



University of Sussex

# Recruitment And Selection Procedures For Appointing Committees

(Support Staff)

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## Glossary

The post title of the person responsible for recruitment in any campaign can vary. For simplicity the term Head of Department has been used In this document to describe this function.

## **Introduction**

These notes have been produced to assist members of Appointing Committees in their task of choosing the best person for a vacancy. They have been written to be applicable to appointments for all categories of staff.

Chairs of Appointing Committees should ensure that all members of the Committee have seen these notes and abide by them.

The aim of these notes is to aid the effectiveness of recruitment campaigns – i.e. effectively and efficiently appointing the person who best fits the requirements of the post.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees and apply to all staff within the University excluding clinical academics in BSMS.

## **RECRUITMENT**

### **Action Required Before Advertising**

An Appointing Committee can only make an informed and objective choice if it knows what the duties of the post are and what skills and experience are being sought. Proper planning by the Chair of the appointing Committee at the initial stage of recruitment is essential in terms of the effectiveness of the selection process and the maintenance of equality of opportunities.

### **Documentation**

The Head of Department should send to Human Resources

- The further particulars - Example **Appendix A** Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees.

The further particulars are produced by the Chair of the Appointing Committee to give as full a picture as possible about the post, the school or unit and the University. You should aim to inform as well as attract. In the main you should clearly set out what the post entails and what is expected of the successful applicant.

- Job Description – Example **Appendix B** Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees.
- Person Specification – Example **Appendix C** Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees.
- Approvals including selected advertising media and dates

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/personnl/forms.shtml#ad>

Please note that it will never be possible for an advert to be placed without the appropriate approvals and it can take a week or even longer in the case of absences for approvals to be completed.

- The text of the advertisement.
- Please refer to Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees for notes on the production of adverts and the selection of media

Human Resources normally will place adverts. In no circumstances should any other University unit or school place adverts in any media without the express authorisation of a Personnel Officer.

### **Pre-advert Planning Timetable**

When consideration is being given to placing the advertisement the Chair should plan a provisional timescale for the whole process. Scheduling of short listing, interviews etc should not be left until after the closing date as this inevitably builds in delay. Below is an example of a typical timetable:

- Approvals sought – this can take up to **one week**
- Advertisement sent to Human Resources **ten days** before advert is to appear in the press. Dates for submission vary by publication this information is available from Personnel Assistants
- Advertisement appears in press – closing date at least **two weeks** later, potentially this can be up to a month if it is likely that the successful candidate needs a Work Permit – please consult your Personnel Officer
- Closing date – collection of application forms **two days** after post has closed
- Circulation of applications to rest of Appointing Committee – **two days** after collection
- Initial meeting to consider applications – **two days** after applications have been circulated.
- Shortlist selected for interview – Personnel informed – interviews to take place at least **one week later** provided that applicants have previously been advised of the date (e.g. in the advertisement or further particulars). If applicants have not been forewarned then the interviews should take place at least **two weeks** after final short-listing has been carried out.

Using the above as the minimum amount of time needed between the advertisement being sent to Human Resources (Personnel) and interview date, the whole process takes six weeks. However the above has assumed that all meetings and discussion have been pre-planned. **If planning has not been properly considered interviews could take place much later with candidates being lost.**

### **Confidentiality**

All proceedings of Appointing Committees, including the names of candidates, are strictly confidential and must not be divulged to those who are not members of the Appointing Committee, other than authorised University officers. The Chair of the Appointing Committee may decide at the time of advertising that certain details of short-listed candidates who are called to give a presentation should be available to members of the selected audience by way of a brief resume of relevant information.

### **Distribution of Applications**

The applicants will return their applications to Human Resources where they will be numbered and collated.

The Chair of the Appointing Committee (or nominated contact) should give Personnel at least two days notice of their intention to collect the applications; this will be after the closing date. Original applications will not be sent in the internal post.

Accompanying the applications will be a list of all candidates. The Chair of the Appointing Committee is responsible for arranging photocopying and distribution of the applications to the other members of the Appointing Committee.

