

Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure for Education Staff

1 Objective

Recruiting and selecting the right people is of paramount importance to the continued success of Hillcrest. This Recruitment and Selection Policy sets out how to ensure, as far as possible, that the best people are recruited on merit and that the recruitment process is free from bias and discrimination on the grounds of age, race, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or social class. The procedure applies to all appointments within the Company.

Staff carrying out recruitment and selection within the Company are trained in the use of the procedure. Until they have received the training, they will interview with a trained manager. No one person will have responsibility for a recruitment decision. Panels will consist of a minimum of 2 people and, where possible, will be balanced to include a mix of gender and race/ethnicity.

All job descriptions and person specifications will comply with the Company's Equal Opportunities Statement and legal requirements. All candidates will be short-listed and interviewed against an agreed person specification and will be expected to show a willingness to implement the Company's Equal Opportunities Statement, Health and Safety policies and all Company policies and procedures.

2 Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education

The Recruitment and Selection Policy applies to all people who wish to work with children and young people through a role in a Hillcrest education service. The Policy provides specific and detailed guidance on recruitment and vetting checks which must be carried out to ensure effective safeguarding in recruitment.

3 Recruitment and Selection

3.1 Legislation

In recruiting staff the following Acts of Parliament affect recruitment and selection.

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Asylum & Immigration Act 1996
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Anyone who feels that they have been discriminated against in recruitment can ultimately take their complaint to an Employment Tribunal and if their claim is proven the Company will be liable to pay compensation.

It is therefore essential that we do not discriminate against people when recruiting to vacancies. Following this procedure will ensure that unfair discrimination does not occur.

3.2 Definitions

These definitions are drawn from race and sex discrimination legislation and are not legal definitions but explanations:

Direct discrimination - occurs when someone receives less favourable treatment than others because of their race, sex or disability or because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Indirect discrimination - occurs when an unjustifiable job or employment requirement adversely affects people of one sex or racial group more than others.

3.3 Vacancies

When a post becomes vacant, the Manager should discuss the vacancy with their Operations Manager as to whether or not the post is to be filled. In the majority of situations the decision will be to fill the vacancy, except in situations where a restructuring is taking place, where the position may be needed for redeployment or where the staffing to client ratios are out of balance.

If the decision is to proceed, the Manager will liaise with the Human Resources Department on conducting the recruitment and selection process for this position including agreeing the timetable for each part of the process. At this point the Manager is required to confirm who will be on the selection panel, the date and venue of the selection interview and what the selection process will consist of. It is important to ensure that a fully trained employee is on the selection panel (i.e. an employee who has been trained in the Recruitment and Selection process). The Manager is now responsible for ensuring that the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure is carried out within the agreed timescale and as per the policy and procedure.

3.4 Job Description

This must be checked to ensure that it is relevant and up-to-date. If the job description is changed/updated it must be approved by the relevant Operations Manager and the Personnel Manager. All job descriptions must comply with the Company's Equal Opportunities Statement and legislation.

3.5 Person Specification

The person specification must be checked to ensure that it is relevant and up-to-date. If the person specification is changed/updated it must be approved by the relevant Operations Manager and the Personnel Manager. The person specification is a list of criteria, which identifies the skills, knowledge, abilities, aptitudes and qualifications or experience required to carry out the duties of the job effectively. The criteria must be clear, fair and justifiable and must not directly or indirectly discriminate. The criteria must also be job related, reasonable and focussed on skills rather than personality.

The specification covers the following headings:

- 1) Qualifications & Experience - what qualification or equivalent qualification (where this is a requirement of the job) and experience the candidate needs.
- 2) Knowledge - the knowledge candidates need to do the job.
- 3) Aptitudes - what aptitudes they must have.
- 4) Skills and abilities - the skills and abilities needed to do the job.

Once the criteria have been agreed they must be weighted as either ESSENTIAL or DESIRABLE. Essential criteria are those, which the candidate must have to be appointed while the desirable criteria are those that can be acquired following appointment. The panel may decide that one or more criteria should carry a higher weighting and it is important that this is decided prior to the recruitment and selection process commencing. Once the criteria have been agreed the person specification is the tool used throughout the selection process for short-listing and selecting candidates.

