



# Recruitment Policy

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# Recruitment Policy

## 1. Introduction

Every Manager recognises that people are our most important asset. Selecting the right person for a job is, therefore, essential - the quality of our services depends on it. Any mistake is both costly and disruptive. However, Managers often describe the recruitment and selection process as somewhat hit and miss. True, it will never be an exact science, the human resource is too unpredictable. Despite the emergence of methods such as psychometric testing, no-one will ever make a performance prediction which is 100% accurate. However, good training and thorough preparation do minimise any uncertainty. Moreover, anti-discrimination legislation now demands high standards of recruitment practice and justifiable decisions. This policy, therefore, provides a framework to ensure that all the Authority's recruitment is handled with consistency, fairness and as effectively as possible. The HR Department will offer the support and advice required by Managers throughout the process and will be responsible for monitoring the policy to ensure that high standards are maintained.

## 2. Obtain Permission to Fill Vacancy

2.1 When a vacancy arises, assess the needs of the section/department:-

Have the requirements of the post changed; or are they likely to change?

2.2 You will need to seek permission from Management Board to fill a vacancy which is on the Council's Establishment List. If there is an urgent need to advertise a vacancy prior to the next Management Board meeting the Director of Resources can confirm whether this can go ahead. The HR Manager will assist you if this is the case. You should always discuss the filling of vacancies with the HR Department before you proceed to advertise.

2.3 No appointment shall be made without open competition, even where an individual has been "acting up". This requirement may be waived for casual appointments and temporary cover only.

## 3. Define your Requirements

3.1 You should identify the selection panel for the appointment as soon as possible and fully involve them in planning the recruitment and selection exercise. Careful planning is essential if the vacancy is to be filled in a timely manner and it is crucial that those involved in the selection process are given ample opportunity to assist the preparation of the advert, job description, person specification, job advertisement and shortlisting. Such involvement promotes consistency throughout the process. It will usually be appropriate for a representative of the HR Department to be involved at this early stage in the process. Pass details of the selection panel to the HR Department when you reach stage 4.2 below.

3.2 Once your requirements have been determined, these should be clearly defined by producing a job description and a person specification.

3.3 A JOB DESCRIPTION should describe the tasks and responsibilities in simple, clear and concise terms, specifying:

- Job Title.
- Department/Section.
- Grade (plus any allowance).
- To whom/for whom responsible.
- Main purpose of job (one or two sentences).
- Key responsibilities.

- Date of Issue.
- Variation Clause.

3.4 A PERSON SPECIFICATION profiles the personal skills, knowledge and experience to be sought.

It should specify:-

- Education level required
- Experience gained
- Membership of Professional Bodies (if applicable)
- Any other special requirements (a particular skill, quality or willingness to meet a requirement such as shift working).
- Whether there is an English Speaking requirement for the postholder (see section 12 for further details)

3.5 Defining your requirements forms a basis for fair and objective recruitment procedures, which are our legal obligation. The job description and person specification are working documents which should assist you in shortlisting and selection. In addition they inform potential applicants and promote self-selection. Templates are available on the Intranet under HR Procedures and General Information for staff.

## 4. Advertisement

4.1 The key duties and requirements for the post are now identified and form the basis of the advertisement. This should specify:-

- Job Title, department/section; salary range, including any allowances.
- The work of the section/department (one or two sentences).
- Main duties of the post.
- Key requirements for the post (skills, experience, qualifications, English Speaking requirement if appropriate – see Section 12).
- Contact for an application form/pack.
- Closing date.

Remember, the aim is for quality not quantity of applicants - be clear and specific about your requirements. A template ADVERT is available on the Intranet under HR Procedures and General Information for staff.

4.2 Pass the advert, job description and person specification to the HR Department, together with details of the selection panel (see above) indicate who the Chair of the Panel will be and state where and when the advertisement should appear. HR will send you a 'Vacancy Advertisement Request Form' detailing all of the information required to advertise the position - this should be completed and returned. Omission of any information may delay advertisement.

