

## **Recruitment and Selection: Procedure and Guidance**

### **1 Aim**

- 1.1 The appointment of all staff has a direct impact upon the quality of educational provision in the University. The aim of this document is to provide best practice recruitment procedures, designed to assist in the process of securing the best candidate for each post and to meet the requirements of current legislation. The principles in this document should be applied to all appointments, whether through external recruitment or internal appointment; of a temporary or permanent nature, to ensure equality of opportunity and fair treatment of employees.
- 1.2 The aim of this document is to promote best practice thereby ensuring that the University's commitment to equal opportunities is fully reflected in the recruitment process.

### **2 Scope of the Procedure**

- 2.1 The procedure contains the following elements:
  - a checklist of recruitment procedures from the identification of a vacancy to the confirmation of an appointment;
  - advice and best practice guidelines on all aspects of recruitment, appointment and selection; and
  - information on administrative arrangements to be followed for the appointment of staff.
- 2.2 Exclusions to the procedure will apply where redeployment procedures operate or for short term casual appointments, executive search, agency appointments and the operation of the Part Time Hourly Paid Pool

### **3 Identifying a Vacancy**

- 3.1 A potential vacancy exists on receipt of a resignation, redeployment or transfer, creation of a new post or confirmation of extended leave through maternity, long term sickness, secondment or sabbatical leave.
- 3.2 A decision should be taken by the appropriate manager on whether or not to fill the post, or to change the nature of the post. Decisions will need to be taken within the budgetary constraints that exist. Decisions should be taken promptly and communicated to relevant staff. Permanent appointments should not be made to replace staff on extended leave. When considering a temporary appointment managers should take account of the guidance issued by Human Resources on the use of temporary contracts.

### **4 Job Descriptions**

- 4.1 Every post should have a job description, which is a clear statement of the main duties and responsibilities of a job. It should be written in straightforward language and not contain jargon, abbreviations or initials that might confuse an applicant.
- 4.2 A job description is a prerequisite to a fair recruitment process. It must contain enough information about the post for the candidate to decide whether they want to apply and to make their application. It must also enable the manager to develop the person specification, which will serve as the principal source of reference during the selection process.
- 4.3 Further information is provided in the Guidance Section A.

### **5 Person Specification**

- 5.1 The person specification sets out the essential qualifications, skills, knowledge, abilities, experience or training that are required to carry out the job successfully. These skills, knowledge etc. form the criteria for selection and must be drawn from the main duties and responsibilities for the post. The essential criteria should reflect the minimum required to carry out the job at a standard level of performance. Desirable criteria should be used to choose between candidates who meet the essential criteria. They identify the skills, knowledge etc. which would shorten induction or training requirements for the new appointee.
- 5.2 Beware of making the level too high. This may put people off and make it difficult to find enough applicants. The level should not be set too low as this will make it very difficult to leave people out of the shortlist.
- 5.3 The person specification is used to decide whether someone can do the job – the applicant will be measured against each criterion. They must be quantifiable, measurable and capable of being tested. Criteria must not be included unless they are necessary to do the job either from the start (essential) or with development (desirable) as they may exclude people and are potentially discriminatory. When specifying experience do not do this by requiring a certain number of years' experience unless that number of years is required by a professional body or is capable of objective justification. Rather you should specify the type of breadth of experience a person must have. Do not require a driving licence as part of a person specification because you want an individual to be independently mobile and to travel between sites. The ability to travel between sites is the criterion that needs to be tested – applicants will then be able to identify how they will do this. A driving licence must only be specified if driving is part of the duties of that job.
- 5.4 Further information is provided in the Guidance Section B.

## **6 Advertising**

- 6.1 All vacancies should be advertised internally and externally (locally and nationally where appropriate) unless an exemption applies. Further information is provided in the Guidance Section C.
- 6.2 Redeployment procedures should be used to avoid potential redundancies; to facilitate redeployment upon expiry of a fixed term or temporary contract where someone has over 12 months' continuous service and to facilitate transfers on grounds of health or disability.
- 6.3 Media should be chosen so as to advertise cost effectively and attract a suitable range of applicants. Advice on publications and circulation figures is provided in the Guidance Section D.
- 6.4 Where applicable, advertisements should also positively encourage suitable applicants from under-represented groups.
- 6.5 The advertisement should be as accessible as possible, using clear language and avoiding jargon. Wording used must not convey a preconceived idea of the eventual postholder unless the post is open to members of one racial group or sex, under the relevant sections of the Race Relations or Sex Discrimination Acts or is a Genuine Occupational Requirement.

