

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Recruitment Procedure</b>
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	<b>HR</b>
<b>Audience:</b>	<b>All Staff</b>
<b>Policy Date:</b>	<b>February 2020</b>
<b>Policy Location:</b>	<b>N Drive: HR/AllUsers/Policies and Procedures</b>

## **1. Overview**

- 1.1 This procedure acts as a guide for all line managers (including HR) to follow to ensure a fair and consistent on-boarding process for all new staff to the organisation, from identifying the vacancy through to induction and completion of any probationary review period.
- 1.2 The principle of all recruitment is that it should be inclusive and non-discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, throughout each stage of the process.
- 1.3 As an organisation we advocate positive action. This means that we will encourage applications from individuals with protected characteristics in order to address any serious under representation in the workforce. However, at the point where the selection process takes place, the member(s) of the under-represented group should be assessed on the same terms as the other applicants.
  - 1.3.1 If we appoint on the grounds of gender, race or ethnicity, this is positive discrimination and is unlawful in the UK.
  - 1.3.2 This does not apply under the Disability Discrimination Act where organisations can take positive steps to improve the numbers of disabled people in its workforce.
- 1.4 This procedure applies to all permanent staff recruitment.
- 1.5 Appendix 1 provides a summary breakdown of key responsibilities for each element of the recruitment cycle.

## **2. Identifying the vacancy**

- 2.1 Before recruiting for a new or existing role, it is essential to review information about the role to consider current and future changes in the workload of the team or strategy of the organisation. For example, you should question the following:
  - Is a direct replacement needed?
  - Can the work (or part of it) be re-allocated?
  - Could the role be done on a part-time or job share basis?
  - Could this role be a development opportunity for internal applicants?
  - Do future changes or uncertainty mean that a fixed term appointment should be considered?
- 2.2 Speak to your line manager about the vacancy before spending time on the job description to ensure you're fully informed of any internal or external factors that may influence or impact the recruitment of the role.

## **3. Pre Recruitment document completion**

- 3.1 You should inform HR of any recruitment needs at least 6 weeks before any application is due to be created and made live in order for necessary information to be provided to the HR team.

- 3.2 A pre-recruitment document has been created in order to gather key information for HR staff before recruitment begins. This will be sent to line managers at least 4 weeks in advance of any recruitment campaign, with the most up to date job description and interview questions, with a two week deadline for completion.
- 3.3 There is space on the document for any suggested edits or changes to Interview Questions or Job Descriptions, as well as key information for job adverts and interview format and logistics. This information will then be reviewed by the Recruitment Coordinator who will implement changes where appropriate.
- 3.4 The pre recruitment document is located: N drive > HR > All users > Recruitment > Templates.

#### **4. Job Descriptions**

- 4.1 Once you have a good understanding of the role that's required you need to either compile a new job description or review the current job description to ensure it is fit for purpose for current needs.
- 4.2 For consistency purposes you should always follow the Job Description Template for this purpose, ensuring you have considered:
- The purpose of the role
  - The key outputs/deliverables required by the role holder
  - The skills and attributes needed to perform the role effectively (the person specification)
- 4.3 It is our intention that Job Descriptions should provide an overview of the typical responsibilities the post holder should expect. It should be as simple and generic as possible. For this reason you should avoid adding in any new sections to the Job Description. You should also avoid the temptation to add long lists of tasks.
- 4.4 You should take care around the language you use ensuring it inclusive and is not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

#### **5. Person Specification**

- 5.1 The person specification identifies the essential and desirable attributes that will be expected of the post holder to competently perform the duties of the role. Our template includes three sections for this:
- education and training
  - experience and knowledge
  - skills and abilities
- 5.2 The person specification should be completely derived from the job description and should form the foundation of the recruitment process – i.e. it will be used as the basis for selection decisions at shortlisting, presentation, test and interview stages.

