



Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

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Recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish Charity - No. SCO 17286

Voluntary Action Shetland

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

This document does not form part of your contract of employment and may be changed from time to time in line with current best practice and statutory requirements, and to ensure that business needs are met. You will be consulted and advised of any changes as far in advance as possible of the change being made, unless the change is required by statute.

This organisation recognises that achievement of its goals and the securing of its values are dependent on the recruitment and the retention of a skilled and committed staff. This policy and procedure sets out our approach to this.

Policy Statement

VAS recruitment and selection activities will be carried out in a fair, consistent, effective and professional manner. It is the responsibility of the executive officer (EO) to ensure that this policy and procedure complies with all relevant legislative and other related policy requirements.

VAS is committed to applying its Equal Opportunities and Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to gender, sexual orientation, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age or trade union membership, unless lawfully allowed for certain specific posts.

Normally appointments must be made in accordance with this policy and must, therefore, be subject to advertisement and interview. The Management Board (MB) must approve any exceptions in advance of formal appointment.

VAS will seek the successful candidate's consent for it to seek two written references and to ask for documentary proof of qualifications. Any offer of employment will be conditional on both of these being satisfactory to VAS. References will be sought prior to interview unless applicant requests otherwise.

Aims

The purpose of the following this procedural guide and policy is to inform managers and employees of the aims and design of the recruitment, selection and appointment policy. It is designed as an aid staff to carry out the process in a fair, effective, efficient and systematic manner.

This will ensure that:

The best candidate is appointed for the vacant post, with regard to objective criteria, which includes qualifications, skills, knowledge and quality of experience.

Vacancies are filled within agreed timescales and in the most cost-effective manner.

Our recruitment procedure does not unlawfully discriminate at any stage of the process.

All recruitment and selection is standardised for audit purposes.

New Jobs and Job Vacancies

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade.

Where the duties of a post have changed significantly the EO must seek confirmation from VAS Management Board for the appropriate grade for the post.

When a vacancy arises, consideration must be given, prior to open advertising, to any staff for whom redeployment may be an option.

When employing temporary or casual staff on a short-term basis the principles of good practice outlined in this policy should be followed. For vacancies of less than 3 months the EO may choose to fill the post by means other than advertising, for example by word of mouth or the use of agency staff.

Job Outline

A job outline is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps. It must include:

- the job title (which must be gender neutral)
- the line manager to whom the postholder is responsible
- any posts reporting to the postholder
- main purpose of the job
- main duties and responsibilities
- any special working conditions (e.g. evening or weekend work)
- note that indicates that, as duties and responsibilities change, the job description will be reviewed and amended in consultation with the postholder

- An indication that the postholder will carry out any other duties as are within the broad scope and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager or EO

Person Specification

The person specification is of crucial importance and informs the selection decision. The person specification details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job outline and, with the job outline should inform the content of the advert. The person specification should be specific, related to the job, and not unnecessarily restrictive - for example only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified.

The person specification must form part of the further particulars of a vacancy along with the job outline in order that applicants have a full picture of what the job entails. The person specification enables potential applicants to make an informed decision about whether to apply and those who do apply, to give sufficient relevant detail of their skills and experience in their application. The person specification forms the basis of the selection decision and enables the selection panel to ensure objectivity.

The person specification details the:

- personal qualities
- skills, abilities and knowledge
- experience
- education

required to do the job, specifying which are essential and which are desirable. Essential criteria are those without which an appointee would be unable to adequately perform the job; desirable criteria are those that may enable the candidate to perform better.

Knowledge can be derived in a number of ways, for example through education, training, or experience.

Publicising the Vacancy

Posts will normally be advertised internally, when it is of short duration, or the EO has designated a particular post as potentially suitable for a person for whom the organisation is seeking redeployment.

The majority of posts will also be concurrently advertised externally to maximise the chances of attracting the best candidate. Consideration should also be given to advertising in locations/publications likely to increase diversity in the workforce.

The Application Pack

Applicants will be able to request a recruitment pack by phone or e-mail. [Packs may also be downloaded directly from our website.] A log of the names and addresses of all individuals requesting an application pack will be taken for tracking and monitoring purposes.