## **7 Vice-Chancellor's Office Approval**

- 7.1 Only unusual requests or those falling outside the guidelines require approval from the Vice-Chancellor's Office.

## **8 Job Evaluation**

- 8.1 All posts must have been subject to job evaluation, either as automatic allocation of grade for generic posts or through job evaluation procedures.

## **9 Information to Applicants**

- 9.1 Sufficient information should be provided to applicants to enable them to decide whether they would like to work for the University and whether they meet the requirements of the post. Accompanying the application form, job description and candidate specification, managers should provide information about the particular School/Service and its work.

## **10 Selection Process**

- 10.1 The manager should determine the selection process in advance and decide how many stages will be used (e.g. long list then shortlist), whether assessment tests are used and questions to be asked at interview. All stages of the assessment process should relate directly to the person specification and should be free from any bias.
- 10.2 Application forms are often used as the means to select a shortlist of candidates called to interview (with or without other tests/presentations). At least two members of the appointment panel should select candidates, based on information contained in the application form only, applying the selection criteria listed on the person specification systematically and consistently for all applicants.
- 10.3 If specific criteria cannot be tested from applications forms, these should be omitted from the selection process for all applicants. Reasonable inferences based on the information provided may be made as long as these are consistently applied to all applicants.
- 10.4 The University is committed to the Disability Confident Scheme and undertakes to shortlist and interview all applicants declaring a disability who meet the essential criteria.
- 10.5 If few or no applications are received from women, members of black and minority ethnic groups or people with disabilities, the advertisement, job specification and outcome of the selection decision should be checked to ensure there are no discriminatory effects. Human Resources review shortlists to implement our commitment to disabled applicants and will highlight any areas of inconsistency between application Equal Opportunities (EO) data and shortlist EO data.
- 10.6 The panel should notify Human Resources of the selection decision. Human Resources will notify unsuccessful applicants and will inform successful applicants of the next stage(s) of the selection process.
- 10.7 All selected candidates should receive reasonable notice of interview and test or presentation arrangements. Candidates should be told in advance if they are to perform any assessment or exercise and provided of details as to what those exercises are. The most relevant tests are those which are developed from a key part of the job. The panel assessing the exercises or presentations does not need to be the same panel as the interview panel. However, the presentation panel should have a constant membership throughout the presentations and have a means of collecting the views of all members of the presentation panel to feedback to the interview panel.
- 10.8 Guidance for panel members and chairs and details of panel requirements are given in Guidance Section F.
- 10.9 The emphasis at interview will be on probing and identifying evidence of experience, skills and abilities claimed on the application form and measured against the person specification. Questions should concentrate on skills and achievement rather than length of experience and should probe to find out exactly what the candidate has done. The same general area of questioning should be covered for each applicant but this does not mean that identical questions or follow up questions will be asked. No discriminatory questions must be used.

The interview should also be used to question any inconsistencies in the evidence presented e.g. dates, career patterns, level of employer reference provided.

- 10.10 The panel should convene before the first interview to confirm the framework of the interviews, including establishing an outline of questioning.
- 10.11 Timing should be realistic. Generally, interviews will take between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the type of job and seniority. Interviews lasting beyond 60 minutes should be avoided. Schedules should allow 5 to 15 minutes between each interview for the panel to compile notes (and scores when used). Interviews should be arranged, at a time and venue which take into account any known difficulties that may be faced by candidates with carer responsibilities, people with disabilities or those who travel long distances.
- 10.12 The interview room should be quiet and free from interruption. Waiting rooms should be comfortable and convenient. Candidates should not be kept waiting too long without explanation. Interview rooms should be arranged sensitively, making provision for personal belongings, light, comfort etc.
- 10.13 Decisions should be recorded and fully documented so that complaints regarding failure to be selected can be investigated.
- 10.14 There is no substitute for proper training in interview techniques. Anyone regularly involved in recruitment and selection should attend the regular training provided by Human Resources.

