



## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

### POLICY & PROCEDURES

**This applies to: All DCC staff including Centrally Employed Teachers, but excluding all staff in schools.**

Policy Date:	May 2010
Version Date:	January 2014

HR ONE

**With effect from January 2014, a Turnover Management Strategy has been adopted which will impinge on these standards, please see [Turnover Management Guidance.](#)**

If you require further help in the interpretation of this policy you can contact the HR ONE Helpline on 01392 385555 or at <a href="mailto:hrdirect@devon.gov.uk">hrdirect@devon.gov.uk</a>
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### **Terms and abbreviations**

### **Policy History**

Recruitment Standards. Version date: 2013.10.21

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## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

With effect from January 2014, a Turnover Management Strategy has been adopted which will impinge on these standards, please see [Turnover Management Guidance](#).

### A. POLICY

#### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 It is Devon County Council's policy to ensure a consistent and fair approach to recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers across the organisation, to integrate equality objectives into our work, provide a framework to assist recruiters in meeting their legal obligations and to ensure as an employer of choice; we follow best practice.
- 1.2 These Standards include procedures for making recruitment processes safer for roles involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults.

#### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Devon County Council will ensure recruitment effectively and efficiently supports the delivery of services to the people of Devon. The objective in carrying out recruitment is to fill vacancies with people of the highest appropriate quality, drawn from the widest possible 'pool', at optimum cost without undue delay, whilst adhering to principles of fairness and equality.
- 2.2 This objective is expressed by Devon County Council's Equality Statement as follows:

As an employer of choice, we value diversity and celebrate individuality across our extensive workforce.

We are committed to equal opportunities in employment and service provision and are only interested in your ability to do the job.

To this end, we will take positive action to ensure a diverse workforce.

- 2.3 From time to time services may have additional requirements / constraints placed upon them with regard to recruitment. Any current impinging strategies or additional guidance to these standards can be found in the 'Also on the Source' section on the front web page. These will be communicated to the service(s) affected with clear guidance provided.
- 2.4 The Personnel Admin Team can advise on the normal procedures operating in your Service. See also the following service specific guidance on the Source:

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- ACS Information for Appointing Officers; or
- CYPS Appointing Officer's Checklist and Safeguarding Requirements;
- Corporate Resources Manager's Reference Directory - Recruitment.
- <http://www.devon.gov.uk/dccmanagers>

2.5 Devon County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

### 3. **SCOPE**

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of Devon County Council including centrally employed teachers but excludes all staff in schools. Recruitment in schools is covered separately; please see Model Recruitment and Selection Policy for Schools.

3.2 Recruitment of volunteers must be in line with DCC's recruitment policies and procedures and all appropriate recruitment checks made; see 14.2 and 19.1 of the CRB Disclosure Policy.

### 4. **PRINCIPLES**

4.1 **With increasing market place competition, it is vital that we aim for Devon County Council to be an employer of choice in Devon. As a consequence we will:**

- Develop and promote our image as a modern, improving and inclusive County Council that enables us to attract the best candidates.
- Be open and transparent and appoint on merit
- Value all individuals involved in the recruitment process.
- Value our existing staff and help them realise their potential.
- Give appropriate and proper consideration to all applicants.
- Work towards developing a workforce that in its diversity can provide an appropriate and professional service to the community.
- Actively engage with under-represented sectors of the community.
- Use flexible working arrangements, where appropriate, to encourage a diversity of applicants.

- Ensure that assessment techniques and tests are free from any bias that might unlawfully discriminate.
- Monitor and review our performance regularly, compare it with other employers, and update our procedures accordingly.
- Devon County Council has been awarded the two ticks symbol and is committed to interview all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities
- When considering applications from disabled candidates the duty to make reasonable adjustments must be considered at all stages of the recruitment process.

## **5. KEY LEGISLATION, POLICY & GUIDANCE**

Our Recruitment Policy is underpinned by:

### **5.1 Legislation specifying employment rights:**

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Fixed Term Employee Regulations 2002
- Part-time Workers Regulations 2000 (Amendment) 2002

### **5.2 Discrimination legislation:**

5.2.1 Discrimination legislation covers all aspects of the recruitment and employment process on the specified grounds of protected characteristics which are;

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

5.2.2 The main types of discrimination set out in legislation are:

- Direct - less favourable treatment;
- Indirect - practices that put a person at a particular disadvantage;
- Associative – where discrimination takes place against someone who is associated with another person who has a protected characteristic i.e. a person who cares for someone with a disability.

- Perceived – where someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic i.e. a certain religious belief, even if that perception is incorrect.
- Victimisation - treating someone less favourably because they have made a complaint or allegation of discrimination, or given evidence in good faith, in connection with the Equality Act 2010.
- Harassment – unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic, that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

The Equality Act also provides guidance on specific elements of harassment such as:

- Sexual harassment
- Third Party Harassment

5.2.3 The discrimination legislation applies to everyone, and therefore, this includes:

- employees;
- workers who are not employees but who work under a contract for services;
- applicants for jobs;
- volunteers;
- agency workers;
- contract workers;
- trainees undertaking or seeking vocational training;
- students.

5.2.4 The Equality Act is supported by a Code of Practice that sets out good employment practice and guidance on how to ensure compliance with legal requirements. Although not legally binding, the code will be taken into account by employment tribunals as evidence of good employment practice. The Code of Practice can be found on the [Equality and Human Rights Commission website](#) and will be amended from time to time.

5.2.5 In addition to the other forms of discrimination set out in the Equality Act, disabled people are also protected from:

- Unfavourable treatment due to something connected with their disability - this differs from direct / indirect discrimination because there doesn't have to be anyone to compare the treatment of the disabled person with
- Failure to make Reasonable Adjustments.

5.2.6 Reasonable adjustments must be made if a disabled candidate is placed at a substantial disadvantage; that is anything that is not minor or trivial, by any aspect of the recruitment process. What is reasonable will depend on the effectiveness of the adjustment in overcoming the

disadvantage and the ability of the employer to make the required changes. Changes may have to be made to the recruitment process, duties, working practices and terms and conditions of employment, even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably.

