

November 2015

HR Professional Service

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE



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I. Introduction

I.1 The purpose of this procedure is to:

- Ensure an open, fair and consistent approach to recruitment and selection
- To ensure that recruitment is on merit
- To assist in attracting the best people to work for Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) To recruit within the Royal Borough's Equalities and Diversity policy and the requirements of the law
- To ensure that timely and cost-effective recruitment processes are used
- To maintain and enhance the image of the Council and local government generally as a good employer
- To support succession planning and talent management

I.2 Line managers play a key role in recruitment and selection. More specifically managers are expected to:

- Work with HR to ensure that an effective recruitment process is implemented
- Plan the recruitment process to ensure it is as timely and cost-effective as possible
- Conduct recruitment in an objective, impartial way, free from discrimination

I.3 Recruiting managers that are recruiting roles that involve working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, or roles in which the duties will involve access to sensitive information relating to children, young people or vulnerable adults, must refer and adhere to the requirements of [Safer Recruitment](#) – welfare of children and young people.

I.5 The procedure applies to all permanent and temporary Royal Borough vacancies excluding Chief Officer vacancies which are subject to a separate chief officer appointments process.

I.6 For management positions, recruiting managers must also refer to the Royal Borough's [Management Standards](#) which can be found within the guidance pages attached to the Recruitment & Selection Policy.

2. Reviewing the job description and person specification

2.1 Recruiting managers should review the [job description](#) and [person specification](#) as soon as the current post holder gives their notice to ensure it is up to date and reflects what will be required in the post in future. If the content of the job description is changed, managers should contact HR to discuss whether there has been significant change to warrant a job evaluation exercise. It is critical that the person specification is reviewed

especially where the post is likely to be hard to fill or likely to attract high numbers of applicants.

- 2.2 Recruiting managers must also ensure that sickness absence is not referred to within this documentation as a selection criteria. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, employers are prevented from referring to sickness absence as a selection criteria and specific years experience required. Further information on this point can be found in the management guidance which accompanies this policy. See Reviewing job descriptions and person specifications also [Job description template](#) and [person specification](#)
- 2.3 Recruiting managers should also refer to the Councils [Management Standards](#) for further information on the recruitment of management positions. Recruiting managers should ensure that recruitment documentation is consistent with requirements underpinning these standards as this will form the basis of the ongoing performance management of staff who hold management positions. See [Embedding the Management Standards into the recruitment process](#).
- 2.4 It is essential to include whether a post requires a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check on the Job Description and Person Specification. To ensure that we are not illegally asking for a DBS, please refer to the governments guidance on the level of DBS required, ie Standard, Enhanced or not applicable.

3. Planning the recruitment process

- 3.1 Successful recruitment depends on effective working with the OD and Talent, Organisational Maintenance and HR Admin Teams. Managers will only get a timely and efficient recruitment process with a planned approach, effective liaison and agreement on some key dates well in advance.
The first step in all types of recruitment requires managers to complete the [Request to Recruit Form](#), this should then be sent to the relevant finance officer for them to make comments on budget availability. Once comments are received back from finance the Request to Recruit form should be sent to the Director for approval. When signed by their respective Director the [Request to Recruit Form](#), should be passed by recruiting managers to the organisational maintenance team so that the role is set up on iTrent with the correct information. During this stage, managers particularly need to focus on agreeing the selection panel, dates for the main stages and diarise closing dates, short-listing and interview dates.
- 3.2 Different types of vacancies may require different approaches to ensure effective recruitment and selection. See [Planning high volume recruitment](#) and [Planning senior or hard to fill recruitment](#).
- 3.3 Managers who have reserve candidates from a previous recruitment exercise for an identical role in the last 12 months can go straight to conditional job offer provided no changes to the job have been made. Managers should check with the applicant if they are still interested in the position and are available to fill the vacancy, prior to beginning the

recruitment process. If this is an additional post, a new request to recruit form must be signed and set up with organisational maintenance. See section 8 for procedure regarding reserve candidates.

- 3.4 The request to recruit form must be completed for all vacancies including permanent, fixed term and agency roles (including agency extensions). After the Director approves the request to recruit form should be sent to Organisational maintenance for permanent and fixed term roles, before beginning the recruitment process and agency requests or extensions must go to Sarah Thompson, who manages the agency contract.
- 3.5 Finance comments are required on all request to recruit forms and they must be sent to the generic email address for the Directorate as shown on the Request to Recruit form.