4.3 All vacancies for posts on Scale 1-2 will be assessed to determine whether the post can be advertised as an apprenticeship. The post will be advertised internally and externally simultaneously on the basis that only a small minority of existing staff will be interested in a sideways move at this entry grade level. Vacancies above Scale 1-2 will be advertised internally only in the first instance. Staff on the permanent establishment of the Council, members of the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme and temporary employees with a minimum of 12 months continuous service with the Council by the date of their application, will be allowed to apply at this stage of the process. All advertisements will include the wording "*The Council welcomes applications from people with disabilities and from the minority ethnic community who are underrepresented within our workforce.*"

*Being Disability Confident demonstrates that the Council is committed to the recruitment and retention of disabled people. The Council is recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and will guarantee an interview to all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for the job." (as permitted by legislation).*

4.4 All external vacancies will appear in the Job Centre, the Job Centre online 'Find a Job' and Local Government 'Jobs Go Public' website.

### 5. Application forms

5.1 On receipt of each application form a unique reference number will be allocated sequentially. This will improve control over application forms and enable the HR Department to track that all applications have been dealt with and none misplaced.

5.2 Application forms and information packs will be issued by the HR Department. Following the closing date, a vacancy file consisting of:-

Job description, person specification, advertisement

Completed application forms will be forwarded to the Chair of the selection panel for shortlisting.

### 6. Shortlisting

6.1 You will have already identified the established selection criteria for the post (paragraph 3.4 above). Once the selection panel have received all of the application forms for a particular vacancy they need to systematically mark each candidate against the essential and desirable criteria using the standard record form provided (**see Appendix 1**).

6.2 This record form provides the main evidence that the selection panel has complied with proper recruitment and selection practices. It must be completed and forwarded to the HR Department before candidates are notified of selection.

6.3 Failure to be specific and display objectivity will place the Authority in a weak position in the event of a complaint to an Employment Tribunal.

6.4 The shortlist scoring sheet and vacancy file should be returned to the HR Department, together with the date(s), time and location of interviews. The HR Department will:-

- Draw up a timetable.
- Notify candidates.
- Send an interview pack to each member of the panel at least three days in advance.

6.5 A Manager with appropriate administrative support may, in some circumstances, wish to carry out this stage within their Department. In such cases, the Manager as a minimum must contact the HR Department for copies of the standard correspondence and to provide details of the shortlisting score sheet for monitoring purposes.

### 7. Interviewing Arrangements

7.1 Any candidate who believes they have been unfairly discriminated against at any stage has the right to complain to an Employment Tribunal. Therefore, where any Manager on an interview panel does not have appropriate training or experience, the HR Manager or HR Officer must be present.

7.2 No Manager should undertake the interviewing of applicants alone.

7.3 A record of each interview must be kept and a scoring sheet has been devised for this purpose (**see Appendix 2**). This must be completed for every interview.

7.4 Members of the Council have the right to be involved in appointments at Deputy Chief Officer grade and above. Standing Committees will determine for which of these appointments it is appropriate for Members to be involved and the number of Members on the interview panel. (Minute No. 8 Personnel Sub-Committee, 21st July, 1992).

7.5 Managers are encouraged to consider additional selection methods (testing, group exercises etc.) and should seek the advice of the HR Department accordingly.

7.6 Candidates should receive at least one week's notice of interview wherever possible.

7.7 The HR Department will request to see any certificates of qualifications essential to the post prior to appointment.

7.8 Interview expense claim forms should be collected and passed to the HR Department for payment.

7.9 Interviewers should read the advisory note at **Appendix 3** with regard to ensuring Equality and Diversity during the interview process.

### 8. Appointment

8.1 Reasons for not selecting a candidate should be recorded in the section on the scoring sheet. Unsuccessful candidates may request information on the reasons for their non-selection.

8.2 The HR Department should be notified of the selection decision, so that references and other pre-employment checks may be made. A formal offer may be made only on receipt of all pre-employment checks and no provisional offers of employment may be made prior to this.