- 5.2.7 Policy and guidance on the employment of people with disabilities is available on the Source or from the HR ONE Helpline.
- 5.2.8 Within the Equality Act 2010 there is provision for employers to take positive action in recruitment and promotion. Positive action provisions mean that it is not unlawful discrimination to take special measures aimed at alleviating disadvantage or under-representation experienced by those with any of the protected characteristics as stated in 5.2.1. To put this into the context of recruitment, please see 9.3.3.
- 5.2.9 For more information about Equality Legislation please see the equality pages on the Source or Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

### **5.3 Legislation, policy and guidance giving rights of access to information including that of all stages of the recruitment process:**

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2004
- Equality Framework for Local Government
- Best Recruitment practice
- National and DCC Conditions of Service

5.4 Relevant DCC documents: Strategic Plan 2009-2013, Equality Policy, Equality in Employment Policy, Acceptable Behaviour Policy.

5.5 Legislation regarding Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups is as follows;

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 & (exceptions) Order 1975
- Police Act 1997

## **6. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

6.1 Devon County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

6.2 Recruitment to posts involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults are subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure check and must also comply with the CRB Disclosure



Policy. A Safeguarding checklist can be found on the following link [recruitmenttoolkit](#)

- 6.3 Schools have their own Safer Recruitment policy. This policy reflects good practice guidance offered by the DCSF (2007) please see; Schools Personnel Safer Recruitment. Schools will also need to comply with the Corporate CRB Disclosure Policy.

## **7. COMMITMENTS**

- 7.1 Devon County Council is committed to ensuring that:
- All candidates are treated fairly throughout the recruitment process to ensure that no candidate is discriminated against in line with the key legislation in Section 5 above.
  - At least one person on the interview panel is accredited in Recruitment & Selection, to ensure consistency, equality and fairness.
  - All new or amended job descriptions have been assessed and evaluated by the Employee Reward Team to ensure that the grading for the duties involved is consistent with the Devon County Council Job Evaluation Scheme
  - All pre-employment checks are carried out in a timely manner to ensure that the County Council, its customers and Service Users are not at risk.
  - Priority is given to all those employees on the redeployment register first before advertising a post.
- 7.2 Devon County Council will ensure that successful candidates appointed to a post involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults have;
- An Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure
  - Completed a PO7 form disclosing their full criminal history and discussed any details at interview
  - Provided references prior to interview for the previous five years which are then checked with the referee verbally. Please see appendix 6.
- 7.3 Devon County Council is committed to ensuring that successful candidates also have;
- An Occupational Health Assessment
  - References taken
  - Relevant Eligibility to Work checks

## **8. EQUALITY STATEMENT**

- 8.1 The HR ONE Helpline, as the first line of contact, will ensure that employees are able to access a copy of the policy.

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Devon County Council (DCC) seeks to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.

DCC is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment regardless of a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity status, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation

## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

### B. PROCEDURE

The minimum Recruitment Standards detailed below are those that must be adhered to at all times unless other recruitment restraints are in place.

**With effect from January 2014, a Turnover Management Strategy has been adopted which will impinge on these standards, please see [Turnover Management Guidance](#).**

#### 1. REVIEW THE VACANCY

- 1.1 The critical first step is to review the actual requirements of the post. If an exit interview takes place (best practice for posts being vacated), it may provide information that can be used to answer some of the following questions:
- Does the post need to be filled?
  - Is the job still relevant?
  - Is the design of the job correct?
  - Are the specific requirements of the job clear?
  - Does the funding for the post exist?
  - Is approval required to fill or establish the post?
  - On what basis should the post be filled, e.g. permanent, casual, temporary, fixed term, part-time, term-time, annualised hours, secondment?
  - Are there any legal requirements connected with the post?
- 1.2 DCC's policy is to consider all jobs as being suitable for flexible working unless managers can clearly demonstrate otherwise.
- 1.3 Consider if the job, or part of the job, could be redesigned to be suitable for adults with learning disabilities. See Access Employment.
- 1.4 Job Evaluation (JE) applies to all jobs within DCC which are under NJC 'Green Book' conditions of service, excluding jobs evaluated under the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme (or under different Terms and Conditions, such as Teachers). **DCC require all new or changed jobs covered by JE to be evaluated in line with the new and changed posts policy.**
- 1.5 There must be a clear and concise job description for all posts which will specifically reflect the duties of the role and a person specification that is precisely aligned to the requirements of the job and the job description. Please see Appendix 1 for details on how to review/produce a job description and person specification.
- 1.6 If the perimeters of the job are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check, please refer to Appendix 6 which details the employment checks that will need to be undertaken.

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## **2. AUTHORITY TO ADVERTISE**

### **2.1 Authority to advertise existing posts**

2.1.1 Where the request is for a replacement post holder in an established post or for a replacement post holder to cover maternity or adoption leave, the Advertisement of Vacancy form (or open Word, select templates and the Corporate tab) may be completed and submitted without further approval. Each Service will need to make its own internal arrangements for ensuring the funding exists for the replacement prior to submitting the form.

### **2.2 Authority to advertise new posts**

2.2.1 For all other requests the Request to Advertise a New Post form must be completed along with appropriate supporting papers. Such requests must receive prior approval from the Head of Service or representative and be signed accordingly. The Head of each Service will determine which staff are authorised to act as their representative.

2.2.2 The process will apply to both permanent and temporary posts. Similarly posts approved as part of the budget process will still be required to follow the approval process prior to advertising.

2.2.3 The request should then be forwarded to the Head Accountant for the service to confirm that funding is available in accordance with the details contained within the request form. A request may only be submitted for the period for which funding has been secured. The Head Accountant must ensure that the request to advertise has been completed correctly in this respect.

2.2.4 If approval is not given the Head Accountant will advise the initiator directly, along with reasons. If Head Accountant approval is given, the request will be forwarded to the Personnel Admin team who will check that details are complete.

2.2.5 In the case of some posts, additional flexibility is allowed for operational reasons and the post may be advertised at this stage (following Head Accountant approval) without further approval from members. This applies to:

- Posts providing frontline services direct to the public.
- Approved trading units.
- Devolved funding units i.e. 100% externally funded.
- Formal DCC Partnerships i.e. Primary Care Trust.
- Other units may be added where appropriate, subject to approval between the Head of HR and the Executive Member.

