



Recruitment policy	
Reference: GN18	Effective date: 1 June 2012
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Introduction

The recruitment and selection process is of paramount importance in order to recruit staff with the necessary skills and attributes to enable the organisation to fulfil its aims and objectives. This recruitment policy and procedures aims to provide clear guidance to staff in relation to both the selection and appointment of staff. This policy promotes and supports good practice for those with responsibility for recruitment.

Policy

This policy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Recruit staff with the appropriate skills, in order to meet the organisation's current and future needs.
- To ensure that staff appointed to posts working with children or vulnerable adults are safe and qualified to carry out such duties.
- Work to a fair and effective recruitment procedure, which is consistent with employment legislation and the organisation's equality and diversity policy.

Internal candidates or others personally known to the interview panel must be treated in the same way as all other candidates. Roles that work directly with children or vulnerable adults are subject to the additional requirements of the safe recruitment policy (GN18a) that should be read alongside this general policy.

Considerations

Justification for Recruitment

Before recruitment begins, the following will be given consideration:

- ◆ Is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- ◆ Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- ◆ Is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- ◆ Could the work be accommodated in other ways?
- ◆ Are there any staff 'at risk' of redundancy? Staff at risk within the organisation must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to an external / internal advertisement being placed.

Filling the Vacancy

In order for the recruitment process to commence the recruiting manager must gain authorisation from the Office Manager and complete the appropriate documentation. The following documentation must be completed for recruitment to all posts:

- ◆ Job description
- ◆ Person specification



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Advertising

It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised, both internally within the organisation, as well as externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the prerequisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only. Staff who have been identified to be at risk of redundancy should be considered for vacant posts prior to advertisement if they meet all the essential criteria of the vacancy.

Enquiries

All enquirers will receive an information pack detailing the requirements of the post. Wherever possible, this will be provided in electronic format and in alternative formats where requested.

Selection

Shortlisting

Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet all the essential criteria defined in the person specification. If the number of candidates meeting the essential criteria is excessive, further selection must be undertaken utilising the desirable criteria to achieve a workable shortlist (suggest no more than 6).

Candidate's personal information and equality and diversity monitoring forms are separated from the application forms prior to the shortlisting process. The shortlisting panel will not have access to this information. Shortlisting must be undertaken by at least two individuals who are briefed about the recruitment process and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process.

Interviewing

The interview must be conducted by a panel, the suggested composition of which is detailed in the procedures. All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. Follow-up questions may be asked in response to candidate's answers.

Skills assessment

As part of the selection process the organisation may wish candidates to partake in a series of skills tests. These tests must be directly related to the role in question and must be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates must be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for interview.

Appointment

The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view from the formal interview panel formed by the scored interview sheets. In the case of a tied score the recruiting panel will vote for the candidate they feel is more suitable – if the panel think that they need more information to make a decision, candidates may be invited back for a second interview.



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A formal offer of appointment is to be made and confirmed in writing and will be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks, such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), if applicable to the post.

Confidentiality

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality and in line with the GN11 Data Protection and Information Management policy.

Documentation

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the interview panel to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them (please note that applications are retained for 6 months only) as part of the record of the interview.

Feedback

Feedback will be provided by a member of the interview panel or the Office Manager at the request of any applicant at any stage of the recruitment process.

Monitoring

For equality and diversity purposes, recruitment statistics are monitored on a yearly basis by gender, ethnicity, disability, age and by department and job type. This information is analysed to identify any positive action required to ensure a diverse range of applicants.

Recruitment Procedure

Introduction

This document details the procedures required to undertake the recruitment and selection process to completion. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, organisational policy and good practice. The Office Manager will be involved at all stages with the recruitment process and will be able to offer any help and assistance needed.

Pre-advertisement

Before a post is advertised the following documentation must be completed:

- Advert text
- Job description
- Person specification

The main points to note about these documents are as follows:



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Advert Text

The text for the advert should be drafted with the Office Manager who is responsible for placing the advert. If the post will be working directly with children or vulnerable adults this should be stated clearly in the advert and reference should be made to the eligibility checks that will be made.

The choice of where to advertise is determined in consultation with the Office Manager. If an individual manager has a specific request which is deemed to be additional to any usual advertising requirement, this can be considered.

Consideration should be given to the timing of placing adverts to ensure maximum benefit. For example, there are periods in the year when advertising would be less effective, eg Bank Holidays, Christmas. Consideration also needs to be given to advert 'closing' dates and the publication and distribution dates of any print media used.

The closing date must allow candidates sufficient time in which to prepare and submit their applications. Ideally closing dates must never be less than one week after the date of advertisement, or more than three weeks. Statutory or concessionary holidays should be taken into account when determining closing dates.