8.3 The vacancy file, containing all applications and scoring sheets for the interview, should be returned to the HR Department who will write out to unsuccessful candidates and retain all information for a period of six months.

8.4 Again, a Manager with appropriate administrative support may wish to carry out the above within their Department. A copy of the standard correspondence must be obtained from the HR Department, and the interview score sheet passed to them for monitoring purposes. In all cases, the formal written offer must be issued by the HR Department.

### 9. Applicants with a Disability

9.1 The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 abolished the registration scheme for disabled people and in 2010 the Equality Act came into place which gives a person has a right to self-identify themselves as a person with a disability.

9.2 For recruitment purposes the onus is on applicants to inform us if they feel they have a disability which is relevant to their application and give details of any specific requirement they may have to enable them to attend an interview.

9.3 We are required to make the necessary arrangements/adjustments wherever possible. Declarations by applicants about disabilities appear on the tear-off equality information sheet at the back of the application form. This sheet is removed before application forms are forwarded to the shortlisting panel. It will be the responsibility of the HR Department to liaise with applicants with a disability to ensure that due consideration is given to their stated requirements.

### 10. Employment Department Schemes

When recruiting, Managers should also consider whether it is appropriate to make use of Employment Department schemes which offer financial incentives to employers to take on those who have been out of work for a specified period.

## 11. Disability Confident Employer – Government Scheme

The Disability Confident Scheme aims to help employers successfully employ and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. Being Disability Confident demonstrates that the Council is committed to the recruitment and retention of disabled people. The Council is recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and maintains this status by completing a self-assessment on a regular basis. The Disability Confident Employer badge will be used on all job advertisements and informs employees and potential employees that the Council has a positive approach to employing disabled people.

## 12. English Language Requirement for Public Sector Workers

12.1 With effect from 21st November 2016, Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 created a duty to ensure that all public authority staff working in customer-facing roles speak fluent English or Welsh to an appropriate standard. The government code of practice sets out what Authorities need to take into account in order to comply with this new duty.

12.2 Customer-facing Roles - Members of staff who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are required to speak to members of the public in English (**face to face or telephone conversations**) are considered as working in a customer-facing role.

When determining whether a role is customer-facing or not, Managers should consider the following aspects of the work involved:

- is there a business need for interaction with the public;
- what is the frequency and form of this interaction;
- what is the level of service quality and responsiveness expected by the public;
- what is the proportion of the role which would require spoken interaction with members of the public;
- what is the nature of the role; and
- is English the primary language required for the role?

Managers should liaise with the HR Department to ensure consistency.

12.3 If it is determined that a role is customer-facing, Managers should then consider the nature and extent of the spoken communication necessary for effective performance. The following factors may be relevant when considering the standard required:

- the frequency of spoken interaction;
- the topic of spoken interaction;
- whether the communication is likely to include technical, profession-specific or specialist vocabulary;
- the typical duration of spoken interaction;
- whether the communication is repeated in or supplemented by, written material provided to customers; and
- the significance of the spoken interaction for service delivery.

The level of fluency required must however be matched to the demands of the role in question to ensure a proportionate approach to the fluency duty.

12.4 Level of Language Proficiency - Managers must satisfy themselves that an individual has the necessary level of fluency appropriate for the role they will be undertaking. Fluency relates to a person's language proficiency and their ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary. In the context of a customer-facing role, a person should be able to choose the right kind of vocabulary for the situation at hand without a great deal of hesitation. They should listen to their customer and understand their needs. They

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should tailor their approach to each conversation appropriate to their customer, responding clearly with fine shades of meaning, even in complex situations.

Fluency does not relate to regional or international accents, dialects, speech impediments or the tone of conversations.