3.6 Advertising the vacancy

All vacancies are advertised in the “Weekly Internal Vacancies” which is distributed to all Hillcrest Services. In addition, the Manager may request for the vacancy to be advertised in an external publication. The Human Resources Department work with the Manager in the production of the advert and are responsible for working with the Advertising Agency in obtaining a quote for the advert and its placement. The Human Resources Department place the advert and are the point of contact for sending out application packs. It is good practice for the Manager to have their contact details on the advert in order that they can speak to prospective candidates. The date of the selection interview should be included on the advert. This avoids delays and provides the candidate with the information of when the interview will take place. A closing date of two weeks is normally given however in professional publications the closing date is extended to three weeks.

The Personnel Administrator will monitor the response from the advert and will liaise with the Manager throughout the process. The Personnel Administrator is responsible for collating the equal opportunities data at the end of each selection process.

3.7 Application Forms

Application packs will contain the following:

- Application Form
- Notes for Applicants
- Job Description/Person Specification

For Management level appointments the packs will also contain:

- External Newsletter
- Service specific information
- Any other relevant information

The following documents are available to candidates upon request:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Recruitment of Ex Offenders Policy
- Disclosure Policy – Code of Practice

The Manager should work with the Human Resources Department to clarify what additional documents are relevant and should be included in the packs sent to candidates.

Internal Candidate Application Forms

For employees of Hillcrest Care applying for a position internally, with the exception of management level positions where the full application form must be completed, the employee is required to complete the “Internal Candidates Application Pro-forma”.

3.8 Short-listing

Once the closing date has been reached, the Personnel Administrator will liaise with the Manager on the application forms received. The Manager is responsible for short-listing the candidates using the person specification criteria. Wherever possible, the Manager should short-list with an appropriate colleague or alternatively with a member of the Human Resources Team. Decisions made will be recorded on the Shortlisting for Interview Form. When short-listing staff must ensure objectivity and look for examples/evidence of how candidates meet the criteria, they must not make assumptions.

3.9 Invite to Interview

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that the short-listing takes place within the agreed timescale and confirms in writing (fax, email or memo) to the Personnel Administrator who will write to short-listed candidates inviting them to the selection process.

The memo from the Manager to Human Resources will confirm:

- Date, time and venue of interviews
- Who is involved in the selection process (formal interview and other selection requirements)
- List of short-listed candidates
- Any special requirements

The Personnel Administrator will write to each candidate inviting to the selection process. The letter details the following:

- Details of date, time and venue for interview (map to be provided if necessary)
- What the selection process will consist of i.e. formal interview, written exercise etc
- Details of the documents for the CRB and Eligibility to work in the UK checking process
- Short-listed candidate Form
- Arrangements for candidates with a disability

3.10 Selection Process

The Personnel Administrator is responsible for collating the selection pack and distributing it to the staff involved in the process. The selection process consists of a formal interview and other appropriate tests relevant to the vacant position. The Manager is responsible on the day for ensuring all staff involved in the selection process know what role they are required to undertake. Where written exercises are to be performed, the candidates must be given a suitable area in which to work, which is free from interruption. Written exercises are timed and the staff member responsible for this part of the process must ensure that all candidates are treated equitably. In the event that a candidate has informed Hillcrest that they have a disability prior to the selection process, appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made.

Formal Interview: The Manager normally undertakes the role of the chair and prior to the commencement of the formal interviews agrees with the panel members and divides the questions appropriately. All candidates will be asked the same set of questions and will be allocated the same amount of time for their interview. One of the panel members must be given the responsibility to discuss gaps in employment or any issues on the application form that require clarification. In addition, this person must check that the referees given are appropriate and full details supplied or alternatively that the full details of a more suitable referee is provided. It is essential that appropriate recording of the candidate's responses is made to ensure that evidence is gathered upon which the selection decision can be made. The panel members should ensure that probing takes place to gain and validate evidence. Each panel member is required to score the candidates response against the criteria.

3.11 Vetting Checks

Criminal Records Bureau and List 99 check: It is the policy of the company that all candidates complete the CRB application form and provide the appropriate original documents as evidence. The member of staff responsible for the CRB checking process, must ensure that they only accept original documents from the list of "acceptable identity documents" from the CRB applicant's guide. The documents must be photocopied and counter signed by the member of staff undertaking the verification checks.

An Enhanced Disclosure is applied for. It is the policy of the company that a candidate cannot commence employment until the Enhanced CRB Disclosure has been received from the Criminal Records Bureau and that it satisfies the requirements of the company. The only exception to this is in a situation when a candidate has an existing Enhanced CRB Disclosure that is less than three months old and that it shows that the "Protection of Children Act List" has been checked. A

copy of this Disclosure Form must be taken and included with the candidates selection paperwork. The company will still undertake it's own CRB check and therefore the CRB Form must be completed by the candidate with the supporting documentation.