4. Redeployment

- 4.1 Vacancies must first be considered for their suitability for re-deployees; if there are no suitable matches the vacancy can be released for advertising. The recruitment process can be put on hold at any point up to conditional offer if new re-deployees are matched against the vacancy. See details of the [Redeployment procedure](#) for more information.

5 Temporary vacancies

- 5.1 Temporary vacancies **including most secondments** are normally advertised and filled in accordance with the recruitment and selection procedure. Existing agency staff are also eligible to apply for internal vacancies.
- 5.2 Where an existing employee is appointed, they must obtain the agreement of their Chief Officer to be released from their permanent post. Chief Officers should not unreasonably refuse requests for temporary appointments.
- 5.3 If an internal applicant is offered a temporary appointment they normally have the right to return to their substantive post at the termination of their temporary post or earlier by giving one month's notice to both the donor and host sections/departments (if different). Therefore the employee's substantive post should not be filled on a permanent basis, unless the employee notifies the department, in writing, that she/he does not intend to return.
- 5.4 These employees must be kept informed about any changes in their previous workplace that may affect their substantive post e.g. any proposed restructure and they must be consulted as appropriate. Contact should be maintained between the employee and the previous workplace in respect of other important issues, e.g. changes in personnel.
- 5.5 Temporary contracts should only be renewed or extended in consultation with the line manager of the substantive postholder. If it becomes clear that there is a continuing

need for the post, the situation should be resolved by advertising the post as a permanent position in accordance with the recruitment and selection procedure.

6 Secondments

- 6.1 There may be occasions where it is necessary to temporarily second existing employees onto new projects or teams within their existing service areas (where knowledge and relevant experience of that service area is a pre-requisite). In these cases the normal recruitment and selection procedure will not apply but managers should consider ring fencing these opportunities to the relevant staff. Managers should also consider the use of supporting statements and interviews where there is interest from more than 1 employee.

7. Advertising

- 7.1 Newly created posts should not be advertised until the post has been evaluated. All vacancies can be advertised on an internal only basis or concurrently (i.e. internally and externally at the same time). In deciding which approach to take managers need to consider whether there is likely to be a suitable candidate or candidates within the authority. See guidance on [Advertising Internally or Externally](#).
- 7.2 All external vacancies are automatically advertised on the Royal Greenwich website. Advice on relevant media and other websites is available from the OD and Talent Team.
- 7.3 Managers can undertake the initial drafting of the wording of the advert or instruct the Royal Borough's advertising agency to produce an attractive and cost effective copy written advert. Managers are strongly recommended to contact the advertising agency via the recruitment lead officer to ensure a cost effective advert that will attract high quality candidates. See [Effective Advertising](#) guidance.

8. Short-listing

- 8.1 Short-listing must be objective and based only on the short-listing criteria from the person specification. Managers should not base their selection decision on prior knowledge of the candidate or assumptions made about the candidate's ability to meet the person specification criteria. All candidates with disabilities who demonstrate that they meet the minimum short-listing criteria must be shortlisted under the Royal Borough's guaranteed interview scheme. See [Group Shortlisting Form](#) and Individual Shortlisting Form
- 8.2 Candidates should not normally be short-listed if they have previously been dismissed for the reasons of misconduct from the Council's employment or have been made

voluntarily redundant or have taken early retirement (with enhancements) from the Council within the last 2 years. Any exceptions must be agreed with the relevant chief officer in conjunction with **the Head of HR**.

