

PROCESS FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF 2020

It is intended that this document will assist in the appointment of the best person to perform the role identified, eliminate discrimination and provide equal opportunity in recruitment.

The University is committed to equality of opportunity, the pursuit of diversity amongst its employees and student population and a supportive environment for all members of our community. This policy sets out the commitment of the University, its Board of Governors, Vice Chancellor and senior management to promote equality of opportunity and work to eliminate any unlawful or unfair discrimination and harassment in the workplace or at study.

The University of Bolton is a highly diverse organisation and here at Bolton we are committed to equality of opportunity and to an inclusive approach to equality – which supports all groups of society.

In order for each section to be read as a ‘stand alone’ document, inevitably there is an element of repetition in the content of the document as a whole.

SECTION 1 – INITIAL PROCESS – OBTAINING APPROVAL TO RECRUIT

- No recruitment of staff, either for temporary or permanent employment, should be undertaken without approval.
- Approval must be confirmed by Human Resources before any offer of work is given.
- Schools/Services wishing to recruit or replace staff (eg. following resignation) must complete the **Request to Fill A Vacancy** request form, available on the Human Resources intranet site – <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/HumanResources/A-to-Z/Request-to-Fill-a-Vacancy-April-2015.pdf>.
- The completed request form should be submitted via the relevant HR Business Partner for consideration by the Staffing committee.
- All sections of the form must be completed and submitted with the required supporting documentation, otherwise the request will not be put forward for consideration. ie. Justification for the need to recruit/replace, Job/Person specification, School/Service organisational structure and general overview and supported by the relevant HR Business Partner.

The School/Service should use the standard template for completing the Job/Person specification, available as an attachment to the Fill a Vacancy request form.

- The Human Resources Officer will collate all fully completed requests and put them forward for consideration on a monthly basis.
- The HR Officer will liaise with the Human Resources Business Partners, Officers and Administrators and Recruiting Managers, following the meeting, to note the outcome of the decisions made with regard to the requests submitted for consideration.
- The Human Resource's Officer will advise Heads of Schools/ Services of the outcome of the considerations.
- If approval is granted to recruit/replace, a relevant representative will be allocated to assist the School/Service with their recruitment campaign.
- The HR representative will liaise with the School/Service to agree the specific schedule for the recruitment campaign, which will cover –

The contents of the application pack – with the HR representative giving guidance where necessary to ensure appropriate use of terminology in the job/person specification, advertising text and general background information of the School/Service structure.

At this stage it will also be necessary to agree the timetable of dates for advertising and media publication coverage, closing date for applications, panel members for the shortlisting/selection process, suitable dates for interview, interview/assessment venues and assessment methods to be adopted.

- It is important to allow at least one week from the closing date for the shortlisting of applicants to take place, followed by a further two weeks for invite letters to go out to selected applicants. This timescale should be applied even if the vacancy is restricted to internal staff only.

Note - where possible proposed dates for interview should be indicated in the advertisement.

SECTION 2 – GUIDANCE - PREPARING THE JOB/PERSON SPECIFICATION AND ADVERTISING TEXT

- Base your decisions on what skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities (behaviours) the post holder needs to have to do the job. The Job Description should outline the duties required of the post holder. The Person Specification gives the skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities required to carry out the duties.
- Avoid references to age. For example, avoid asking for “so many years” experience. This may rule out younger people who have the skills required but have not had the opportunity to demonstrate them over an extended period.

An applicant could challenge a “time” requirement and you may have to justify it!

- Educational and vocational qualifications have changed and developed over the years. You need to ensure that the qualifications specified do not disadvantage people of different ages.

Questions you need to address:

Are the qualifications really necessary to do the job?

Are they still current?

Can the skill level required be specified in other ways?

If you are going to be specific about qualifications, you need to be sure that you can justify their need in objective terms.

You should also make it clear that equivalent or similar level alternative qualifications will be considered.

- Be clear about what skills, knowledge and experience you actually need for the post and what is merely desirable or reflect your personal preferences.
- Write your advertising text using information contained in the job and person specification. Avoid using language that might imply you would prefer someone of a certain age, such as “mature”, “young”, “energetic”, “dynamic”.
- Base your requirements on ability and not on x number of years experience.

For example, instead of stating “you must have x number of years in a specific role”, use terminology such as:

“You need to have experience of managing a team of people, which has involved performance management, coaching.”