- 5.3 Interview questions and selection tests should also be derived from the person specification and be designed to elicit more evidence on the candidate against the criteria of the post.
- 5.4 The person specification should also be used to write your advert.
- 5.5 The identified requirements will be used as grounds for making an appointment and therefore if the requirement cannot be justified, it should not be used as selection criteria and should not be included in the person specification and advert.
- 5.6 Person specification selection criteria should be classified as either Essential or Desirable.
- 5.7 Essential criteria are those requirements that are critical if the role is to be carried out to the required standard. These criteria should be used in the shortlisting process as a basis for the rejection of unsuitable applicants.
- 5.8 Desirable criteria are those requirements that would enhance the applicant's ability to carry out the role, but a lack of these on the applicant's part would not mean that they could not carry out the tasks of the job description.
- 5.9 Selection criteria should be specific rather than general. This helps ensure that candidates understand the expectations, avoids confusion and ensures consistency of selection decisions by the shortlisting panel. *For example:* The criteria "*verbal and written communication skills*" covers a range of possibilities. It would be more useful to specify the nature and level of communication skills that the job requires. For example, the use of any of the following criteria would still relate to communication skills:
- The ability to draft complex correspondence.
  - Good report writing skills.
  - Effective presentation skills.
  - The ability to communicate with a diverse range of stakeholders at all levels.
- 5.10 Selection criteria must be justifiable in relation to the job tasks and requirements. Non-justifiable criteria could be deemed discriminatory and prevent suitable applicants from applying for the position. *For example:* An essential requirement for an Administrative Assistant to be educated to degree level could be deemed unjustifiable as the role does not required specialised knowledge and an experienced administrator could perform all the functions of the role effectively without a degree.

## **6. Job Evaluation**

- 6.1 Where a new job description has been created, or substantial changes have been made to an existing job description, it will need to be evaluated through our Job Evaluation Procedure.
- 6.2 This will help ensure there is parity across the organisation and that all jobs are graded consistently in accordance with a due process.

## **7. Adverts & Recruitment Packs**

- 7.1 It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that HR has all the information necessary to advertise the position. This includes:
- Completed Pre Recruitment document

- Job Description & Person Specification
- Recruitment timescale (i.e. advert open and close dates, shortlisting date, interview date, and preferred start date).
- The cover letter which introduces the role. This is your opportunity to really promote the organisation, team and role so time and attention needs to be given to this task. Any reference to the responsibilities of the role should come directly from the job description and person specification – no new criteria should be introduced here.

7.2 Be realistic with your timeframe and ensure the information is provided to HR at least two weeks in advance of your expected advert open date.

7.3 HR will be responsible for placing the advert for the role but as line manager it is your responsibility for identifying the most appropriate placements for the advert.

## **8. Application Process**

8.1 HR will be responsible for setting up your vacancy on PeopleHR to ensure that applications can be received.

8.2 Line managers will be given access to their vacancy so you can see the applications as they are submitted.

## **9. Shortlisting Process**

9.1 Once the advert has closed, line managers will need to create a shortlisting grid using the templates provided in the HR folder on the N drive.

9.2 The shortlisting grid should contain a range of the essential criteria identified in the Person Specification.

9.3 At least two members of the recruiting panel will be responsible for shortlisting candidates. This should be done independently, with a follow up meeting to discuss and agree final candidates.

9.4 Only in circumstances where the candidate has demonstrated *evidence* of a particular criterion, should they receive a positive mark on the shortlisting grid. For example, if excellent report writing skills is one of the essential criteria and the candidate simply writes in their cover letter “I have excellent report writing skills”, this is not evidence of their ability. Good evidence of a criterion is where they can reference previous examples of where they have demonstrated this attribute. For example, “I regularly write reports in my current job, for example I most recently wrote a five page report on xxxx. I understand that a good report should clearly identify the purpose, it should be logically structured, well formatted, and clear yet concise with no assumption of knowledge.”

