



Providing Support to Health and Social Care

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Business Services Organisation
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- All appointments should be made on the basis of the 'merit principle'.
- All appointments will be made in accordance with the Policy and Procedures contained in this document and will be made following a selection process which normally provides for shortlisting, if appropriate, assessment centres and aptitude tests along with interviewing for both shortlisting and final appointment purposes.
- In exceptional circumstances where it may be necessary to depart from these procedures the HR Directorate should be consulted for advice. Variations to the procedure are possible after discussion with the HR Directorate and the issue of a Variation Order by the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services or Chief Executive. The reasons for such variations are to be recorded and retained on file.
- All panel members should be trained in Recruitment and Selection and attend Refresher training every 3 years.
- Throughout the process the procedures should be applied in a systematic and objective manner with the Chairperson of the panel taking a lead role in ensuring the integrity of the process.
- To avoid allegations of nepotism anyone directly involved in the selection process who is related to, has or have had a close personal relationship with any of the applicants must disclose the fact at the earliest opportunity. In such circumstances the panel member will normally be asked to withdraw from the selection process.
- Panel members must also be aware of the relevance of the Bribery Act 2011 and ensure their position is not compromised in any way.

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 provides inter alia that for the purposes of employment in the HPSS, a conviction may never be regarded as spent. This will be drawn to the attention of all applicants who will also be advised that a conviction does not necessarily debar an applicant from obtaining employment.
- An individual has a statutory right to take a complaint of discrimination within three months of becoming aware that he/she may have been discriminated against and therefore the BSO will normally retain all recruitment files in accordance with the requirements of the relevant version of Good Records Good Management guidance from DHSSPS.
- Strict confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process. All information and correspondence must be treated in the strictest confidence.
- The Human Resources and Corporate Services Directorate can be contacted at any stage throughout the process for advice/information; however, ultimately any decisions taken are the responsibility of the panel.
- Canvassing by applicants will result in disqualification.
- The Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services will administer the recruitment and selection process in accordance with policy and procedures contained in this document.¹
- Appointments Panels have the power of appointment, with the exception of the Chief Executive (to be confirmed by Board). This appointment will require the approval of the DHSS PS.

¹ This may change following the introduction of shared services

PROCEDURE ON VACANCY ARISING/PRE-RECRUITMENT

1. When a vacancy arises, the relevant manager must review the need for the post to be filled and its grading i.e. the appropriateness of the grading.
2. If it is considered necessary to fill the vacancy the relevant manager should submit a “Notification of Vacancy” form to the relevant authorised officer, together with a case for the post, an updated job description, personnel specification, background information and draft advertisement and confirmation of available funding. In circumstances of a new post there will be a need to confirm that the post has been properly evaluated and that the job description has not been significantly changed following the evaluation. After authorisation by the relevant authorised officer and any scrutiny arrangements in place at the time, the relevant form and accompanying documentation will be sent to the Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services.
3. On receipt of the completed “Notification of Vacancy” Form and associated information the advertisement will be placed in the appropriate advertising media.

CONSTITUTION OF PANELS

4. Appointments Panels should be as detailed below. The reasons for any deviation from this should be recorded.

Level of Post	Post Description	Panel Membership
Level 1	Post of Chief Executive.	Chairperson plus 2 Non-Executive Directors. 2 External assessors including a DHSSPS Representative.
Level 2	Director Level.	Chairperson or Non-Executive Director Chief Executive Third Panel member

		2 External assessors.
Level 3	Assistant Director level.	3 officers of the BSO two of whom should be at least at category 2 level and one of whom should be directly responsible for the post holder External Assessor
Level 4	Posts reporting to Assistant Director or equivalent.	3 officers of the BSO, two of whom at least at level 3 and one of whom should be directly responsible for the postholder.
Level 5	All other posts.	3 officers of the BSO 2 normally at a senior level to the posts being filled and 1 of who should be directly responsible for the postholder.

- Where the post carries responsibilities of a multi-professional nature, the appointments panel may include allied professions.
- Where a post is regionally funded or part-funded by the BSO the appointments panel may require input from an outside organisation. In such circumstances a Variation Order will be issued by the Director of Human Resources
- The Chairperson, will normally be the officer to whom the appointee will be directly responsible.

- Except in extenuating circumstances, membership of the Appointments panel should remain the same throughout the entire process in order to ensure consistency. Where circumstances necessitate a change of panel membership applicants will be notified of the change at the earliest opportunity.
 - Panel members will normally be of a grade senior to that of the vacant post.
 - Appointments panels will, where possible, reflect both a gender and religious mix and should ideally include one member from outside the recruiting department.
5. Appropriate assessors will be identified by the Chairman of Panel in consultation with the Director and appointed in respect of posts that fall into categories as detailed above.