2.2.6 Similarly for new (100%) external grant funded posts, the post may be advertised at this stage (following Head Accountant approval) without further approval from members.

2.2.7 For all other new posts the request to advertise a new post will be passed to the Head of HR by the Personnel Admin team, in order that approval may be sought from the Executive Member.

### **2.3 Executive Member Approval**

2.3.1 Following consideration by the Executive Member, authorisation forms will be returned to the Personnel Admin team who will notify the Service as to whether or not authorisation has been given.

2.3.2 If rejected, the Executive Member will be able to provide a brief explanation of the reason(s) or any qualifying factors in the space provided for guidance and/or follow up, where appropriate.

2.3.3 Any subsequent re-submission / appeal to the Executive Member will be at the discretion of the Executive Head of HR and subject to satisfying any qualifying factors as indicated above.

2.3.4 See flowchart in Appendix 2.

2.3.5 Strategic Recruitment can provide a service to co-ordinate the recruitment process for senior appointments.

### **3. IDENTIFYING THE APPOINTING OFFICER AND ACCREDITED PANEL MEMBER**

3.1 At the start of each recruitment process, an Appointing Officer must be identified. This is often, but not exclusively, the Line Manager for the post. They are responsible for the recruitment process and for ensuring that the standards are met, and a fair process followed to find the best person for the job.

3.2 If the Appointing Officer has not been accredited, it is important that one of the other members selected to be on the interview panel have been. The HR ONE Helpline hold a list of accredited officers, please contact them on 01392 385555 or email them on [hrdirect@devon.gov.uk](mailto:hrdirect@devon.gov.uk)

3.3 Appointing Officers interviewing for posts which involve contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, must be suitably experienced in Safeguarding, and should seek advice if needed from the Devon's Safer Recruitment Service.

3.4 Appointing Officers must refer to the 'Disabled Applicants Checklist'. check this as well Recruitment Services will supply Appointing Officers with the checklist if First Stop are co-ordinating the receipt of applications.

## 4. **ADVERTISING A VACANCY**

- 4.1 All corporate advertising must go through the First Stop Desk. They will:
- format the adverts and place them with media and/or online jobsites on your behalf
  - deal with the administration and invoicing;
  - negotiate with media if an error occurs;
  - reduce costs and increase visual impact by compositing adverts together;
  - advise on where best to place your adverts;
  - advise on the wording of your adverts;
  - place adverts in Choice and on the Internet at no additional charge, see DevonJobs.
- 4.2 On contacting the First Stop Desk the vacancy will be automatically notified to the Central Placement Unit to identify any suitable candidates.
- 4.3 **All posts must be advertised as widely as possible** unless there are clearly defined reasons, please see Appendix 3
- 4.4 If the post involves contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, First Stop will include the corporate wording within the advert regarding Criminal Records Bureau Checks.
- 4.5 Advertisements must be appropriate, cost effective and non-discriminatory, please see advert guidance on the Source.
- 4.6 For details on writing an advertisement, please see Appendix 4

## 5. **APPLICATION PACK**

- 5.1 Application packs are often the first point of contact between the applicant and Devon County Council. It is important, therefore, that packs are relevant, informative and promote Devon County Council both in content and standard of presentation.
- 5.2 Occasionally application packs are sent as a paper copy but it is now standard practice that all packs are sent online therefore, there must be electronic copies of the items below:
- Leaflet or PDF describing the work of the Service.
  - Job description and person specification.
  - Details of the selection process.
  - Standard DCC application form (added by First Stop).
  - Diversity monitoring form (added by First Stop).
  - Provide website addresses and links to relevant sites/pages.

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- A contact telephone number and contact name(s) for help and advice on any aspect of the recruitment process, this should be provided in the covering letter by First Stop.
- If the job involves contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, the pack needs to include a copy of the Safeguarding Leaflet advising candidates of the vetting and pre-employment requirements.

5.3 Additional information should include:

- DCC Strategic Plan
- Unit Business Plans
- Structure charts

5.4 The application form also asks candidates who know that they are related to any Member or senior officer (an officer being paid in accordance with Management grades or above) of the Council to disclose that relationship when making an application.

A candidate who deliberately fails to disclose such a relationship will be disqualified for the appointment and if appointed will be liable to dismissal without notice.

5.5 Please note; the candidate and the Member/senior officer will be considered related if they are:

- Partners to include; husbands, wives, civil partnership
- The child/parent, grandchild/grandparent, brother, sister, nephew, niece, aunt or uncle of the other.
- The partner to include; husbands, wives, civil partnership, of any of the above.

5.6 A partner does not have to be of the opposite sex and will include a civil partner.

## 6. **SELECTION PANELS**

6.1 **Selection panels must contain at least one member who has satisfactorily completed DCC training in Recruitment and Selection and been accredited (see 'Recruitment & Selection Accreditation Guidance'), please see section 3 above.**

6.2 The panel must also:

- Consist of three people (unless there is a specified and justifiable reason for this to differ). Where only two people are available,

Appointing Officers should refer to the [HR ONE Helpline](#) for advice.

- Not be related to, or have a close personal relationship with, any candidate. Such instances must be referred to the Appointing Officer's line manager who in turn will contact the HR ONE Helpline for advice.
  - Include members from both genders, where possible, to help instil confidence in the process.
- 6.3 It is **recommended** that managers involved in recruitment undertake equality and diversity training, to raise awareness of potential prejudice and discrimination issues, as well as recruitment and selection training.
- 6.4 Selection panels must be consistent throughout the selection process to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and to prevent any potential discrimination claims.