The application pack will always include:

- Applicant cover letter – includes closing date
- Application Form
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form
- Equal Opportunities policy / statement
- Job Outline
- Person Specification

The pack may also include further information relevant to the particular post – e.g. annual report, organisational structure chart as appropriate.

Processing Applications

Staff must be aware that when dealing with enquiries about vacancies it is unlawful to state or imply that applications from one gender or from a particular racial group, age group, sexual orientation, marital status or religion/belief would be preferred, (unless a genuine occupational qualification or requirement applies) and to do so may lead to a complaint of unlawful discrimination.

Care must also be taken that all applicants are treated in the same way, for example with regard to invitations to visit Market House, informal meetings to discuss the vacancy, and provision of information. However, it is acceptable to respond to requests from individual candidates who demonstrate initiative in their preparation.

The confidentiality of applications must be respected by all of those involved in the selection process.

Selecting the Panel

All shortlisting and interviews must be conducted by a panel. The EO will select interview panel members prior to the closing date. This allows panel members to carry out the shortlisting process.

Panels must:

- consist of a minimum of two people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post.
- reflect a sex and ethnicity balance wherever possible
- declare if they already know a candidate
- be willing and able to attend shortlisting and all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

Shortlisting

After the closing date has passed the interview panel should individually assess the applications to determine which applicants are to be called for interview. The panel should then meet to discuss and agree the shortlist. Where the panel has an external member, that person should take part in the shortlisting wherever practicable. Shortlisting decisions should be based on evidence that the applicant has met the requirements of the person specification.

The original applications for all applicants, together with a written note of reasons for shortlisting or rejection, must be retained for a minimum of 6 months from the date that an appointment decision is notified, in case of complaint to an Employment Tribunal. They will thereafter be destroyed. All photocopies of application forms must be shredded.

Acting Up and Undertaking Higher Duties

Approval and authority for acting up or undertaking higher duties must be given by the executive officer before the arrangement begins.

- **Acting Up**

This applies where an employee is temporarily undertaking the full range of duties of a higher graded post. The employee must be terminated in their existing post and transferred to the new post and will be paid on the minimum point of the grade for the new post for a specified period of time. This applies only when there is a vacancy for an established post and must be advertised within the department.

- **Undertaking Higher Duties**

This applies when an employee is undertaking some of the duties of a higher graded post, is sharing the duties or is merely undertaking some additional duties. The percentage of duties must be calculated and the relevant percentage of the higher grade applied. The employee stays in their existing post and payment is paid as an allowance. An end date must be set for the honorarium payment.

Resignation Checklist

On receipt of the employee's resignation, there are 2 forms to be completed:

- Employee checklist form
- Employer checklist form

The employee's checklist should be enclosed with the letter acknowledging receipt of their resignation and should be returned the executive officer on the employee's last working day.

All employees who leave VAS should complete and Exit Interview Questionnaire. Completed questionnaires will be used for statistical analysis.

Arrangements for Interviews

Letters to shortlisted candidates should include:

- date, time and place of their interview
- travel directions to the interview venue when appropriate
- a request that they contact the author of the letter/message if they have any special requirements in relation to the interview (related to access to the venue or any other special need related to a disability) and to confirm attendance.
- if appropriate, details of any test or presentation they will be required to do, or anything that they should bring with them (e.g., examples of work or proof of qualifications that are essential to the post).

Letters to unsuccessful applicants should be sent at the same time successful applicants are called for interview.

Interviewing

Interviews should be scheduled as soon after the closing date as reasonably possible.

The structure of interviews should be decided in advance by determining who will chair the panel and what areas of questioning are required to cover all of the elements of the person specification. The question sets will be developed in advance by the appropriate member of staff and agreed by the EO. The question areas to be explored by each panel member should be agreed in advance to avoid overlap or repetition.

All interviews will be conducted in a fair and consistent manner and must be structured and systematic. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous. Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g., questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job).

Interview panels act for the organisation in making selection decisions and are accountable for them. Interview notes must be taken to help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interviews. Such notes must relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification. The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint. Obviously any inappropriate or personally derogatory comments contained within the notes could be considered discriminatory and are unacceptable.