## **11 Offers of Employment**

- 11.1 A member of the panel should contact the successful candidate to offer the post. All offers of employment must be made subject to necessary clearances. The panel should notify Human Resources of the decision. Human Resources will notify unsuccessful candidates and will process the formal offer of employment and make necessary contractual arrangements.
- 11.2 An employer's reference, current or most recent must be obtained for the successful candidate before any offer of appointment is confirmed. Employer references should include factual information regarding salary, dates of employment, work duties, attendance, disciplinary and capability records, health record and ability to meet the person specification for the post. Human Resources will arrange for relevant employer references to be called.
- 11.3 Employer references must cover the last five years of employment. If current employment has not lasted five years previous employers must be contacted. Where someone is self-employed client references may need to be used which could provide evidence of an individual's match against the selection criteria. Where this is someone's first job after education then University/College or School references can be used, alongside employer references from any regular part time or vacation employment.
- 11.4 Telephone references should not be relied on. Written references are essential and non-conditional offers of employment must not be made until satisfactory reference checks are concluded.
- 11.5 Since employer references vary in quality, they should not be used in deciding between candidates. It should be remembered that they are usually someone else's opinion of the candidates' suitability for the post and may give differing amounts of useful and unsolicited information.
- 11.6 For professorial posts a system of peer reference operates as part of the direct selection process. These should be available for all candidates prior to interview and a decision for such a post cannot be made until sufficient peer assessments have been received.

- 11.7 Employment must not commence prior to the completion of statutory checks under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.
- 11.8 Where a candidate requires a Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) in accordance with Tier 2 of the Points Based System, this will be issued Human Resources. A COS enables the candidate to apply for entry clearance or further leave to remain in the UK. Employment may not commence until evidence of clearance has been provided.
- 11.9 All applicants for posts which may involve contact with children and young people under the age of 18 or working with vulnerable adults will be subject to disclosure requirements. The University of Huddersfield complies fully with the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. Support staff employment must not commence until a satisfactory disclosure has been received. In some academic posts where work with children or vulnerable adults will not take place immediately employment can start but access to those groups restricted until a satisfactory disclosure has been received.
- 11.10 Some appointments require evidence of professional body membership/registration. Where this is the case evidence will be checked by Human Resources at the formal offer of employment stage. Requirements are outlined in Guidance Section K.

## **12 Recruitment Monitoring**

- 12.1 On completion of the recruitment process Human Resources will record monitoring information relating to gender, ethnic origin, disability, age and sexual orientation. Information is used to analyse recruitment trends and to monitor the impact of the University's equal opportunities policy on the composition of the workforce. Annual headcount statistics on both recruitment and staff numbers are reported to the University Council and Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee on an annual basis.

## **13 Complaints**

- 13.1 All unsuccessful candidates should be given the opportunity of a debriefing by a member of the panel, both at shortlisting and following interview. Advice on feedback is provided in Guidance section N.
- 13.2 If a candidate is not satisfied with the reasons given or believe they have been discriminated against, a written complaint should be sent to the Human Resources Manager who will instigate an investigation into the procedures followed.

## Summary of the Stages of the Recruitment Procedure

1	Review Vacancy	Should the vacancy be replaced? Should the post be changed or modified?
2	Write Job Description	Is the existing job description suitable? Should the job description be updated? Is this a new job – what are the main tasks/who does this person report to/who reports to them?
3	Write Person Specification	What knowledge, experience, skills and ability will someone need to do this job?
4	Draft Advertisement	Where should I advertise to attract the best field? How can I make the post look interesting to attract a wide field?
5	Determine Selection Process	How many stages? Will I use tests and/or exercises? If so, what do I want to test?
6	Carry Out Selection From Application Form	How many people are involved? Meeting to agree selection?
7	Inform Human Resources	Papers returned Arrangements for next stage(s) confirmed
8	Debrief Unsuccessful Candidates	Notify unsuccessful candidates of availability for debriefing (debriefing is solely concerned with identifying those areas of the person specification that were not matched/insufficient match).
9	Carry Out Selection Process	Agree format for selection process Determine reception and hospitality arrangements Agree interview questions
10	Select Successful Candidate	Identify further checks required
11	Inform Human Resources	Papers returned
12	Debrief Unsuccessful Candidates	Notify unsuccessful candidates of availability for debriefing (debriefing is solely concerned with identifying those areas of the person specification that were not matched/insufficient match).