## **7. SHORT-LISTING**

- 7.1 Short-listing must be undertaken by all selection panel members. To minimise bias, the short-listing of applications must be undertaken individually by the designated panel members, who must review all applications and assess each applicant against the agreed selection criteria on the person specification. It is best practice to use the short-listing matrix, please see short-listing proforma on the following link. [recruitmenttoolkit](#). The panel should then agree a final short-list.
- 7.2 Late applications should not generally be considered and certainly not once short-listing has commenced.
- 7.3 In assessing applications against the person specification, take note of experience outside of paid work which evidences required criteria.
- 7.4 Short-listing must be made by reference to the essential, and if necessary, the desirable criteria detailed in the person specification.
- 7.5 If an applicant satisfies all essential criteria, s/he must be short-listed. However, if too many applicants meet the essential criteria, the selection panel must apply the desirable criteria to reduce the numbers and produce a final agreed short list. Exceptions to this are shown in 7.8 below.
- 7.6 If, after applying both essential and desirable criteria, there are still too many applicants, additional fair and equitable criteria can be applied, please contact the [HR ONE Helpline](#) if you need further assistance. A record must be retained of the additional criteria used.
- 7.7 The reasons for the inclusion on or exclusion from the short-list should be carefully noted on the short-listing matrix and for non-successful candidates, retained for a minimum of twelve months.



7.8 It is important to note the exception to the normal short-listing process in that;

- **Priority candidates** who meet the essential criteria must be short-listed and interviewed ahead of other candidates. Please see [8.4.1](#) below.
- **All applicants with a disability** (as defined by the Equality Act, please see [Employment of People with Disabilities Information and Advice for Managers](#)) who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy must be short-listed and invited for interview. When short-listing applications from disabled candidates it is necessary to consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be made to the selection criteria where a person is unable to demonstrate they meet a specified essential requirement. For example, where a disabled person has been unable to obtain qualifications specified as essential, due to their disability, but has experience that could demonstrate their ability to meet that 'competence' and undertake the role, failure to short-list them without considering whether their experience could offset their lack of qualifications might give rise to discrimination arising from disability or failure to make reasonable adjustments, discrimination claim. Where an adjustment is reasonable it must be made to ensure equal opportunity.

**Remember; it is unlawful to eliminate applicants from the short-list on the grounds of:**

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation
- criminal history, if unrelated to the job;

Other than where an Occupational Requirement applies, please see [Appendix 1](#) for further information, or there is an objective justification of age discrimination.

7.9 **Short-listed candidates whose role involves contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults will need to be sent a PO7 form to complete and bring to interview detailing their full criminal history including both spent and unspent convictions, please see the [CRB Disclosure Policy](#).**

7.10 For posts that involve contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, employment references for their previous five years

employment history should be obtained prior to interview (their most recent employer reference may be delayed until the candidate has received an offer of employment but must be received prior to their commencement in post). Please see [appendix 6](#).

- 7.11 The references taken at short-listing stage, as stated in 7.10, will not require the referee to complete details about the applicant's sickness absence or disability, in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010. However, subsequent information relating to sickness absence can be requested for the successful candidate after they have received their conditional job offer.

## **8. ASSESSMENT & SELECTION**

### **8.1 Assessment and selection methods must be relevant, non-discriminatory and cost effective**

8.1.1 Appointment is based on merit and the suitability of each candidate for the job, as evidenced against the person specification, and demonstrated by the selection methods. Selection methods must not disadvantage any particular group. All applicants must be treated in a consistent and a non-discriminatory manner.

8.1.2 Applicants are encouraged to complete Valuing Diversity forms and these forms are returned in a sealed envelope to Recruitment Services, or by email/online as instructed on the electronic application form.

### **8.2 Appropriate and effective selection tools and processes must be used**

8.2.1 A range of selection tools should be considered in order to test candidates' suitability for the role, as identified in the person specification. When selecting tests the cost and relevance to the role needs to be considered.

8.2.2 Selection should normally be based on a formal structured interview except where 8.2.5 applies or where this would place a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage, please see [8.3 below](#).

8.2.3 Other selection methods can include:

- A written exercise for completion on the interview day to check knowledge of legislation, technical competence, etc.
- Reasoning and aptitude tests i.e. skills testing such as; literacy and numeracy
- Presentations.
- Occupational Personality Questionnaires (OPQs). These have been rigorously developed and supported by extensive research to demonstrate their relevance, accuracy, validity, fairness and

reliability. DCC is committed to the highest standards of practice in the use of all Psychometric tests in order to maximise the benefit of testing to both the organisation and the individual, thus promoting fairness and equality of opportunity for all.

- 8.2.4 All candidates must be notified in advance of test procedures, and practice tests should be provided where possible. The testing team will provide wording and sample tests for candidates. Only trained and qualified staff will administer the tests, interpret the scores and profiles and give feedback. DCCs Occupational Testing service can offer advice and recommendations about selection tests and OPQs.
- 8.2.5 In some circumstances, a formal structured interview will not be appropriate for example, if it is not relevant for the role or for the criteria being assessed. In such cases an interview will need to take place but could also include other methods of selection such as:
- Trials
  - Practical assessments
  - Observations

Strategic Recruitment can be contacted to offer advice and recommendations.

### **8.3 Assessment and selection of applicants with a disability**

- 8.3.1 Applicants who have indicated on the application form that they have a disability, must be contacted by the Appointing Officer and informed of the selection process, and checks made of what 'reasonable' adjustments might be required to meet their needs. Depending on the disability, this could include considering whether an alternative to the formal interview is possible for disabled candidates who find such a method particularly difficult, extra time allowed if an applicant has a speech impediment, adaptation to a standard test or a sign language interpreter. Access to buildings and any other specific requirements may need to be considered. Please contact the HR ONE Helpline for assistance.

### **8.4 Staff with priority status and identified as in need of redeployment, must be interviewed ahead of other candidates.**

- 8.4.1 Priority candidates need to demonstrate that they meet the essential selection criteria or could do with reasonable training or adjustments. They should be interviewed ahead of, and separately from, other applicants. Subject to interview or other assessment process, the candidate will be offered the post, unless it is clearly demonstrated against the person specification, that they do not possess the competence, capability or qualifications to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post. If training within a reasonable timescale and

at reasonable cost would enable a priority candidate to meet an essential criteria, this should be considered.