Disabled applicants

Where the candidate being interviewed has a disability for which adjustments may need to be considered, the candidate's requirements should be discussed with him/her once the planned questioning is complete. The outcome of these discussions must not influence the consideration of the candidate's application. If the disabled candidate best meets the person specification, consideration must be made regarding what would be 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of the person in question. On considering these, if it is considered that the adaptations needed would not be deemed to be 'reasonable' under the Disability Discrimination Act, the EO will draft a letter to the applicant explaining why the adaptations cannot be made. Reasons for not making adjustments to the working environment must be both material and substantial, and must be documented.

Making a Decision after Interview

The information obtained in the application, the interview, and in any selection tests will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made. The Chair of the panel must ensure that a written note of the reasons for selecting the successful candidate and rejecting others is made and placed on the recruitment file, together with the original applications and notes of all panel members, for a minimum of 6 months after the appointment decision has been notified to the candidates.

Interview proceedings are confidential and interviewers are free to divulge to others the decision reached only once the appointee has accepted the post.

The EO will make a provisional offer to the preferred candidate subject to satisfactory references, confirmation of eligibility to work in UK, confirmation of qualifications and satisfactory Disclosure (if appropriate) being received.

Withdrawal of successful applicant

In these circumstances a reserve candidate may be offered the position subject to following the normal vetting process. Reserve candidates may be appointed within 3 months of a withdrawal from the successful applicant. Where there is no reserve, the panel should reconsider alternative methods of service delivery including re-advertising.

Feedback

It is good practice to offer applicants feedback after interviews and it is our policy to respond if requested. Feedback should be specific and honest. Panel members giving feedback must ensure that any feedback they give relates to the selection criteria for the post and that the words that they use could not be taken to infer unlawful discrimination.

Pre-employment checks

Where deemed necessary a number of employment checks may require to be undertaken before a formal offer of employment can be made. It must be ensured that any offer of employment given, is a 'provisional' one, subject to receipt of documentation as shown below.

- **References**

All appointments will be subject to two satisfactory references.

- **Asylum and Immigration**

Under this act it is a criminal offence to employ someone who does not have the permission to work in the UK. All external candidates at interview must therefore be asked to provide proof of citizenship, through a document showing the person's name and NI number. E.g. P45, a payslip, P60, an NI card, a passport or birth certificate. Note that it will be unlawful racial discrimination to carry out checks only on potential employees who by their appearance or accent seem to be other than British. Checks must be carried out on all external applicants.

- **Criminal Conviction Information – The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme**

VAS will seek a Disclosure for all posts that are exempt under the Exemption Order of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A Disclosure request will only be undertaken for the successful candidate, and all candidates will be informed of this process in the invitation to interview. It should be noted that this may delay the offer a position until the disclosure process is complete.

- **Pre-Employment Health Check**

Where deemed necessary, VAS will require certain information prior to an individual commencing employment, to ensure that they will be able to perform the requirements of the job and give reliable service, and to ensure compliance with relevant Health and Safety regulations. The information is also required in order to establish whether any reasonable adjustments may need to be made to assist them in performing their duties, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Further advice on this (if applicable) would be obtained through an occupational health report. A pre-employment health check questionnaire is sent to the successful candidate along with the provisional offer of employment.

- **Qualifications**

Proof of academic qualifications and any others considered essential for the post must be verified.

Appointment

Only the EO issues letters of appointment and places individuals on the payroll.

Induction

An induction programme will be set out which covers information about the organisation and their post.

Record Keeping

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, all records relating to the recruitment and selection procedure will be retained only for as long as is necessary (generally 6 months) , and will be securely destroyed thereafter.

Complaints

Complaints and Breaches of Policy

All applicants may make a complaint of unfair treatment relating to any stage of the recruitment and selection process.

Any breaches of the Recruitment and Selection Policy may result in suspension of the recruitment process and/or investigation by the EO or nominee.

Where a complaint raises concerns with a recruitment procedure or implementation of the procedure a thorough review will be undertaken.