“You should have experience of controlling costs and managed a budget of £x pounds.”

“You need to have managed the delivery of excellent customer service.”

DBS

- Certain positions may require a DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service Check (Enhanced Disclosure) and List 99 check to be undertaken for the postholder. Advice can be obtained from Human Resources/Student Services as to the type of position where this is applicable.

Where a DBS enhanced disclosure is required, the fee payable will be paid by Human Resources.

SECTION 3 – ADVERTISING PROCESS

- Human resources subscribe to advertise on jobs.ac.uk website.
- All vacancies are circulated on an internal bulletin and placed on the University's intranet site.
- Advertising should be used to encourage a diverse range of applicants. It is important not to focus on publications that represent a niche market or age boundary. Selecting the publication in which to advertise should be focused on the interest of the audience, eg. choosing a specialist publication as opposed to Times Higher Education Supplement for a science-related or construction/civil engineering vacancy.
- Legislation already exists to protect people against discrimination including the 2010 Equality Act, on the grounds of sex, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation and religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.
- The age legislation will affect the way recruitment, including advertising, is undertaken.

Date of Birth and reference to age-related information, eg. dates attending school/college, when qualifications were obtained, have been removed from the application form.

- The HR representative/Sponsoring School/Service should liaise as appropriate to discuss and agree the content, timescale and cost with regard to the external advertising of a vacancy.
- The HR representative will liaise with the HR Business Partner or Executive Director of HR where appropriate to determine whether the cost of the advertisement is acceptable. Where the cost appears exorbitant, efforts will be made to reduce the cost by adjusting the overall size of the advertisement without detracting from the content.
- The general University recruitment budget can only cover the cost of an advertisement in one publication.
- Schools/Services wishing to use multiple media coverage will need to fund the additional costs incurred.

- Where it is necessary to re-advertise a vacancy due to an unsuccessful recruitment campaign, the associated costs will need to be met by the School/Services.

SECTION 4 – SCHOOL/SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

- The job description and person specification are the key documents in the selection process and they should describe the profile of the role and the qualities required to do the role effectively.
- You need to be sure that when you specify a requirement you are satisfied that it really is needed to do the job. The inclusion of ‘unnecessary’ criteria can go against the principles of equal opportunity.
- Essential criteria (Priority 1) are those which applicants **must have** to carry out the responsibilities of the job.
- Desirable criteria (Priority 2) are extra requirements, which **may be** considered should we have insufficient applicants shortlisted against Priority 1 criteria or where candidates cannot be separated on the basis of Priority 1 criteria.

Care should be taken when specifying Priority 2 criteria. They should still be linked to the role and responsibilities of the job, not personal preferences.

- Careful consideration of the requirements of the role will allow for a consistent method of approach to identify and measure people against clearly-defined criteria and ensure a discrimination free process.
- Shortlisting of application forms, or where stipulated, CVs should be undertaken independently by a minimum of two people from the School/Service. The shortlisting panel and date for the shortlisting exercise will have been agreed with the HR representative at the initial stage of the recruitment process.
- The Chair of the selection panel has the responsibility for ensuring that the scoring of application forms/CVs and letters of application are undertaken strictly against the detail provided by applicants on the basis of the job and person specification criteria.
- The assessment forms provided to School/Service representatives with the application forms at the shortlisting stage must be completed in full.

A thorough breakdown of the shortlisting scoring is required for the Chair of the selection panel to ensure equity of practice and application.

- Once the shortlisting exercise has been completed, the School/Service shortlisting panel will inform HR
- The HR representative will not allow invitations to be sent out to applicants unless full information is available as to any assessments, role play, presentation - topic, timing etc. that will be required to be undertaken as part of the selection process.
- It is the responsibility of the School/Service to arrange the assessment room and supervision of the assessment
- The general Recruitment budget will be used for interview expenses submitted by candidates, although this will be restricted to covering travel expenses within the UK initially, plus any overnight hotel accommodation that may be necessary.
- Expenses for other travel arrangements will be approved on a case by case basis.
- The School/Service may choose to fund some or all of the additional costs of candidates where interview expenses exceed the maximum £150 allowance.
- Interview expenses will be processed by the HR representative, where possible by means of reimbursement of expenses on the day of the interview through petty cash if the amount involved is small, or with reimbursement being arranged by cheque payment via Finance to candidates as soon as possible after the day of the interview.
- School/Service representatives involved in the recruitment campaign have the responsibility for ensuring that documentation and recorded score sheets used at both the shortlisting and selection stage are available to the HR representative.