- 8.3 All candidates are required to state on their application form if they are related to a Royal Borough employee or elected member. If this affects any candidates whom you short-list, managers must seek permission from their chief officer to proceed with their application. Similarly any member of the interview panel should declare to the chair of the interview panel if they are related to, have a close personal relationship with or are a close friend of a short-listed candidate and may be required to withdraw from the interview panel.
- 8.4 Where qualifications are required, you must not assume that overseas qualifications are not acceptable or are not of an equal standard and must investigate further
- 8.5 All candidates who meet the short-listing criteria should go forward to the next stage (interview and/or test). If this results in an unmanageably large number of candidates a second short-listing stage may be required. See [Planning high volume recruitment](#).
- 8.6 The recruiting manager should have already agreed a date and timescale with the other recruiters for the short-listing process in order to reduce the overall time it takes to fill the vacancy and reduce the risk of losing good candidates.
- 8.7 Managers can include applications received after the closing date; this should ideally be before short-listing. Managers have discretion to accept late applications – this will primarily depend on the number of applications received. Managers cannot choose to include some and ignore other late applications. The selection panel should agree a common and consistent approach to arriving at a short-list by assessing the information supplied by candidates against the criteria on the person specification that are marked to be used for short-listing purposes. The panel must record their agreed decisions on the short-listing form which will be kept as part of the official records in relation to the recruitment process.

9. Testing

- 9.1 Test results can provide additional information to help managers make informed recruitment decisions so where appropriate managers should include an assessment exercise(s) in their selection process. The person specification should indicate, which parts of the criteria are being assessed by the test.
- 9.2 Tests should be used in one of two ways:
 - (a) To inform the interviewing process: tests can be used alongside the application form and interview to provide additional information which can be explored during the interview. Such test(s), where possible should take place before the interviews are held, allowing sufficient time for the results to be available to interviewers to evaluate before the

interview take place. If it is not possible to conduct tests before the interviews, the panel must convene to evaluate all the information to base a decision on the applicants.

- (b) For short-listing: to provide additional information where short-lists produce an unmanageable number of applicants. In this case, only some of the short-listed candidates will go forward to the interview stage

For further guidance see [Using tests and assessments](#).

10. Interviews

- 10.1 The interview panel should consist of the recruiting manager plus other relevant officers who have a good working understanding of the role and its requirements and be able to fully participate in the interview process. Within this context recruiting managers must endeavour to ensure the panel is representative of the community we serve. You must never interview alone. Interview panels should ideally consist of three interviewers although may go ahead with a minimum of two. When interviewing a candidate pool which is likely to be predominately made up of young people (e.g. entry level roles) then it would be good practice to include a young person on the panel.
- 10.2 As well as the interviewers, it is possible that Greenwich employees may attend as observers as part of their training. This should always be explained to the interviewees and the role of the observers should be made clear at the outset of the interview. Non Greenwich employees may occasionally be involved in the interview – for example, where the vacancy is a jointly-funded post. Managers should ensure that non-employees involved in recruitment are essential to the process and have appropriate experience in selection and interviewing.
- 10.3 Interview dates and times should normally be organised so that candidates have at least one week's notice of attendance and ideally be included in the candidate information when the post is advertised.
- 10.4 Individuals with disabilities may have requirements about the interview room, such as level access, seating arrangements, lighting, access to toilet facilities, the presence of a companion/advocate, or an interpreter/signer. In such cases the candidate should have alerted the Council to their requirements at the time of their application, and the planning for the interview should include ensuring suitable provision has been made for these needs. For further guidance see [Recruitment of candidates with disabilities](#).
- 10.5 It is important that the interview panel works as a team including:
- ensuring that they agree in advance the interview questions
 - probing and clarifying any issues arising from the application form for each candidate
 - deciding who will lead each area of questioning
 - agreeing core and supplementary questions
 - agree who will chair the panel, and other issues about the conduct and assessment of the interviews.
- 10.6 Each interviewer should use an interview assessment form to make notes on each candidate during the interview before discussions with other members of the interview

panel. You should include adequate comments and information on the form to justify your assessment, and enable fair comparisons to be made between candidates.

- 10.7 The panel may not normally ask interviewees about their health or absence record until they have been offered the job. However panels can establish at interview whether or not an interviewee will be able to perform a function that is intrinsic to the job after taking into account reasonable adjustments that could be made for disabled candidates.
- 10.8 After all candidates have been interviewed; panel members should compare individual notes of each individual and jointly make a decision on the successful candidate using the criteria below. See Interview Assessment Form

1	Poor: significantly below the required level
2	Fair: not fully at required level
3	Good: meets the required level in full
4	Very Good: above the required level in some areas
5	Outstanding: exceeds required level in all areas