Any applications received after the deadline can be considered if the panel wishes. If this is the case they can be collected by arrangement from Human Resources / Recruitment.

### **Short listing**

The selection of those to be interviewed. The pro forma in Appendix D should be used in all instances, this details the desirable and essential criteria set out in the Person Specification. The Chair of the Appointing Committee must return a copy of this form to Human Resources / Recruitment along with all the notes made during the shortlisting process and the Interview Schedule - a list of candidates to be called for interview detailing times and location and, where appropriate, those for whom references should be called prior to interview.

Each application is compared against the criteria listed. Those whose applications most closely meet the criteria will progress to either further short listing or to the final selection stage. As part of our commitment to good practice in employing disabled people, prescribed in the Department of Trade and Industry's Two Ticks symbol

programme, you will interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria as set out in the Person Specification and consider them on their abilities. Human Resources will advise the Chair of the Appointing Committee if any disabled candidate who you have indicated on your short-listing sheet meets the minimum criteria has not been short-listed.

There are no guidelines on the number or proportion of applicants who should be short-listed for interview. It is good practice to interview a number that can be accommodated in one day. Therefore if there is a large number of apparently suitable applicants, the Committee need not short-list all of them.

A further review of the applications against the criteria should be used to select the final group to be interviewed. This should be done with reference to the desirable criteria and the depth of experience and the focus of the application to the essential criteria. It is important at this stage not to let subjective views come in to play. It is usual only to call to interview the number who can be accommodated on one day.

## **SELECTION**

### **Methods of Selection**

The methods of selection adopted by an Appointing Committee should include an interview. To improve reliability, the selection process includes consideration of the information in the candidate's application form and where they are called, in references. Appointing Committees should bear in mind the full range of skills, aptitudes and experience for all the duties of the post, and should ensure that they explore fully each candidate's application in these respects. The Committee should do this through appropriate questions during the interview, and might also wish to set tests to examine particular skills. For example Committees may wish to ask candidates to give a presentation. If a candidate has not had the experience to make such a test appropriate, the Committee nevertheless should determine whether he or she has those aptitudes that underpin competence, and not simply knowledge of the discipline.

All methods of selection must be valid in that they will indicate whether a candidate meets certain selection criteria. You must take care that adjustments are made to any selection process where required by a disabled person.

Please refer to the section on equality and diversity in the Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees.

Notes on the preparation required for interviews as well as on their conduct can be found in the Recruitment And Selection Guidance Notes For Appointing Committees

### **MEMBERSHIP OF APPOINTING COMMITTEES**

In all cases there should be at least two people in an Appointing Committee, and it is desirable that the membership should consist of men and women. Under no circumstances should candidates be interviewed by only one interviewer.

The composition of Appointing Committees is determined by the head of the relevant unit under authority delegated by the Council through the Vice-Chancellor. In all cases it is **essential** that the membership should include people who have received training in selection techniques and that a member of the Committee should be familiar with the working conditions of the post.

## **FINAL SELECTION**

### **Majority Voting**

In all cases it is desirable that decisions should be arrived at by consensus rather than by voting, but if voting is necessary the Chair has a casting vote as well as an initial vote.

## **Recommendation on Appointment**

The Chair can contact the successful candidate to inform them that a recommendation will be made to Personnel to offer the appointment but care should be taken to ensure that the candidate is aware that the post will be offered subject to satisfactory references, Occupational Health clearance and the presentation of proof of eligibility to work in the U.K.

Please be careful not to enter into discussions that could be construed as contractually binding and to make clear that the formal offer will be only be generated by Human Resources.

It is appropriate to state what the recommendation to Human Resources will comprise (including salary recommendations) but it must be made clear that no offer is being made.

To help ensure consistency in starting salaries across the University please contact your Personnel Officer before any recommendation above the starting point for the grade is made.

