Staff Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure

Policy

We aim to recruit and retain the best staff to enable us to deliver our Corporate Plan. Our policy is to ensure that recruitment and selection decisions are based on the ability of the applicant to meet the requirements of the job description, person specification and any other relevant criteria. All applicants and employees will be treated fairly and according to this policy and procedure, and our relevant equality policies. We are committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality.

Scope

These procedures apply to all full time and fractional appointments. The good practice elements of the procedure apply to all appointments, including Hourly Paid Trainers (HPTs).

Procedures

1. Statutory Requirements

1.1 Current employment law imposes obligations on employers not to discriminate on the grounds of a protected characteristic; age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. We are committed to taking a positive and pro-active approach to diversity and equality which extends beyond the statutory obligations. There is also an additional requirement to ensure that we comply with UK immigration rules and procedures.

1.2 In addition, we will take into account the practical guidance and recommendations of non-statutory codes of practice.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 HR Services will provide advice, guidance and support to recruiting managers so that:

(a) Job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements are drafted in such a way as to make clear the requirements of job vacancies.

(b) Our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality policy is a feature of all recruitment advertising.

(c) Staff involved in recruitment and selection are aware of their role and responsibilities in this area.

2.2 HR Services will monitor applications by equalities criteria.
2.3 HR Services will organise training and development to support recruitment and selection, including relevant equality legislation.

2.4 Head of Departments are responsible for the appointment of staff in their area; for ensuring that these procedures are followed, and that unfair discrimination does not occur.

2.5 All staff involved in recruitment and selection have a responsibility to behave in a non-discriminatory manner.

3. Criminal Convictions

3.1 For certain posts, a CRB disclosure will be sought from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The requirement for CRB disclosure should be clearly stated in the advertising/recruitment documentation.

4. The Recruitment Process

4.1 The recruitment process is often the first experience an individual has of our Academy and it is important that it is a positive one. These procedures are designed to:

- create a positive image to applicants who may be future employees, students or customers;
- give a clear understanding of our work and what will be expected of them as employees;
- enhance the quality of the candidate pool;
- reduce the risk of a bad selection decision.

An essential component of the recruitment process is the literature prepared for candidates, such as job description, person specification and further details.

5. First Step

5.1 If an employee leaves, or additional staff resources are required first check with the Company Director or Head of Department that there is ‘in principle’ support for filling the vacancy and that budget is available.

The Company Director or Head of Department may determine the need for new or replacement posts based on the current and future requirements of the Company. He/she may authorise moving to the next stage of the recruitment process where all of the following conditions are met:

- Where the nature of the post fits our HR frameworks and a budget can be identified to cover the cost involved.
- The grade has been determined in accordance with our procedures.

5.2 The Company Director or Head of Department must initially discuss and agree with the relevant Management that the budget is available to fill the vacancy.
5.3 If the job is new, or the duties of the job have changed significantly over time, it may be necessary for the job grading to be reviewed; the outcome may impact on the budget required. Advice on this should be sought from HR Services.

5.4 Recruiting managers are advised to discuss their recruitment plans with HR Services so that the appropriate level of guidance and support can be provided to ensure that the process runs smoothly. Consideration needs to be given at this stage to the shape and content of the recruitment activity appropriate to the vacancy.

5.5 If selection tools other than an interview are planned, these should be directly related to the requirements of the job, should be carefully selected, professionally designed and properly applied to ensure that there is no bias in the selection process. Further advice is available from HR Services.

6. Getting Started

6.1 Vacancies normally have to be approved by the Company Director. The recruiting manager who is seeking to recruit to a post must provide all of the recruitment documents, job description, person specification to the Company Director or Head of Department, who will collate this for submission to advertisers. Services with relevant vacancy details including budget, whether the post is new or a replacement, full or part time, location etc.

7. Job Description

7.1.1 The job description:

- provides a ‘snapshot’ of the job at a given time;
- defines the job purpose and principal accountabilities of the job;
- indicates where the job sits within the organisational structure;
- outlines reporting relationships;
- changes as the job develops

7.1.2 The job description must be prepared by the employing Head of Department in the standard format. The appropriate templates may be found in the Shared Drive. The elements of the JD are in the template and should not be removed without a good reason. Advice on production of job descriptions may also be sought from HR Services.

7.1.3 Where there is an existing job description for the vacancy, this will need to be reviewed, and updated where necessary and set out in the latest version of the appropriate standard template.

