

Recruitment and selection

This policy should be read in conjunction with our equal opportunities policy, which sets out the main objectives in relation to providing fair and anti discriminatory recruitment and selection practices.

The recruitment panel

As soon as possible after it is decided to undertake a recruitment exercise, a decision should be made on the membership of the recruitment panel. The members of the panel can then take part in each stage of the process. Exactly who is on the panel will depend on the nature of the post; but should normally include the person managing the post and a representative of the Management Committee. At least one member of the panel should, if possible, have undertaken training in recruitment and selection using an equal opportunities policy.

Job descriptions

Every post must have a job description, which should be produced by the recruitment panel having analysed the requirements of the post. Other staff in the organisation may be encouraged to comment on a draft but the final decision on the wording must remain with the panel. The job description should be written in simple language, identifying each different aspect of the post and including any special features such as evening work, need to travel etc.

The job description must include:

- a title which simply but accurately describes the nature of the work
- who the person is responsible to
- a summary of the duties and responsibilities of the post

Person Specifications

The panel will produce a person specification setting out those skills and abilities, which will be required by the person doing the job. The person specification will be used when preparing advertisements, drawing up a short list, and choosing the best person for the job. The panel will ensure that they do not draft the person specification in ways that could create unnecessary barriers for applicants or perpetuate patterns of discrimination. The requirements in the person specification must be:

- directly related to the job
- as specific as possible
- reasonable

Advertising

The recruitment panel will consider the most appropriate method used to advertise any job and take positive steps to encourage applications for people who are currently under-represented in the organisation. Such steps may

include identifying publications, newsletters and other information networks that will reach its target groups: black and ethnic minority press, community centres, women's interest group newspapers, disability action groups, gay and lesbian groups etc.

The information provided in any advertisement should include: the name of organisation, title of the post, salary and/or other benefits, outline of duties and requirements, method of application, closing date, interview date, and equal opportunities statement.

Responding to enquiries

The panel will ensure that someone will be ready to deal with requests for information as soon as possible after the recruitment exercise has been publicised.

The recruitment pack to be sent to candidates should include: the application form, the aims, principles and activities of the organisation, the job description, the person specification, a summary of the terms and conditions of employment, details of access for disabled people, interview date/s, the equal opportunities policy statement and monitoring form, and arrangements for paying attendance expenses.

Dealing with applications

The members of the recruitment panel will treat all applications as confidential. Applicants will be kept informed of any significant changes in the recruitment schedule.

Applications will be monitored according to sex, race and disability so that the Management Committee can assess how well the advertising is reaching the groups targeted. The total number of enquiries will be compared with the number of applications received to establish whether the advertisement was effective in encouraging applicants to enter the recruitment process.

Selecting a short list

The recruitment panel will assess each candidate's ability to meet the essential requirements of the job as set out in the person specification using a scoring system.

For example;

- 0 not met
- 1 partially met
- 2 fully met

The panel will keep a record of the reasons for not short-listing any candidate.

Planning the interview day

The panel will decide whether a practical task directly related to the requirements of the job is required to inform its assessment of a person's suitability in addition to an interview.

A realistic timetable will be agreed to allow sufficient time for each candidate to complete any task in addition to the interview. The timetable will also allow sufficient time after each interview for each member of the panel to complete his/her notes on the candidate.

The panel should convene in good time to finalise the procedure they will follow. One of the panel members should act as chair.

The interview / assessment procedure

The aim of the interview is to get candidates talking, to encourage them to provide facts and information, to describe past events or experiences and express feelings or opinions. A general question may be used as a starting point but more specific follow-up questions should then focus on those matters of interest to the panel.

The chair is responsible for:

- welcoming the candidate
- introducing the panel
- ensuring that the interview starts and concludes on time
- ensuring that all questions are relevant to the essential requirements of the person specification and that all aspects are covered
- ensuring that the candidate is aware of the rate of pay, the expenses and other items, conditions attached to the job
- ensuring that the candidate has a chance to ask questions
- ensuring that the candidate is told how the decision will be notified

Making the decision

At the end of each interview, the panel should be given time to complete their interview notes, using a simple scoring system to establish how well each candidate meets the essential requirements of the job. The panel should discuss the results of this assessment before making any comparison of candidates with each other. The interview notes (or a summary) should be added to the monitoring form. The notes and forms must be kept for at least 12 months.

Once a selection decision has been taken the person selected should be informed, the offer confirmed in writing, and references taken up if necessary. Unsuccessful candidates will also be informed and given an opportunity to receive feedback on their performance.

References

The post will normally be offered 'subject to satisfactory references'. References are used to provide comments on a candidate's ability and to vouch for the integrity of the individual. If a reference raises questions about the candidate's ability or character then these aspects should be pursued.

Contracts of employment

In respect of paid posts, the Management Committee will provide an appropriate contract of employment, which takes account of the legal duties upon it as an employer and its policies, including the equal opportunities policy.

Documentation

All written records relating to all shortlisted candidates will be kept for a period of 12 months