employed, then consideration should be given to asking for another suitable referee with knowledge of the applicant such as a doctor, solicitor, police officer or other professional.

Evaluating a Reference

References should be treated as confidential. Where a reference raises a concern the recruiting manager may feel that more clarification is required before taking a decision on the successful candidate, they may contact the referee to discuss the content. Notes of the conversation must be documented, dated, signed and placed on file. If they wish to discuss the contents of the reference with the applicant, the referee's consent to the disclosure of the contents of the reference should be obtained prior to discussing the concerns directly with them.

The recruitment panel may also consider re-interviewing the applicant and seeking clarification on the area of concern (having taken account of the confidentiality issues above). If these prove satisfactory, the recruitment panel may appoint. If not they can consider the second choice candidate.

Applicants are informed that no formal offer of employment may be confirmed until the satisfactory references have been received.



Absence History / Medical Conditions

Under the Equality Act 2010 it restricts employers from asking questions about health before offering a post.

Medical information will not be sought for internal appointees to job vacancies,

Right to work in the UK

Applicants must provide evidence of their right to work in the UK. For a full list of documents that can be used please visit- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acceptable-right-to-work-documents-an-employers-guide>

DBS

Further information is available from <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-check-applicant-criminal-record>

Criminal Convictions

Where unspent convictions are declared and have a direct bearing on the individual's ability to do the job.

Prohibition Check

A prohibition check is required to ensure anyone Teaching is not prohibited from doing so. This can be carried out at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>

Disqualification by Association

All employees should complete a declaration which should be retained on file. (further information is available from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/528473/Disqualification_under_the_childcare_act_June2016.pdf)

HR will confirm to recruiting manager when all pre-employment checks have been completed and obtain a start date from the recruiting manager.

8. Offer of Appointment

Following receipt of pre-employment checks the recruiting manager will confirm a start date.

If a satisfactory reference or DBS has not been received, no offer can be confirmed without Governor approval.

9. Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) provides all employees and applicants with control over how the organisation holds and uses personal data. Please refer to the School Privacy Notice and Data Retention Information for further information.

10. Document Control

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