In all instances decisions made must be recorded and retained for a period of twelve months with the electronic job file held in Human Resources.

- All Chairs of selection panels must have completed the University's recruitment and selection training and have successfully completed the University's suite of online equality and diversity training.

SECTION 5 – HUMAN RESOURCE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Approval of a vacancy will be advised to the Head of School/Service as soon as possible and a HR representative nominated to assist the School/Service with the recruitment campaign. The HR representative will have responsibility for agreeing the contents of the application pack, offering guidance where necessary to ensure appropriate use of terminology in the job/person specification, advertising text and general School/Service background information.
- The HR representative will agree with the Chair of the selection panel the media coverage for the specific vacancy. Where this involves external advertising the HR representative will liaise as appropriate with the necessary Advertising medium, ensuring that the Chair of the panel is kept fully informed of dates for publication, closing dates and advertising costs to be funded by the School/Service if multiple media coverage is requested.
- The HR representative responsible for advertising the campaign will maintain a record of costs - advertising and interview expenses - associated with the recruitment campaign, using the spreadsheets set up within HR at the start of each financial year.
- The HR representative will also have responsibility for ensuring the listing is kept up-to-date as the recruitment campaign for which they are the nominated representative progresses so that other HR team members have the full picture of the recruitment activity being undertaken.
- The HR representative will ensure that the content of the application pack is presented in a standard template format and available to be sent out by the time the advertisement first appears, whether being advertised for internal only or for both internal/external applications.
- The HR Administrators will endeavor to respond to requests for application packs generally within 24 hours and no later than 48 hours.
- The HR Administrators will ensure that electronic applications and shortlisting grid is sent to the Chair of Panel following closure of the vacancy sufficient copies of returned application forms are available to the panel within 2 working days where possible

Once an applicant has been shortlisted, they will be asked to confirm whether they have a disability that requires any special arrangements to be made. The HR representative should advise the panel that adjustments may be needed to the arrangements in order for the candidate to attend the

interview. For example, there may be a need to organise the venue on a ground floor, allow longer time to complete the assessment exercise.

Where the successful candidate has a disability reasonable adjustments may need to be considered depending on their disability and in consultation with them. This should be done as soon as possible after the offer of appointment. UoB has a duty to consider what reasonable adjustments can be made to working practices, or premises, or to enable access to goods, facilities and services by disabled people. (See the Equalities website for further information on what is considered reasonable.) Successful applicants who declare a disability or may require adjustments to their work or working environment may be referred to the Occupational Health provider. Where reasonable adjustments are agreed these must be recorded in writing. The candidate should also receive written confirmation of whatever adjustments have been agreed.

- The HR representative will also check the Personal Information Section of the application forms of shortlisted candidates to establish if they have declared a criminal conviction. If so, the HR representative will send out a form to the candidate requesting that they provide additional information about the conviction and requiring the form to be returned prior to their interview.
- The HR representative will withhold the information provided, unless the candidate is successful and it is deemed necessary (due to the nature of the role) to inform the Chair of the background to the conviction. At that stage a decision will be made as to whether an offer of appointment should still be made.
- HR will also consider any complaints that may arise regarding the recruitment and selection process.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders:

- The university is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people for employment on the basis of their individual skills, abilities, experience and knowledge and where appropriate, qualifications and training.
- As a good employer the university recognises its social responsibilities and its position within the local community and appreciates the important role that continuity of employment can play in the rehabilitation process of ex-offenders when matched with appropriate posts.

- The university will therefore consider ex-offenders for employment on their individual merits. The university's approach towards employing ex-offenders differs, however, depending on whether the job is or is not exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

For further information, please see the Recruitment of Ex-Offender Policy

Appointment

- Only Human Resources can issue letters of appointment and place individuals on the payroll. If the job offer is conditional on completion of a qualification, DBS check, visa clearance or health screening, this will be made clear in the appointment letter.
- Any offer of appointment is subject to the verification of academic qualifications, professional registration, the right to work in the UK and any other specifics considered essential for the post. If a qualification is essential for the post and the recruiting manager has any concerns about the legitimacy of the qualification document they should contact the awarding body to ask for verification. If a qualification certificate is issued in a foreign language, recruiting managers can ask the candidate for a translation from a reputable source or document notarisation.