- 8.4.2 Applicants are not entitled to a priority interview for a promotion post unless they are disabled as defined in the Equality Act, when it may be a 'reasonable adjustment' to allow priority interview for post with a higher maximum salary. Please contact the [HR ONE Helpline](#) if you need further assistance.
- 8.4.3 If a priority candidate is disabled as defined in the Equality Act, it may be a reasonable adjustment to appoint even if there is an essential criterion they are not able to meet. This would depend on the criterion, whether it is possible to meet the requirement in other ways, e.g. reallocate specific tasks etc.
- 8.4.4 Priority status appointments will be subject to an agreed trial period (normally four weeks), in which time applicants must demonstrate suitability for the post and have all agreed training provided to enable the optimum level of acceptable standards to be achieved.
- 8.4.5 Advice from the [HR ONE Helpline](#) should be sought and an independent Human Resources representative, or accredited officer, will be allocated to the selection panel.

## **9. INTERVIEWING**

### **9.1 Preparation for an interview**

There are a number of aspects of critical importance in planning the interview, please see [Appendix 5](#).

### **9.2 Interview**

- 9.2.1 The panel will ask each candidate the same core set of questions and fully record their answers. Interview questions should be competency based and the interviewer will need to be prepared to further question to test the evidence being given. Guidance on preparing interview questions can be found on [recruitmenttoolkit](#). The questions should not contain any reference to sickness absence or protected characteristics as defined in section 5.2.1 of the policy.
- 9.2.1 For posts involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults the candidate's motivation and attitude towards safeguarding should be thoroughly explored, recorded and assessed.
- 9.2.2 During the interview all candidates must be informed of [DCC Smoking at Work Policy](#). All recruitment is on the basis that candidates understand they will not be afforded time away from the workstation to smoke at any County Council site. (County Council staff working within buildings operated by other agencies will be subject to the Smoking at Work policy operating in the building.)

- 9.2.3 Documents confirming the candidate's identity and eligibility to work in the UK should be seen at interview, copied and a note of confirmation made by the Appointing Officer ([see Appendix 6](#)). The copied documents should be filed in the employee's personnel file on, or prior to, their first day of work.
- 9.2.4 Where candidates have been sent a PO7 form, they will be asked to bring this to the interview detailing the full criminal history including both spent and unspent convictions and discuss the circumstances around any declarations. This will need to be kept with the interview documents until the CRB2 process is completed and then a copy filed on the successful applicants personal file. The [CRB Disclosure Policy](#) gives guidance on assessing the relevance of criminal records.
- 9.2.5 Original professional qualifications and/or highest level of study certificates should be seen at interview and a note of confirmation made by the Appointing Officer ([see Appendix 6](#)). Any professional registration or membership requirements must be verified, e.g. ensure social workers have current registration with the General Social Care Council (GSCC). A copy should be taken and kept with the rest of the interview papers and should be filed on the successful candidates personal file.

### **9.3 Decision making, feedback and offers of employment**

- 9.3.1 When assessing disabled candidates it is a requirement to consider their suitability on the basis that any reasonable adjustments that may be required have been made. For example, if certain duties would be reallocated the correct measure is how the disabled candidate scores against the remaining duties. Similarly, if special equipment is required the candidate's suitability must be evaluated on the basis that the equipment is in place.
- 9.3.2 Score each candidate at the end of each interview privately before the overall scores are agreed collectively and the best candidate chosen. If additional selection methods are used, these should be fed into the decision-making process at the end and the candidate who best meets the selection criteria chosen. An interview proforma can be found on the following link [recruitmenttoolkit](#).
- 9.3.3 The new positive action provision within the Equality Act 2010, please see 5.2.8, mean that it is not unlawful to choose to recruit or promote, on the grounds of a protected characteristic, a candidate who is of equal merit to another candidate, if the employer reasonably thinks the candidate in question:
- has a protected characteristic that is under-represented in the workforce; or

- that people with that characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic.

However, positive action does not allow an employer to appoint a **less suitable candidate** just because that candidate has a protected characteristic that is under-represented or disadvantaged. Please see the following guidance for further information.

<http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/Positive%20Action%20in%20Recruitment%20and%20Promotion%20Guide%201.pdf>

- 9.3.4 Agree feedback for candidates with panel members and record whether or not the candidate is appointable, even if not the first choice candidate. Offers of employment should not be made at interview.
- 9.3.5 All candidates should be notified of the outcome of the interview as soon as possible. However, Appointing Officers are advised to wait until the successful candidate has accepted the offer prior to informing unsuccessful candidates unless they are assessed as unsuitable for employment.
- 9.3.6 All candidates must be offered feedback on their performance and an explanation of the decision if requested. Feedback should be accurate, specific, constructive and helpful.
- 9.3.7 The initial job offer will normally be made verbally and followed up in writing stipulating that appointment is subject to satisfactory employment checks e.g. references, medical, qualifications, Criminal Record Bureau checks and eligibility to work. If the conditions on which the job was offered are not met, advice should be sought from the HR ONE Helpline, before any offer is withdrawn.
- 9.3.8 Consider how best to make any 'reasonable adjustments' to the employment arrangements or premises that are required to meet the needs of a successful applicant with a disability. Advice from DCC's Wellbeing@Work and the Job Centre Plus Disability team; may be required to ensure an informed decision is reached. Applications for assistance for Access to Work funding through Jobcentre Plus must be made within the first six weeks of an appointment. This applies to ergonomic solutions, i.e. seating, software, desk top aids etc, but does not include all equipment e.g. digital hearing aids.
- 9.3.9 If you are appointing a candidate from the redeployment register, you will need to notify the Central Placement Unit and put the necessary arrangements into place; please see Section 8.4 above and the CPU page on the Source.