It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised both internally and externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the prerequisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only. Staff who have been identified to be at risk of redundancy may be considered for vacant posts prior to advertisement if they meet all the essential criteria of the vacancy.

Job Description

A Job Description defines the purpose, scope and the principal duties and responsibilities of a particular role. It provides a framework which outlines the expectations; both for the employee and the employer, and forms part of the working agreement, but is not in itself contractually binding.

The key elements normally included are:

- Identifying factors: Job title, team and line manager.
- Purpose: One or two short sentences to summarise the overall purpose of the job.
- Main responsibilities: A description of the job, generally eight to twelve short sentences (bullet points). The intention is to provide an outline of the job, not a task list. Responsibilities should be listed in order of importance.

Person Specification

The purpose of a person specification is to provide criteria against which the recruitment of candidates will be carried out objectively in line with equality and diversity policy. It defines both essential and desirable criteria. The person specification should be based upon the job description. To assist in the drafting of a person specification and to ensure consistency, reference should be made to the guidelines.

- Essential criteria: Requirements without which a candidate is unlikely to be offered an interview.
- Desirable criteria: Requirements which enhance the candidate's application or basis for consideration and may facilitate more detailed shortlisting for interview.



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The criteria required of the ideal candidate and the format of the person specification may vary, but typically could include:

Qualifications:	Only where considered appropriate and specific to a profession or trade.
Experience:	Either in the type of role outlined in the job description, or in a preparatory role.
Skills relevant to the post:	Any specific skills that required
Special requirements:	Will be specific to the job, eg ability to lift heavy weights, ability to work with specific client groups.

The interview panel

The interview panel will be selected from staff with the skills, experience to judge the suitability of candidates for the role and the relationship they are likely to have with the post holder. The panel will usually include the line manager of the post holder. For senior appointments (Grades E, F) a member of the board of trustees should be involved in either shortlisting or interviewing.

Procedure for selecting candidates

It is the organisation's policy that all applications for roles must be made by filling out the application form. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted as an application. This is made clear on the job advertisement.

Receipt of applications

Receipt of applications will not be acknowledged to individual applicants. All applications will be logged and referenced by the Office Manager or delegated member of staff. Personal data and equality and diversity monitoring forms will be separated from the application forms with the information recorded and monitored anonymously. In accordance with the Data Protection policy, personal data (such as application forms and CV's) is shared only with those that need to know involved in the recruitment process.

Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

Shortlisting

The Office Manager will make appropriate arrangements for shortlisting which will be undertaken by at least two members of the panel.

The shortlisting should be undertaken against the information compiled on the job description and the person specification. It is important to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the way in which shortlisting is undertaken. Greater weight may be given to experience demonstrated against some of the criteria than others. Shortlisting records will be kept for 6 months alongside applications in order to provide feedback if requested and for equal opportunities monitoring.



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Interviewing

Following shortlisting, selected applicants will be invited for interview by the Office Manager. The purpose of an interview is to facilitate the selection of the most suitable candidate for the post, although it should be recognised that this is only one part of the selection process.

Invitations to Interview

Candidates should be given at least one week's notice of an interview date. This may be through the interview date being stated in the advertisement. The invitation should include the details of any skills assessments and related preparatory work that they will be required to undertake prior to or as part of the recruitment process. Candidates should also be asked to bring with them satisfactory evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK (original documents must be checked and copied) and the originals of any qualifications required for the role. The candidates should also be asked whether any reasonable adjustments are to be made for the interview.

Conduct of the interview

All interviewers will be offered training in Equalities and interviewing techniques, wherever possible. If interviewing for either the Children and Family services or Health and social care departments at least one person on the panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

When conducting interviews, every member of the panel completes a scoring sheet and must make notes of questions asked and answers given. This will provide feedback and evidence of why the candidates have been selected or rejected. These notes must be signed and given to the Office Manager. Just as with shortlisting, these notes should be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants will normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the interview.

All candidates must be asked the same questions and the questions must be relevant to the role applied for. All panel members must be clear about the skills and aptitudes that are being probed by each question. Care must be taken to avoid questions which are discriminatory.

For each panel a lead or chair panel member should be appointed. As well as leading the process the following are the responsibilities of the chair:

- Advise candidates what happens next;
- Advise candidates that all employment is offered subject to satisfactory references and other checks including DBS checks if appropriate to the role;
- Check whether candidates require a work permit and seek evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. This must be asked of every candidate. If there is doubt about the validity of the evidence supplied, advice should be sought from the Office Manager.

It is important that interviews are conducted in a courteous and professional manner, since a badly managed and conducted interview could lead to legal action against the potential employer or the individual(s) involved in the interview. It is important that candidates leave with a positive impression of the organisation.