Description	Linguistic Fluency
Threshold or intermediate	<p>Can exploit a wide range of simple language flexibly to express much of what they want.</p> <p>Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and verbal planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.</p>
Vantage or upper intermediate	<p>Can adjust to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation.</p> <p>Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although they can be hesitant as they search for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.</p>
Effective operational proficiency or advanced	<p>Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.</p>
Mastery or proficiency	<p>Can express themselves spontaneously at length with a natural conversational flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the customer is hardly aware of it.</p>

Further guidance can be sought from the HR Department.

12.5 Recruitment Documentation/Interview - If it is determined that a post is customer facing and has a particular standard of spoken English necessary for the role, applicants must be informed of this throughout the process. Adverts and Person Specifications must include the requirement along the lines of:

*The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide information\*/advice\*/instruction\* in accurate spoken English is essential for the post.*

The description and example of linguistic fluency should then be detailed in the Person Specification and used to assess following interview.

## 13. Monitoring

13.1 Responsibility for monitoring this policy and procedure rests with the HR Department. The HR Manager may, therefore, request involvement at any stage of the recruitment and selection process, for any vacancy.

13.2 Within the procedure, each Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that their decisions are made in accordance with best practice.

13.3 The HR Department will maintain a database of all recruitment and selection activity for monitoring purposes.

**Updated March 2015**

EIA August 2016

Updated December 2016

Updated July 2017

Updated July 2018

**Appendix 1**

**RECRUITMENT POLICY - SHORTLISTING PRO FORMA**

VACANCY \_\_\_\_\_ SHORTLISTING PANEL \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Criteria 1 -----	Criteria 2 -----	Criteria 3 -----	Criteria 4 -----	Rejection Reason	Comment

Rejection Reason Code	Description
NE	Insufficient Experience
NI	Insufficient Qualifications
NQ	Inadequate Qualifications
NO	Other Specified Reason

**Notes**

Each member of the selection panel should be involved in shortlisting and interviewing stages  
 Each member’s views should be recorded on a copy of this form Criteria identified on the Person Specification should be used  
 Shortlist should be passed to HR Department prior to interviewing  
 Interview results should be recorded by each panel member on an ‘Interview Pro-forma’

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2**

**INTERVIEW PRO FORMA**

**POST:**

**DEPARTMENT:**

**DATE OF INTERVIEW:**

**PANEL MEMBERS:**

CANDIDATE:	Appearance / Speech	Disposition	P Spec Criteria .....	TOTAL SCORE	Reason for Rejection				

**SCORING:**

- 1 = Unsatisfactory criteria match
- 2 = Satisfactory criteria match
- 3 = More than satisfactory criteria match
- 4 = Far exceeds criteria

**NOTES:**

1. Each Panel Member to complete an interview pro forma.
2. Ensure all essential criteria are assessed.
3. A candidate must achieve a score of at least 2 for all essential criteria to be considered for appointment.
4. Disposition can best be described as temperament, inclination or natural tendencies. Score according to requirements of position.
5. Please insert one of the following reasons for rejection:
  - IE Experience did not match requirements/successful candidate
  - IS Skills/knowledge did not match requirements/successful candidate
  - ID Disposition did not match requirements/successful candidate
  - IO Other reason – please specify

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 3 – Equality and Diversity Note**

**What you can ask a job candidate about their disability and health**

1. You CANNOT ask questions about disability and health on an application form or during an interview before the offer of a job has been made, unless it relates to an intrinsic part of the job.
2. You CANNOT reject a candidate with a disability just because they're disabled because that would be unlawful disability discrimination. You need to be sure that they can't do the job before you reject them on that basis.
3. You can ask a job applicant relevant questions about their disability and health before you interview then, if or when you interview and before deciding whether to give them a job, in order to find out whether they can do something essential to the job.
4. You can also ask a job applicant about their disability and health, if you want to:
  - a. Find out whether they are able to take part in the application / selection process or need special arrangements or assistance (reasonable adjustments).
  - b. Monitor the diversity of applicants for jobs you advertise.
  - c. Support positive action for disabled people.
  - d. Recruit a person with a particular disability.