## 9.4 Records of interviews

- 9.4.1 Records must be retained by the Personnel Administrative team (for a minimum of twelve months from the date of advertisement) to include:
- assessment and selection criteria used (person specification);

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- application of assessment and selection criteria (e.g. application form);
  - interview and other selection method notes, e.g. question pro-formas, test results;
  - reasons for decisions made.
  - Any additional information such as copies of qualifications, PO7 form etc.
- 9.4.2 Reasons for the decisions taken by the interview panel must be recorded, to be completed and filed by the Appointing Officer. This must include details of all the information used to reach a decision.
- 9.4.3 Interview notes from each panellist must provide sufficient detail on which to base a decision, and may need to be relied upon in defending a decision if challenged.
- 9.4.4 All recruitment paperwork relating to the successful candidate must be retained and placed on his/her personnel file.
- 9.4.5 All recruitment paperwork relating to unsuccessful candidates must be retained for a minimum of twelve months. It must be stored and disposed of securely.
- 9.4.6 All paperwork should be forwarded together with the Appointment Form to the Personnel Admin Officer.
- 9.4.7 Individuals are able to access all the paperwork relating to their recruitment process in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

## **10. APPOINTMENT – PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

- 10.1 There are many pre-employment checks that need to be considered when appointing a candidate such as;
- References
  - An Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check
  - Qualifications
  - Proof of identity and eligibility to work in the UK
  - Medical fitness for successful candidate only
- 10.2 The Equality Act makes it unlawful to make pre-employment enquiries about disability or health, including asking a candidate to complete a health questionnaire provided by an occupational health practitioner, except for enquires that are:
- To identify reasonable adjustments that are required for the recruitment process
  - To establish whether a candidate can undertake assessment as part of the recruitment process

- For diversity monitoring purposes
- To implement positive action measures such as a guaranteed interview under the "Two ticks scheme"
- To establish whether a candidate meets a genuine occupational requirement
- To vet applicants for national security
- Related to the candidates' ability to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the job.

Please see Appendix 6 for details on what needs to be collected prior to the candidate starting employment.

## **11. APPOINTMENT, INDUCTION AND PROBATION**

### **New employees must receive written details of the main terms and conditions of employment within two months of appointment**

11.1 All employees should receive a letter of appointment prior to taking up their employment. There is a legal requirement for a written statement of their employment particulars to be forwarded to them within two months of the start of their employment.

11.2 The written statement of particulars must be accompanied by an appointment pack, to include:

- Details of where collective agreements not included in the statement of particulars can be viewed
- Job description
- Payroll new starter form - Prism 1

There may also be other service specific information that needs to be sent out.

11.3 The type of contract and the terms and conditions of employment must be clear and appropriate for the category of job and the needs of the service.

### **11.4 Removal and disturbance allowance payments**

11.4.1 It is the decision of the Appointing Officer whether to offer financial assistance, in accordance with standard procedures and Devon County Council's Removal and Disturbance Scheme.

### **11.5 Remuneration**

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- 11.5.1 It is normal policy for new entrants to Local Government (and internal appointments to a higher grade) to be appointed to the minimum spinal column point of the grade. However, it is recognised that starting salaries may need to be offered above the minimum in certain circumstances, e.g. to take account of current salary, quality of experience, skills shortages or levels of qualifications; in any case, remuneration should remain within the lower half of the grade for the post.
- 11.5.2 When employees of other local authorities are appointed to a lower graded post with DCC, the starting salary in each case should be the point within the grade of the post which is as near as possible to, but not exceeding, the officer's existing salary.
- 11.5.3 Employees of other local authorities are sometimes appointed to posts on the same grade in Devon. In such cases, the starting salary should be the officer's existing point within the grade.
- 11.5.4 Further salary progression must be in accordance with the pay and grading structure arising from equal pay and must not exceed the JE grade maximum.
- 11.5.5 Any specific salary increases linked to obtaining a qualification etc, must be included in any formal letter of appointment.
- 11.5.6 Accelerated increments may be awarded by a line manager and must be within the JE grade for the post. Such increments must be justifiable in terms of equal pay and an auditable record of the rationale placed on the employee's personnel file.

## 11.6 **Employees must receive a full induction programme**

- 11.6.1 Line managers are to ensure that a full induction programme is conducted for each new member of staff. There are two separate elements to induction – workplace and County Council-wide.
- Workplace induction is carried out by a line manager within a specified timeframe.
  - Corporate Welcome Days are organised by Learning & Development on behalf of the Chief Executive and offer newly appointed staff the opportunity to meet and question Senior Officers and Members in order to develop their knowledge of the County Council. These Welcome Days are held regularly and line managers may nominate employees to attend.
  - All new employees must have access to the Corporate Welcome Pack.
- 11.6.2 An induction checklist should be used. Careful consideration must be given to any special requirements that a disabled appointee may have. For example if the appointee has a hearing impairment it might be appropriate to agree in advance what other staff should be told. For