7.2 Person Specification

7.2.1 Person specifications are designed to identify the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills/competencies, and personal qualities required of the successful candidate to ensure the job is carried out effectively. It is crucial to the recruitment process that it is clear and precise
since it outlines the criteria by which candidates will be shortlisted and selected. It is important to keep the person specification succinct. If candidates are not going to be assessed against a criterion during the recruitment process, then it shouldn't be included.

7.2.2 The person specification should make clear what is essential and what is desirable. Essential criteria are necessary pre-requisites whilst desirable criteria are ‘nice to haves’ which would be advantageous for the candidate to possess. The person specification with the job description is used to provide a realistic basis for an advertisement. Time spent at this stage will help at subsequent stages of the process.

7.2.3 Particular care must be taken when devising the criteria used in person specifications to ensure that these do not unlawfully discriminate against particular groups of people either directly or indirectly.

7.2.4 Where a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau check is required for the post this should be specified as an essential requirement.

7.3 Additional Information/Further Details for Candidates

7.3.1 The Company Director or Head of Department may provide further information to supplement the job description and person specification e.g. giving the job context.

7.4 Recruitment Advertisement

7.4.1 The recruitment advertisement should be designed to:

- give a snapshot of the job;
- attract those applicants whose experience, qualifications etc match the requirements of the job and quickly eliminate those who do not;
- convey a positive image of our University as an ‘employer of choice’;

7.4.2 The Company Director or Head of Department is responsible for providing a draft advertisement. It should be succinct and interesting, aiming to have maximum impact with a minimum of text.

All adverts will include one of a selection of regularly reviewed and updated standard short generic ‘openers’. These can be obtained from previous adverts or Sales & Marketing Director.

Applicants initially scan publications very quickly for 3 main things:

- Job Title
- Salary
- Location

This information should be followed by:
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- The job (the main thrust of what the jobholder will be doing or be expected to achieve)
- Key requirements - what the candidate needs to do the job e.g. essential and desirable qualifications, experience, background, personal qualities

HR Services will add: standard text such as the closing date and equality statement.

8. Advertising the Vacancy

8.1 HR Services hold an advertising budget that is used for campaigns to increase our visibility as an employer of choice, encouraging traffic to our website, therefore improving the pool of candidates. These include sponsoring words on Google, external advertising campaigns and a subscription with job advertisers. Any additional costs for specific advertising campaigns which relate to a particular vacancy, are charged back to the department sponsoring the recruitment campaign and are subject to prior approval being granted by the Company Director or Head of Department. For more information contact the Recruitment Manager.

8.2 All posts should normally be advertised for a minimum of two weeks to attract the best pool of candidates. In situations where we may wish to sponsor an individual under Tier 2 of the point based system, this advertising timeframe will need to be extended. Please contact HR Services for further information if you think you need to comply with this.

9. Shortlisting

9.1 Shortlisting should normally be carried out by at least two members of the selection panel, one of whom will normally be the Head of Department.

9.2 It is important that the criteria set at the beginning of the recruitment process in the person specification are used to assess all candidates as objectively as possible.

9.3 Internal applicants 'at risk' should be shortlisted if they meet most of the essential criteria. The likely duration and cost of staff training and development will need to be taken into account in deciding whether the job would be suitable alternative employment for an ‘at risk’ applicant.

9.4 We operate a Job Interview Guarantee Scheme (JIGS) for people with a disability. This scheme guarantees that disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria will be interviewed. When completing their application it is up to the candidate to demonstrate that they meet the essential criteria.

10. Selection Administration

10.1 For all staff references can be obtained after successful interview but prior to offering employment. Head of Departments may decide that references are required prior to interviewing candidates.

10.2 Where references are to be requested prior to interview a longer lead in time is required to allow referees reasonable time to respond prior to interview. At least
12 working days notice should be given to HR Services.

10.3 For internal appointments within the same Department or Academy further references will not normally be required. For other internal candidates the Chair of the panel (or another panel member) should obtain a telephone reference from the appropriate manager and then inform HR Services.

11. The Interview

11.1 The aim of the interview is to select the best candidate for the job. It is a two-way process during which the details of the job can be discussed and the candidate's suitability assessed.

11.2 Where the candidate’s application reveals any unexplained gaps in employment or inconsistencies, these should be explored with the candidate at interview.

11.3 Candidates will have been asked to bring with them to the interview their original qualification certificates plus a copy, which must be verified against the originals and forwarded to HR Services.

11.4 The purpose of collecting the above documents on the interview day is to ensure that any offer of employment may be expedited. If the documents are not collected or are not available, HR Services will need to make alternative arrangements, which may delay any formal offer being made.