Eligibility to Work in the UK: All candidates must complete the Eligibility to work in the UK form which is sent to them with the invite to interview letter. In addition, the candidate must produce the necessary original documents to evidence that they are eligible to work in the UK which must be checked and countersigned by the member of staff undertaking this verification process. This is an important part of the vetting process and the Recruiting Manager is personally responsible for ensuring the process is carried out appropriately and would be the person held responsible for the employment of a candidate who was not eligible to work in the UK.

Qualification Checks: For positions where a qualification is an essential requirement of the job for example a Qualified Teacher's position, the candidate must provide original evidence of the qualification, that they hold Qualified Teacher status and registration with the GTC. Copies of all documents must be taken and endorsed.

Note: If a candidate has a DfES reference number this does not necessarily mean that the candidate has QTS.

Short-Listed Candidate Form: This form is sent to all candidates with the invite to interview letter. The short-listed candidate form should be requested from the candidate and given to the chair of the interview panel. This form is part of the two stage application and contains information regarding Rehabilitation of Offenders, Asylum and Immigration, Health Record and Qualifications. It is essential that the chair of the panel checks this form and asks relevant questions arising from what has been disclosed.

Candidates who have lived outside of the UK: where the candidate has lived outside of the UK, further checks may be considered appropriate where obtaining a CRB Disclosure is not sufficient to establish suitability to work with children. In this situation, advice should be sought from the Human Resources Department.

Photographic Evidence: It is important to ensure that the candidate is who he or she claims to be. It is the Policy of the company to ask to see some form of photographic identity such as a passport, driving licence or some other document showing a photograph and details of the candidate.

3.12 Notes and Records

- Notes must be taken during each formal interview in order that there is a record and that the panel can remember what each candidate has said.
- Time should be taken between each interview to finalise notes and fill gaps.
- These notes will be used to make a decision about the appointment along with the other selection methods used.
- At the end of the selection process all of the documentation must be sent back to Head Office where they are kept securely for six months.

3.13 Making a Decision

At the completion of the selection process each panel member will give an individual score for each candidate using their notes to score from. The panel will discuss their scores, moderate where necessary and reach agreement. The Manager will record the scores on the Interview Record Sheet and sign off. The Manager is responsible for ensuring that panel members are consistent in scoring and in the overall decision.

The Manager is responsible for contacting successful and unsuccessful candidates by telephone to inform them of the outcome of the selection process. Successful candidates must always be informed that the appointment is subject to:

- a satisfactory CRB clearance
- satisfactory references
- health clearance
- eligibility to work in the UK
- the offer is subject to a six month probationary period

The candidate must be informed that they should not tender their resignation until all the checking process has been successfully completed and confirmation given to them.

Unsuccessful candidates who have requested feedback, should be given feedback based on the criteria they were assessed against.

The selection paperwork must be returned to Head Office without delay in order that the next steps can be carried out. The Personnel Administrator will make the formal offer in writing to the successful candidate. If any paperwork is outstanding or incomplete, it should be noted that this will delay the appointment process.

3.14 References

Hillcrest has its own reference request form that is sent out to referees. The form follows the good practice guidelines specified in the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education document. Hillcrest will not accept testimonials or open references i.e. "to whom it may concern".

For positions in Education Services, references wherever possible will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates prior to the selection process.

References are used to confirm dates of employment, information about the candidate's suitability for employment with children, details of sickness absence and whether the candidate has been subject to disciplinary proceedings etc. If there are any discrepancies, arising from the reference these should be checked out with the person providing the reference. As all offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references, the Manager should ensure that he/she is satisfied with the references before agreeing a start date. In addition, it is recommended that the Manager contacts the referee to establish that the reference supplied was provided by that person. If the Manager and/or Personnel Manager is not satisfied with the references obtained, a decision will be made whether to withdraw the offer of employment.

References are sought from the current or most recent employer and from the next previous employer. Employer references are taken up in preference to character references. It should be noted that previous employers not given as referees may also be contacted for a reference.

3.15 Monitoring

The Personnel Manager will monitor all aspects of the recruitment and selection process.

Equal Opportunities data along with advert analysis is undertaken at the end of each Recruitment and Selection process.