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Skills tests

Skill tests or other activity that forms part of the selection process must be measurable against objective criteria. Notes of the outcome of the tests should be kept as part of the recruitment process.

Under the General Data Protection Regulations applicants will normally be entitled to have access to these notes if a specific request is made.

The Choice of Candidate

The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view from the formal interview panel formed by the scored interview sheets, the application form and any tests undertaken. In the case of a tied score the recruiting panel will vote for the candidate they feel is more suitable – if the panel think that they need more information to make a decision candidates may be invited back for a second interview.

If the candidate selected does not take up the appointment, any decision to offer the appointment to the second choice applicant must be taken by the whole panel. Before the panel disbands it should agree, if possible, on the reserve name(s).

Post-selection administration

Offer of Employment

An offer of employment will be made by the Office Manager. It must be made clear, however, that the offer is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of references, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks. A verbal offer of employment must be followed up in writing. Only when all of the above have been obtained and cleared is the offer of employment legally binding.

On verbal acceptance of the post the Office Manager will issue the offer letter, contract and other relevant documents within 5 working days.

Unsuccessful candidates must be notified as early as possible of the outcome of their interview by the chair of the panel or the Office Manager. Ideally this should be no more than three working days after the successful candidate has confirmed their acceptance of the post.

References

The Office Manager will take up the references from the application form. Employment references should be obtained from at least the last or current employer, references can be obtained in writing either by letter or email. This will be followed up by a telephone conversation with the referee. The questions and information gleaned from the reference must be relevant to the aspects of the post in question eg where cash handling is involved in a post, then the honesty of the prospective employee must be discussed.

All references for positions within the Children and Family Services will be taken BEFORE the interview.

If the successful candidate is an internal one the taking up of references may be 'waived' or an internal reference may be sought.



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Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

As a registered body with the Disclosure and Barring Service, the organisation is obliged to comply with the Code of Practice as published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers>). The Code of Practice is intended to ensure that disclosure information is not used to unfairly discriminate against the subject of the disclosure (on the basis of convictions or other defaults revealed) and that the handling and storage of Disclosed information is dealt with in an appropriate and confidential manner.

The obligations of the Code require the organisation to have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and a policy on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information. Copies of both policies are available on request.

Under the code, before withdrawing an offer of employment based on the Disclosure information, the matter should be discussed with the applicant.

All permanent staff roles within Windmill Hill City Farm are subject to an enhanced DBS check due to the nature of the services provided within the organisation to children and vulnerable adults. In addition, those roles working directly with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to checking against the relevant barred lists.

Sessional workers whose roles are in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults are subject to full checks. For sessional workers in other areas we will accept DBS checks undertaken by other providers so long as they are no more than 3 months old.

Regular volunteers or those in contact with children or vulnerable adults are all subject to DBS checks. We will accept DBS checks undertaken by other providers so long as they are no more than 3 months old.

From 1 Dec 2012 CRB and ISA merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service. Administrative processes remained the same (see <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/vetting-barring-scheme/>). Windmill Hill City Farm uses the Capita Recruitment Vetting Service (CVRS PO Box 4324, Sheffield, S1 9EW, www.capitarvs.co.uk) to undertake the checks.

Alternative recruitment procedure

From time-to-time the organisation experiences staff shortages and difficulties in filling vacancies due to local skills shortages. At these times the timescales of our recruitment cycle can exacerbate the issue, eg a candidate will have found work before we have shortlisted. Under these circumstances we may invoke an alternative recruitment procedure as outlined below.

Sessional posts

The process will be carried out following the normal recruitment process except that a rolling advert will be used such that there will be no end date and it will be advertised for as long as it takes to fill the post. In order to maintain a fair process the applications will be prepared by removing the candidates contact details before handing over to the manager for shortlisting. When a suitable candidate comes in, the line manager will be able to short list the application immediately and if suitable the manager can contact the candidate and invite them to interview.



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During the interview they will need to answer the prepared questions which will be scored as before and added to the recruitment documents. If the manager is happy then we can offer them the contract. Once we have filled position the advert will be cancelled.

Permanent posts

The process will be carried out following the normal recruitment process except that the manager will be able to shortlist as applications come in. In order to maintain a fair process the applications will be prepared by removing the candidates contact details before handing over to the manager for shortlisting. If there is a person of interest then the manager will be able to contact the candidate before the deadline to establish an interest and keep them “warm” for the job.

Where a strong candidate emerges we can review the recruitment timescale with a view to proceeding ahead of the deadline set. This decision will lie with the Office Manager and manager of the post to be recruited.

CEO and Senior Manager positions (grades E and F) will not be recruited under alternative procedures.