SHORTLISTING

6. Shortlisting will normally take place within 8 working days of the closing date for receipt of completed application forms.
7. In circumstances where there are three or less applicants the Chairperson should decide, in liaison with the Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services, if there has been a sufficient response to provide a suitable field of applicants. Where the Chairperson determines there to be an insufficient response, applicants should be notified and the post re-advertised accordingly. It will not be necessary for these applicants to respond to the second advertisement as their application forms will be transferred to the new process.²
8. Shortlisting may proceed with only two voting members present. In such instances it will be necessary to obtain the agreement of the third panel member prior to notifying applicants.³ In circumstances when e-shortlisting is used no meeting is required but agreement of all panel members and the assessor when appropriate is still required.

² Once the process has been initiated it must be completed even if only one of the applicants is shortlisted for interview.

9. Whilst it is not necessary for the Assessor(s) to attend shortlisting, he/she/they should be consulted and agreement to the shortlisting proceeding obtained prior to notifying applicants.

10. The Chairperson should ensure proceedings at shortlisting are carried out as follows;

- Confirm that the panel members have been appropriately trained in recruitment and selection
- The panel should determine the shortlisting criteria prior to application forms being considered. Under no circumstances should the panel have sight of the application forms prior to agreement of the criteria. Details of the shortlisting criteria, including definitions, should be recorded on the appropriate form or relevant record within e-shortlisting software.
- The decision on whether applicants meet/do not meet the shortlisting criteria should be made only on the basis of the information contained in the application forms, and should be recorded including reasons for non-shortlisting.
- The Chairperson should at this stage identify from the Disability supplement of the application form, if any shortlisted candidates will require any special arrangements for interview e.g., interpreter, signer or have any special accommodation needs.
- The Chairperson should also identify if any shortlisted candidates have indicated any prior commitments, or planned holiday arrangements, on their application form. Whilst the BSO is not obliged to accommodate such commitments, reasonable efforts should be made to do so without unduly delaying the process.

11. The panel may consider and agree the need for further selection aids, e.g. assessment centre, aptitude tests etc which may be used as a further shortlisting stage or as an additional aid to supplement the interview process. In such circumstances the advice of the Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services should be sought and selection aids should be examined to ensure relevance and the absence of any discriminatory elements.

12. Panel members should make arrangements to prepare questions, a scoring system and the format of interviews.
13. All applicants should be notified simultaneously of the result of their application normally within 3 working days of receipt of shortlisting results from the panel. Those shortlisted should be informed of the next stage of the selection process including any selection aids it is intended to use together with the names and designation of members of the Appointments Panel.
14. Where applicants request reasons for not being shortlisted the BSO will release details of criteria upon written request. Responses should be prepared by the Chairperson of the Panel, in liaison with a HR Adviser.

THE INTERVIEW

15. The questions for interview should be prepared in advance of the interview and in accordance with the recommended format .Questions should relate to the essential requirements of the Personnel Specification and the requirements of the job and will include as appropriate;
 - The Leadership Qualities Framework
 - Relevant professional body competence frameworks
 - The Knowledge and Skills Framework profile of the job
16. The BSO will provide for reasonable special adjustments, where necessary, as requested by candidates who fall under the Disability Discrimination Act.
17. All applicants will be informed of the availability of feedback on their interview performance.
18. When the final applicant has been interviewed the Chairperson should invite the Assessor (if applicable) to give an assessment of each applicant's professional suitability for the post and to make any further recommendations to the Panel.
19. The Chairperson should then invite each voting member to comment on each applicant and should initiate discussion in

relation to their relative merits, taking account of the results of any selection aids used in the process.

20. The result of interviews may be made either by a unanimous or majority decision, each panel member carrying one vote.
21. The panel should reach agreement on –
 - i. who, if anyone, should be offered the post,
 - ii. who, if anyone, was selected as reserve candidate and/or
 - iii. placed on a waiting list as appropriate.
22. The decision of the panel should be recorded on the appropriate form (and signed by all panel members) for return to the Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services together with any associated documentation.
23. All applicants will be notified as soon as possible of the panel's decision. The panel should decide on the manner in which candidates will be notified of the outcome of the interviews. This will normally be the Chair of an interview panel but in large scale recruitment exercises this will be undertaken by the HR Directorate.
24. Applicants placed on a waiting list will be advised of the period of time for which the waiting list is operated, i.e. at present the BSO normally holds waiting lists for no more than four months.

REFEREE REPORTS

25. Panel members should endeavour wherever possible not agree to be a referee for a person whom may be an applicant.
26. Referee's reports should normally be sought for applicants invited to interview within three working days of shortlisting, unless an applicant has specified otherwise.
27. Where an applicant has indicated that a referee should not be contacted, unless an offer of appointment is being made, then no contact will be made at this stage. This should not in any way prejudice their application.

28. Referees should be provided with a copy of the job description and personnel specification together with a Self Addressed Envelope marked 'confidential'.
29. References will be dealt with in strict confidence and care exercised in their retention.
30. This policy will be kept under review in the light of its effectiveness and change required due to the implementation of shared services and the introduction of BSTP. The policy will be formally reviewed in December 2012.

EQUALITY

31. This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. No significant equality implications have been identified the policy will therefore not be subject to equality impact assessment.