Recommendations on appointment are to be sent to Human Resources/recruitment on an Appointment form this can be found at:  
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/staffing/forms/appointment.doc>

Chairs of panels should also return all application forms and interview notes. Human Resources will keep these with all other documentation relating to the post. Applicants who claim discrimination will often serve questionnaires upon an employer seeking comprehensive details of the whole selection process, without documented information tribunals are free to make inferences that may be detrimental to the University.

The Chair of the Appointing Committee should enter the successful candidate's details on the Appointment Form. The form will contain the following, in addition to the applicant's name and number as well as authorising signatures:

- Starting date of the appointment, and termination date in the case of fixed term appointments. As Chair of the Appointing Committee you are reminded you should refer to the 'Policy on the use and management of fixed term appointments'.
- Probationary period. The probationary period is set in the appropriate terms and Conditions of Service, unless explicitly waived or reduced with the approval of Human Resources.
- Starting salary. This is set by the Department Head in discussion with the Personnel Officer.
- Any other consideration that the Committee wishes to include in the formal contract.

Human Resources will only send a letter when the form has been received. Please note that a letter of appointment will normally be sent out within five working days from receipt of the form. Please advise the Appointee that this is the case, and not that they will be sent a letter the day after a decision has been reached.

### **Unsuccessful Candidates**

The Chair should contact the unsuccessful candidates by telephone, to inform them of the decision and to provide constructive feedback. Once this has been done the Chair should inform Personnel, who will write to the applicants officially confirming the Panel's decision.

It is good practice for the Chair to speak promptly to any internal candidates who are unsuccessful to inform them of the decision and to give feedback on their candidacy, if requested.

### **References**

Human Resources / Recruitment will call references for the successful candidates after the offer is made; all appointments are made subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

References received by e-mail through recognised official accounts are as acceptable as those received on headed paper. If the validity of a reference is doubted then you should consider contacting the referee by telephone to confirm the details.

Human Resources cannot operate telephone references.

Human Resources / Recruitment will send out references to the Chair of the Appointing Committee within three working days after their receipt.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The University is working to promote diversity and the equality of opportunity for all. To support this endeavour the University's Equalities Unit (equalities-unit@sussex.ac.uk) is available for all staff to give help and advice on any equality areas concerned with race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, part time working etc.

Details of the guidance relating to equality and diversity and how this specifically relates to recruitment and selection can be found in the Guidance Notes.

### **Feedback**

It is best practice and reflects well on the image of the University if feedback is given when requested in as full a manner as possible to those who are not short-listed or who have been unsuccessful at interview. Human Resources / Recruitment will draft feedback letters following the return of a feedback request form that they will send to the Chair of Appointing Committees upon receipt of a request for feedback from an

unsuccessful candidate. Feedback should refer to the notes made at either the short-listing or interview phase and will therefore concentrate on the candidates' application against the Person Specification. We would normally expect feedback to be supplied to Human Resources / Recruitment within ten days.

## Organisational Responsibilities

Organisation of the process is split between Human Resources (Personnel) and the Department. The table below has been written to clarify the stages inherent in the procedure, specifying who takes principal responsibility at each stage:

<b>Process</b>	<b>Who administers</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Placing of the advertisement in the press	Personnel - Personnel Assistant	
After closing date collation and numbering of application forms	Personnel - Recruitment	
Collection of original application forms	Department	
Applications photocopied and distributed to the Appointing Committee	Department	
Committee convened for long-listing/short-listing	Chair	
Committee convened for short-listing	Chair	
Personnel provided with names of the final short-list plus a clear timetable for the day with consideration being given to arrangements for lunch	Department	
Short-listed candidates invited to interview	Personnel - Recruitment	
Interview day: Room booked Lunch arranged as necessary Presentation arranged Reasonable adjustments made	Department	
Hotel accommodation arranged	Personnel – Recruitment	
Notification of recommendation of appointment made to successful candidate	Department	
Offer made to candidate	Personnel – Personnel Assistant	
Unsuccessful candidates informed	Department and Personnel - Recruitment	