9.5 Once the decision has been made regarding the shortlist, this should be conveyed to HR in writing.

## **10. Interview Process**

- 10.1 HR will be responsible for inviting candidates to interview and for rejecting candidates who were unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage.
- 10.2 To allow candidates reasonable time to prepare and make arrangements, interviews should not be arranged any less than five working days from the date of a shortlisting decision having been made.
- 10.3 External applicants who are invited to an interview will be sent a map showing the location of the interview and an outline of the form of the interview, who will be on the panel and whether there will be any other form of assessment. The invitation should ask for notification of any access requirements and reasonable adjustments should be made to accommodate the particular needs of any candidate where possible.
- 10.4 Line managers are responsible for drafting the interview questions, using the template grid provided in the HR folder on the N drive. Draft questions should be sent to HR at the same time the pre recruitment document is returned, in order of changes to be reviewed.
- 10.5 Questions should be considered with attention to the Job Description and Person Specification and should include a range of open questions that test experience and competencies. Design questions to check facts, obtain relevant information about each applicant's background, test achievement and assess aptitude and potential. This approach ensures consistency and fairness because all interviewees will be given an equal opportunity to sell their skills and abilities.
- 10.6 HR will provide the panel with an interview pack as soon as practicable. The pack will include: confirmation of attendance and interview times, the interview questions for all panel members, copies of candidates' CVs and cover letters.
- 10.7 The panel should be made up of three members of staff, which should comprise the direct line manager, a sabbatical officer and one other member of staff from the organisation. The third panellist should be senior in grade to the position being recruited and may be from the same department or another department in the organisation. The panel should include gender balance.
- 10.8 Having prepared your questions, it is important to check that they are put to the applicant in an effective way in order to elicit as much useful information as possible from the applicants.
- 10.9 Managers should not, however, restrict themselves to asking only these questions, as there will also be a need to ask questions that are specific to a particular applicant, for example to clarify something vague or ambiguous on an application form or ask about a gap between jobs. In addition, at the interview itself, further unplanned questions will be necessary in order to follow up or probe any relevant matter raised or hinted at by the interviewee.

- 10.10 Consider asking questions that are challenging, but never ask them in an intimidating manner.
- 10.11 Ask open questions that require the applicant to give examples of real situations that they have experienced.
- 10.12 Don't be afraid to probe and re-phrase questions. An important questioning skill is to be able to ask 'follow up' questions once an interviewee has started talking, either to get further information, to clarify a point or to check your understanding of the situation. By probing further, the interviewer will be able to delve deeper into an issue and gain a greater understanding, e.g. "can you give me an example which shows how you were able to use this skill?" or "what exactly did you mean when you said that you had responsibility for that particular function?"
- 10.13 Avoid questions that relate to family, health, race, religion, sexual orientation or age.
- 10.14 During the interview notes should be taken on each of the candidates. This should be a summary of what each candidate says to act as a reminder to you following completion of all interviews. Following interview you should make notes summarising the key reasons why the successful candidate was selected and the other applicants rejected. This can be used to provide feedback to candidates. No comments should be written which you would not wish to be disclosed to the candidates.
- 10.15 You will need to confirm your interview decision to HR by email and return all handwritten notes to HR for filing purposes (to be retained for 6 months).
- 10.16 Any offer should be made by the line manager as soon as practicably possible. This would be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.
- 10.17 Only once you have received a verbal acceptance of the role, should you inform HR to turn down the unsuccessful candidates. You should email HR with confirmation of the acceptance and request for an offer letter to be drafted, supplying all relevant details (salary, start date, whether references are required).

## **11. Making an offer and Pre-employment Checks**

- 11.1 HR will be responsible for drafting offer letters and for pursuing references.
- 11.2 In the case of internal promotions or transfers, the employee must be sent a letter confirming the variation to their terms and conditions.
- 11.3 Appointments will not be confirmed until satisfactory replies have been received from referees.
- 11.4 Original proof of the individual's right to work in the UK must be seen and copied on their first day of employment.

## **12. Induction**

- 11.1 A well-considered and effective induction will help to ensure that new employees settle in well and gain an understanding of the organisation and its policies, procedures and culture as early as possible. It also gives them a full opportunity quickly to become effective and motivated team members.
- 11.2 HR can share a template induction programme with you but line managers are responsible for ensuring that the induction has been personalised to the job role and is planned well in advance of the individual starting with appropriate meetings and training booked in relevant diaries.