Certificates of Sponsorship

As an employer the University of Bolton has a legal responsibility to prevent illegal migrants working in the UK. The University has an A-Rated sponsor licence holder under the Points Based System (PBS) with the UKVI, and must comply with strict Home Office requirements in order to retain this license to sponsor international talent.

Please refer to guidance on the different Tiers of the points based immigration system. Detailed advice is available from your HR Business Partner. For further information about current immigration regulations please go to the UK Visas and Immigration website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>.

Only Human Resources are authorised to issue certificates of sponsorship (CoS). In addition to the CoS the individual must apply for entry clearance/ leave to remain through the UK Visas and Immigration and provide personal evidence of competence in English and ongoing maintenance

SECTION 6 – GUIDANCE – INTERVIEW/SELECTION PROCESS

- Once agreement has been reached on which applicants are to be invited to interview, the panel representatives should agree the format and programme for the day prior to invite letters being sent out.
- If special arrangements are required in order for an applicant with a declared disability to attend the selection process, the HR representative will undertake to sort out the arrangements. External provision may be needed to support the candidate, which could delay the planned interview date depending on their availability.
- In instances where panels request to undertake an online (e.g. SKYPE, MS Teams or Zoom) interview that any progression of these candidates as potential appointees should ideally be subject to a further formal interview on site.
- At interview it will be the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that the selection process is conducted in a fair and ethical manner.
- A HR Representative will convene with the panel prior to and following completion of the interview process to ensure that due [process is followed. Where required, a HR Representative will also take an active part in the selection/interview process.
- Questions should be compiled and agreed by the Panel that specifically address the criteria and will give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the precise skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities which are relevant to the job requirements.
- A template of generic questions may be requested from HR and it is recommended that Panels develop questions particular to the role and circumstances.

Age-related or discriminatory questions need to be avoided – eg. “How would you feel about managing older/younger people?”

- Focus on the candidate’s ability to do the job, not how many years experience they have.
- Assessments should be designed to predict performance in the role and a grading sheet should be developed to demonstrate this.

If candidates are required to undertake a presentation, the audience should have been briefed as to the specific criteria that is being assessed by the presentation and be provided with a score sheet to complete.

To enable consistency and fairness of process it is necessary for the selected audience to be able to attend the presentations of all candidates.

- It is essential that the selection panel base their scores strictly against the criteria outlined in order to determine the person to be offered the role.

Decisions need to be checked for bias and to ensure that the outcome from scoring is based on merit against the criteria set.

- Should the person to be appointed have a declared disability, the Chair of the Panel, in conjunction with Human Resources, will need to undertake an assessment of the reasonable adjustments that may be required/possible for the offer of appointment to be viable.
- All documentary evidence, interview notes, score sheets, used by individual members of the selection panel must be handed to the HR representative to be retained with the electronic job file for a period of twelve months.
- Although the Chair of the selection panel has the responsibility for informing candidates of the outcome of their interview and providing feedback if requested, the selection panel must agree as a whole on the feedback to be given.
- Avoid reference to lack of experience in feedback. Focus on positive feedback, informing a candidate of specifics - what they needed to do to make the difference.
- Appointments should usually be made at the bottom of the grade. Where an appointment at a higher scale point can be justified in conjunction with the HR Business Partner/HR Representative, the commencing salary will be considered for authorization by the Executive Director of HR.
- All academic recommendations for appointment should be sent to the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Executive Director of HR in the first instance outlining requirements and shortlisting grid and any HR concerns/support. This should be accompanied by relevant paperwork.
- All other appointment recommendations should be authorized by the HRBP/Officer and/or Executive Director of HR as appropriate.
- The dedicated HR representative will have the responsibility for arranging for the initial offer letter to be sent out when acceptance of the appointment has been confirmed.

Subsequent contractual documentation and a start date will be finalised by Human Resources in consultation with the relevant Head of School/Service, once the required stipulations contained within the offer letter have been met, i.e. medical clearance, receipt of at least 2 references satisfactory to the University, verification of qualification award certificates if applicable, right to take up employment in the UK, DBS check if applicable, together with seeking approval of a work permit where this is a requirement. Submission of any relevant Pin Numbers or Registration numbers (ie NMC) where required will be provided to HR for any relevant validations.

- All appointments of staff must be made in line with the University Financial Regulations as updated from time to time.

All associated documentation will be handled in the with the University's Data Protection Policy (June 2018)