- 10.9 Where 2 or more candidates are equally appointable the panel should consider the scoring and of each candidate against the criteria both essential and desirable to identify areas of strengths and weakness and measure these against the current work programme and needs of the service.
- 10.10 The panel decision must be recorded on the interview assessment form as the official decision of the panel and this along with any panel notes should be incorporated within the recruitment file. If there is more than one appointable candidate, then the interview panel should agree a list of reserve candidates. This can be done only at the time that the selection decision is made. All appointable candidates should be listed in an agreed rank order based on the agreed (or majority) view of the panel. The list should be kept with the recruitment file for future reference if needed.
- 10.11 Should an identical vacancy occur at any time up to 12 months from the date of the interview, the first person on the list may be offered the post subject to no suitable redeployees being matched and appointed. Any subsequent identical vacancies may be offered to the next person on the list and so on. A record sheet must be attached to the recruitment file giving information on who has been offered a post. The recruiting manager must check the reserve candidate is available and still interested, prior to commencing the recruitment process. This process can be used only in the 12 months following the date of the original selection decision and it is at management's discretion whether to use it or not.
- 10.12 Feedback to those not appointed should be provided for internal and disabled candidates and provided to external candidates if requested.
- 10.13 See [Best practice interviewing](#) for further guidance

11. Offers of Employment

- 11.1 The starting salary for internal candidates should be the minimum of the salary scale of the job. Where internal candidates are promoted they must receive at least one increment more than their current salary. If the internal candidate is moving to a post at the same grade as their current post, they must retain their existing salary point if this is already higher than the bottom point of the scale. The starting salary for external candidates is normally the minimum of the salary scale of the job unless it is necessary to match the candidate's current salary within the grade.
- 11.2 The manager responsible for the post being filled should contact the successful candidate and give them a verbal, conditional offer of employment. Candidates should be alerted to the fact that pre-employment checks will now be taken up and this may take several weeks. In addition, candidates should be advised that they should not give notice to their present employer until they have been informed that the pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.
- 11.3 The interview pack, including application form(s), all interview notes, all interview assessment forms, photo-copied ID (if external applicant) for the successful candidate(s) must be returned to the HR Admin & Recruitment Team who will write to the successful candidate with a conditional offer of employment. The offer of employment will be conditional upon the manager being satisfied with the outcome of pre-employment checks that will include, as appropriate:
- medical checks
 - References (at least two references for external candidates, one of which will be from their most recent employer or for internal candidates, one reference from their current line manager)
 - In situations where the chair of the recruitment panel is the current manager of the successful internal permanent RBG applicant, a reference is not required
 - checks on entitlement to work in the UK;
 - [Disclosure](#) and Barring Service (previously CRB) and other requirements for posts involving working with children and vulnerable adults, the appropriate level of DBS must be agreed prior to the start of the recruitment process
 - Proof of qualifications (where this is a job requirement)
- 11.4 Managers will sign off the references to ensure that the candidate is still suitable for employment. If the reference(s) raise doubts about the candidate's suitability for employment it may be appropriate for you to contact the referee or candidate for clarification. Where the reference(s) lead to the interview panel to agree that the job offer should be withdrawn, the vacancy should be offered to any reserve candidates. If the offer is withdrawn the chair needs to record that decision and the reasons within the recruitment file.

- 11.5 Once all the pre-employment checks have been completed, managers will contact the successful candidate to arrange a suitable start date which should then be notified to the HR Admin Team who will send out a first-day-of-service letter to the candidate. The HR Admin Team will normally send out a contract of employment to the candidate before their first day of work, but no later than eight weeks after the person's start date.
- 11.6 In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to pay relocation expenses. See [Relocation Scheme](#).

12. Induction

It is the managers' responsibility to ensure that workplace induction is carried out. This should generally include as a minimum:

- Ensuring the new starter is met when they start work for the first time
- Introductions to their new colleagues
- An explanation about the organisation and objectives of your directorate
- Directorate procedures and practices
- Training and development provision
- Health and safety requirements of the job and work location
- Ensuring staff have access to and complete the Councils on-line induction programme. <http://royalgreenwich.learningpool.com>

The HR Admin Team will normally carry out the first-day induction (in terms of pay administration and providing information on corporate employment policies). See [Ensuring an effective Induction](#)

13. Further information

- 13.1 For further information on the operation of this procedure, please contact the OD and Talent Team or regarding the New Starter process (the procedure after the applicant has been offered the role), the HR Admin Team.