### **13. Probation**

- 13.1 Probationary periods of three months will be in place for all new members of staff, and in some cases at the line manager's discretion in respect of employees who have been transferred or promoted into different posts.
- 13.2 It is intended that probationary periods will allow both the member of staff and the line manager to assess objectively whether or not the employee is suitable for the role. Clear objectives should be set for delivery within the probation period.
- 13.3 Line managers are responsible for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period with frequent one to one meetings and review of objectives. If any problems arise, these should be addressed promptly.
- 13.4 Line managers will receive a notification via PeopleHR in advance of the probationary period expiring, requesting that they book a meeting in with the member of staff to discuss the conclusion of the probationary period.
- 13.5 Line managers should follow the Probationary Review Guidance which is located in the HR folder on the N drive.
- 13.6 Following completion of a successful probationary review meeting, the line manager should write to the member of staff confirming this. HR will be able to provide guidance and a template letter for this purpose.
- 13.7 Where a line manager does not believe that a member of staff has successfully completed their probationary period, it may be extended. This should be discussed with HR.



## Appendix 1

### Summary Process & Responsibilities

Task	Line Manager Responsibilities	HR Responsibilities
<b>1. Job Description</b>	Review and update job description and person specification using template.	Quality control to ensure consistency and correct use of template.
	Send to HR for sign off.	
<b>2. Advert</b>	Research advert placement.	Meet with Line Manager to agree advert placement and budget.
	Research advert cost.	Write summary paragraph for job advert.
	Email HR with thoughts for advert placement and associated costs and full details of the recruitment timeline including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advert open date (be realistic and allow at least 5 working days for placement)</li> <li>• Advert close date (at least 3 weeks later)</li> <li>• Shortlisting date</li> <li>• Shortlisting panel</li> <li>• Interview date</li> <li>• Interview panel members</li> </ul> Arrange quick meeting with HR to agree.	Upload advert to PeopleHR and any other relevant channels as agreed with Line Manager.
<b>3. Shortlisting &amp; interview planning</b>	Pull together shortlisting grid with draft questions using only the essential criteria from the person specification (see template grid in HR/AllUsers/Recruitment/Templates)	Provide Line Manager with access to PeopleHR to see all relevant applications.
	Shortlist with another staff member from the interview panel to ensure objectivity and parity. This should be done separately first, followed by a meeting to agree final selection.	Invite all successful candidates to interview using the information received from line managers.
	Email HR Manager with the following confirmation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The names of all shortlisted candidates.</li> <li>• The names of all unsuccessful candidates.</li> <li>• The date of the interviews.</li> <li>• The schedule for the interviews – i.e. how long each interview will</li> </ul>	Reject all unsuccessful candidates.  Follow up any interview confirmations where necessary.  Book candidates into the car park.

	<p>last and the start and end times for each (and any breaks required).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any tasks for the interview (i.e. presentation question, in-tray exercise).</li> <li>The interview panel members.</li> <li>The location for the interviews (your responsibility to source the room).</li> <li>Any instructions regarding where the candidate should report to sign in on the day – i.e. Helpdesk or other? Who will meet the candidates?</li> </ul>	
	Ensure all hard copies of shortlisting grids are given back to the HR Manager to hold on file for a period of 6 months.	
<b>4. Interviews</b>	Pull together the interview question grid (see template grid and example questions in HR/AllUsers/Recruitment/Templates).	Provide schedule and pack with one copy of CVs and cover letters to the panel.
	Share draft questions with HR Manager before confirming.	
	Ensure set up of the room is comfortable – seating layout, temperature and provision of water for all candidates and panel members.	
<b>5. Selection</b>	Make phone call offer to successful candidate confirming salary and start date.	Draft the offer letter and all other contract documents for new employee.
	<p>Email HR Manager with the following confirmation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name/s of successful candidate/s.</li> <li>The names of unsuccessful candidates.</li> <li>The start date, grade, spine point and salary for new employee.</li> <li>A few lines about the new employee, i.e. background and experience for HR to use in an email to all staff.</li> </ul>	<p>Send out rejection emails to unsuccessful candidates offering feedback if required.</p> <p>Send out announcement of successful recruitment to all permanent staff.</p>
<b>6. Induction</b>	Plan induction programme using template from HR.	Provide induction template and meet with line manager to discuss where necessary.
	Set up new I.T user account using most up to date template in the	

	HR/AllUsers/Recruitment/Template folder.	
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