11.5 The Chair of the panel must identify administrative support within the recruiting Department or Academy to meet and greet candidates on the day of the interview and to collect and photocopy the appropriate documentation. HR Services will provide the Chair of the panel with a checklist of required documentation in the interview pack. Guidance on appropriate documentation to be checked as confirmation of the right to work in the UK can be obtained from the Company Director or HR Services. Right to work documents should also be verified and signed by the interviewer to confirm that the originals have been seen.

12. Chair’s Actions after Interview

12.1 Following interviews, the Chair of the panel/recruiting manager may make a verbal conditional offer of appointment to the successful candidate. It must be made clear that the offer is subject to completion of our pre-employment checks as follows:

- receipt of references which are satisfactory to us
- evidence of essential qualifications
- confirmation of right to work in the UK

12.2 HR Services should then be notified of the outcome and the successful candidate’s documents returned together with all of the recruitment documents to HR Services including:

- Verified copies of the candidates’ qualifications
- Verified copies evidencing the right to work in the UK
Failure to provide any of these documents could delay the process.

12.3 Where a particular vacancy cannot be filled by an individual from within the EEA, the offer may also be subject a Certificate of Sponsorship being issued under the Points Based Immigration Scheme and leave to remain in the UK being granted. If you are looking to offer the role to someone who does not have the right to work and remain in the UK then you must liaise with HR Services prior to any verbal conditional offer being made.

12.4 Where a CRB disclosure is required, an offer of employment will be contingent upon a satisfactory CRB disclosure being received. HR Services will advise where appropriate.

12.5 It must be made clear to the candidate that they should not resign their current position and that we will only proceed to a formal offer of employment if all of the above pre-employment checks are satisfactory to us.

12.6 Although you may wish to explore the successful candidate’s availability to start work e.g. notice period, it is not appropriate to agree a potential start date at this stage.

12.7 The successful candidate must not be allowed to start work in advance of all the pre-employment requirements being met. Please note full pre-employment checks will be required for Hourly Paid Trainers who are offered a full-time or fractional appointment.

12.8 Any unsuccessful internal candidates must be contacted by the Chair of the panel (or some other nominated member of the selection panel) to confirm the decision and provide feedback. This should be by telephone or by face-to-face. Once they have been informed please update HR Services.

12.9 The unsuccessful candidate documents should be disposed of in confidential shredding.

13. Salary

13.1 On appointment the successful candidate will normally be placed on the first point of the advertised salary range for the job.

13.2 There may be situations where it is appropriate for the successful candidate to be placed on a higher salary point e.g. job related experience. In such cases it will be for the Chair of the panel (in liaison with the budget holder) to decide the appropriate starting salary and put forward the appropriate justification.

14. Actions after Interview

14.1 Unsuccessful external candidates will be informed of the outcome by email issued by the Head of Department usually within 5 working days of receipt of the interview outcome.

14.2 Confirmation of the conditional offer of employment will be sent to the successful candidate by the Head of Department or HR Services normally within 3 working days; unless previously
obtained, references will be sought by HR Services using a pro-forma. The receipt of satisfactory references for the last two years of employment or last two employers is the normal requirement.

15. Formal Offer of Employment

15.1 When all pre-employment conditions have been met, HR Services will email the recruiting manager confirming that this is the case and will forward copies of the references to them to determine that they are satisfactory.

15.2 It is the recruiting manager’s responsibility to confirm by a reply email to HR Services whether references received are satisfactory and whether a formal offer of employment should be made.

15.3 Advice should be sought from HR Services if there are any concerns about the content of references or in the event that there are omissions on the reference. References should always be checked to ensure that:

- questions have been answered unambiguously – omissions should be followed up
- employment dates match those listed on the application form – discrepancies should be followed up and clarified

15.4 The recruiting manager will then agree a start date with the candidate and arrangements for the first day of work and then forward these details to HR Services by e-mail.

15.5 Once HR Services have been notified by the recruiting manager that a formal offer of employment can be made, paperwork will be sent to the candidate within 3 working days.

16. Induction

16.1 Once an appointment is made, the recruiting manager must ensure practical arrangements for the new member of staff are organised before their arrival such as their workspace.

16.2 HR Services will request a staff ID card on receipt of a passport-sized or digital photograph from the candidate.

16.3 The recruiting manager should also ensure a local induction programme is planned for the new member of staff in readiness for their first day. This should incorporate standard information/activities which are common to all staff within the department, plus elements which are specific to the role.

16.4 All new starters must receive the Employee Handbook

17. Review of Policy & Procedure
17.1 This procedure is subject to review in the light of relevant developments in legislation and employment practice. We reserve the right to amend the procedure from time to time at our discretion.