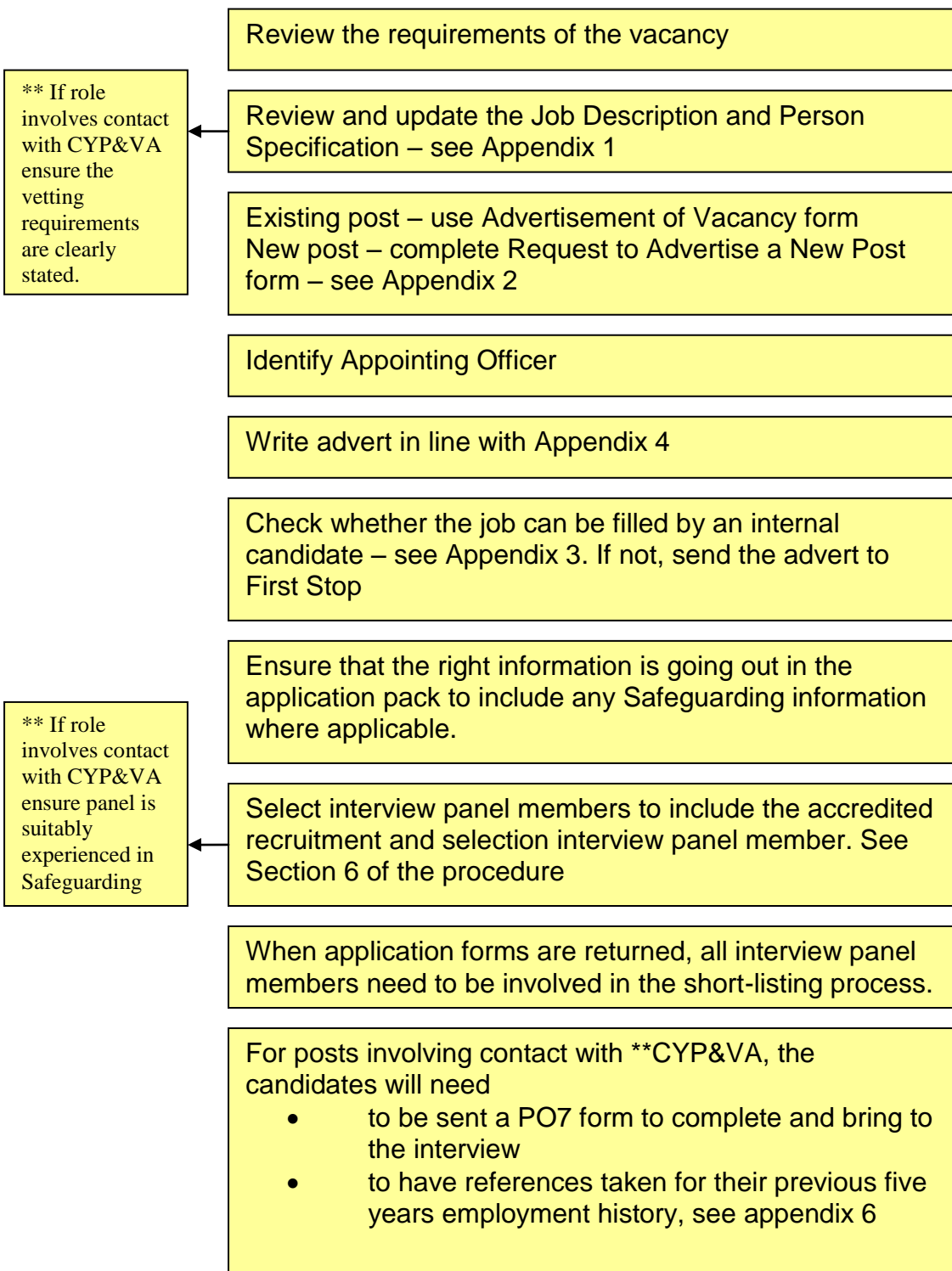
example, if the appointee lip reads it may be appropriate to ask existing staff to face him / her when they are speaking but such matters are always potentially sensitive and should be handled by agreement.

- 11.6.3 Minimum Health and Safety instructions must be delivered on the first day, especially fire safety arrangements, evacuation and security concerns and details of the workplace Health and Safety Representative. Where possible, line managers should not delegate first day induction to other staff, as important messages may not be adequately conveyed to new appointees. At the earliest opportunity key policies including Managing Sickness Absence, Acceptable Behaviour and the Equality Policy should be explained and made available. Policies regarding the use of departmental equipment i.e. personal use or misuse of equipment such as Internet and personal e-mails etc, must be explained.
- 11.6.4 As DCC no longer send a copy of important HR policies out with the application pack, it is essential that as part of the induction, managers direct new appointees to relevant policies such as the Conduct Policy, Capability Policy, Grievance Policy and Data Protection Policy.
- 11.6.5 If the post involves considerable use of display screen equipment (i.e. generally for more than an hour per day) the line manager should ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken. DCC has subscribed to 'Oshens' and this should be used as the method for assessment for all staff (with the exception of those working in schools).
- 11.6.6 It is important that new corporate staff attend the relevant equality training for their role, including the introductory one day workshop.
- 11.7 New employees to local government must be monitored through a six month probationary period.**
- 11.7.1 The performance of new staff needs to be rigorously monitored during the probationary period (if newly appointed to local government), with close attention being paid to learning needs, performance issues and Safeguarding. The HR ONE Helpline and the employee are to be made aware of any areas of concern at the earliest opportunity and action plans for addressing these put in place. (See Probation on the Source).

## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

C.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

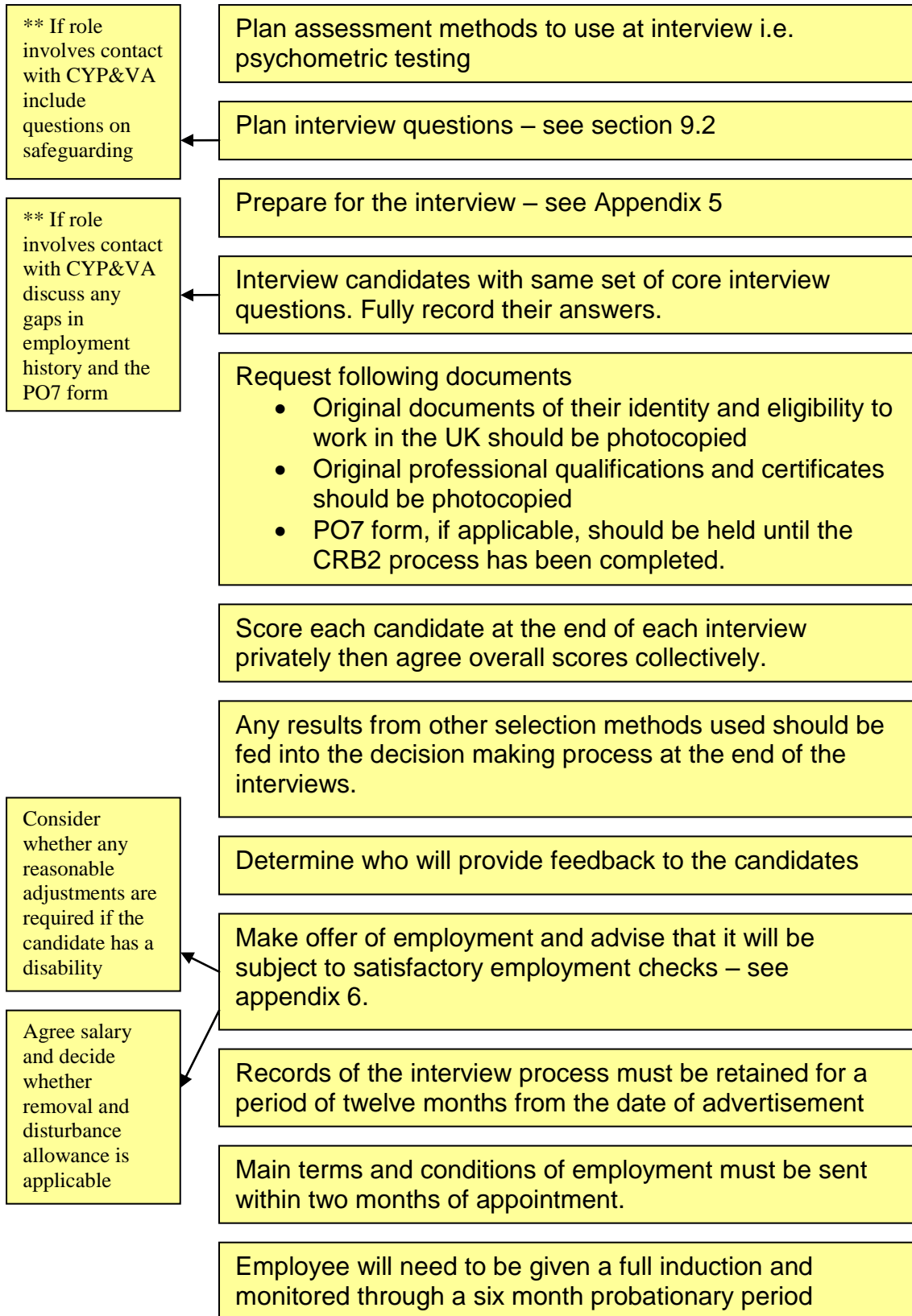


\*\* CYP&VA = children, young people and vulnerable adults

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**\*\* CYP&VA = children, young people and vulnerable adults**

# RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### Writing a job description and person specification

##### **1. Job description must be reviewed/produced**

- 1.1 There must be a job description for each vacancy, detailing the purpose, tasks and responsibilities of the job. It must not unlawfully discriminate against any section of the community. It can help with induction and training and the person specification needs to be aligned to it. For the majority of roles a job description will already exist.
- 1.2 All job descriptions covered by JE must have been approved by the Employee Reward (JE) Team. All newly designed jobs which are covered by JE **must** have a signed job description by the relevant managers and authorised by JE, before being sent to the First Stop Desk for advertising.
- 1.3 For existing jobs, where the job description has not yet been updated to JE format, the previous job description can be used provided it is updated to include the JE Grade, JE job number and JE approved post title.
- 1.4 The JE job description sections and accompanying completion notes provide for a description of the role.

If a disabled candidate applies for the post it may be necessary to review the job description again and make any reasonable adjustments that would remove any substantial disadvantages faced by the disabled candidate. An example might be to reallocate, if practicable, an aspect of the duties that the particular candidate could not undertake because of their disability.

##### **2. Person specification must be reviewed/produced**

- 2.1 The person specification provides the selection criteria and is crucial to ensure an effective, fair, professional recruitment and selection process, and is the basis upon which the selection process is designed and decisions made.
- 2.2 For all newly designed jobs covered by JE the standard person specification format (contained within the standard JE GLPC job description) must be used.
- 2.3 For existing jobs, where the person specification has not yet been updated to JE format, the previous person specification can be used.
- 2.4 The person specification must be aligned with the requirements of the post, as stated in the job description, the person specification sets out

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the selection criteria – this specifies the attributes that a candidate should possess based on the essential and desirable criteria for example:

- minimum **education, training and qualifications**;
- type and level of **experience**;
- **knowledge** needed to fulfil the role;
- **skills and abilities** required for effective performance;
- **other relevant factors** e.g. shift working, ability to travel etc.

**2.5 It must identify the safeguarding responsibilities for roles involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults.**

2.6 These requirements must be justifiable and clearly defined in order to identify:

- What are essential criteria?
- What are desirable criteria?
- How are these to be measured?

2.7 There should be nothing in the person specification that can't be identified within the job description and linked to occupational competencies.

**3. Essential** criteria are those that form the minimum requirements needed to successfully undertake the job and so must be met before any applicant can be short-listed, with the exception of disabled or redeployed applicants, when consideration must be given to what reasonable adjustments or training can be provided. For further information please see 'Employment of People with Disabilities'. The criteria must be genuinely essential and not unnecessarily or unlawfully exclude suitable candidates e.g. asking for a graduate when it's not a necessary requirement to do the job.

**4. Desirable** criteria are those qualities which would be beneficial to optimise job performance. These can be used to reduce the numbers on the short-list if a large number of candidates satisfy the essential criteria e.g. experience of a specific I.T system.

**5. All criteria must be:**

5.1 Measurable against objective measures such as the application form, validated and approved psychometric assessments, practical tests, job simulations, interviews or references.

5.2 Linked to competencies that can be described and demonstrated.

5.3 Related to the needs of the job. If criteria are too narrow, or set at an unnecessarily high standard, there is a danger that this will limit the number of applicants. Conversely, if they are too general or too low a standard, this will increase the pool of applicants and make the short-listing process more difficult. The inclusion of unnecessary or marginal requirements and blanket exclusions can lead to discrimination.

- 5.4 Specific, clear and not open to misinterpretation e.g. rather than stating 'good communication skills', they should specify exactly what is required in the post, such as 'be able to prepare and deliver presentations to small groups'. Any exaggeration or misrepresentation could result in false ideas about the role, which could subsequently demotivate a successful applicant or discourage potential applicants. Inclusion of unjustifiable requirements could prove to be discriminatory.
- 5.5 Do not state a specific time requirement such as three years in a customer service environment, quality is more important than quantity. It would be better stated as 'sufficient experience to perform the role effectively'. Specific time requirements may also be viewed as discriminatory on the basis of someone's age.
- 5.6 Non-discriminatory and apply to all regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, cultural background, religion or belief, or any other difference. The legal exceptions to this are where there is an:

- **Occupational Requirement:** An employer must show that the requirement to discriminate is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim' such as; where certain protected characteristics, as stated in 5.2.1 of the policy, is a genuine and decisive requirement of doing a job, e.g. a Roman Catholic head teacher for a Roman Catholic school.
- **Objective justification of age discrimination:** criteria are permitted if they pursue a legitimate aim and are a proportionate (i.e. appropriate and necessary) means of achieving that aim.

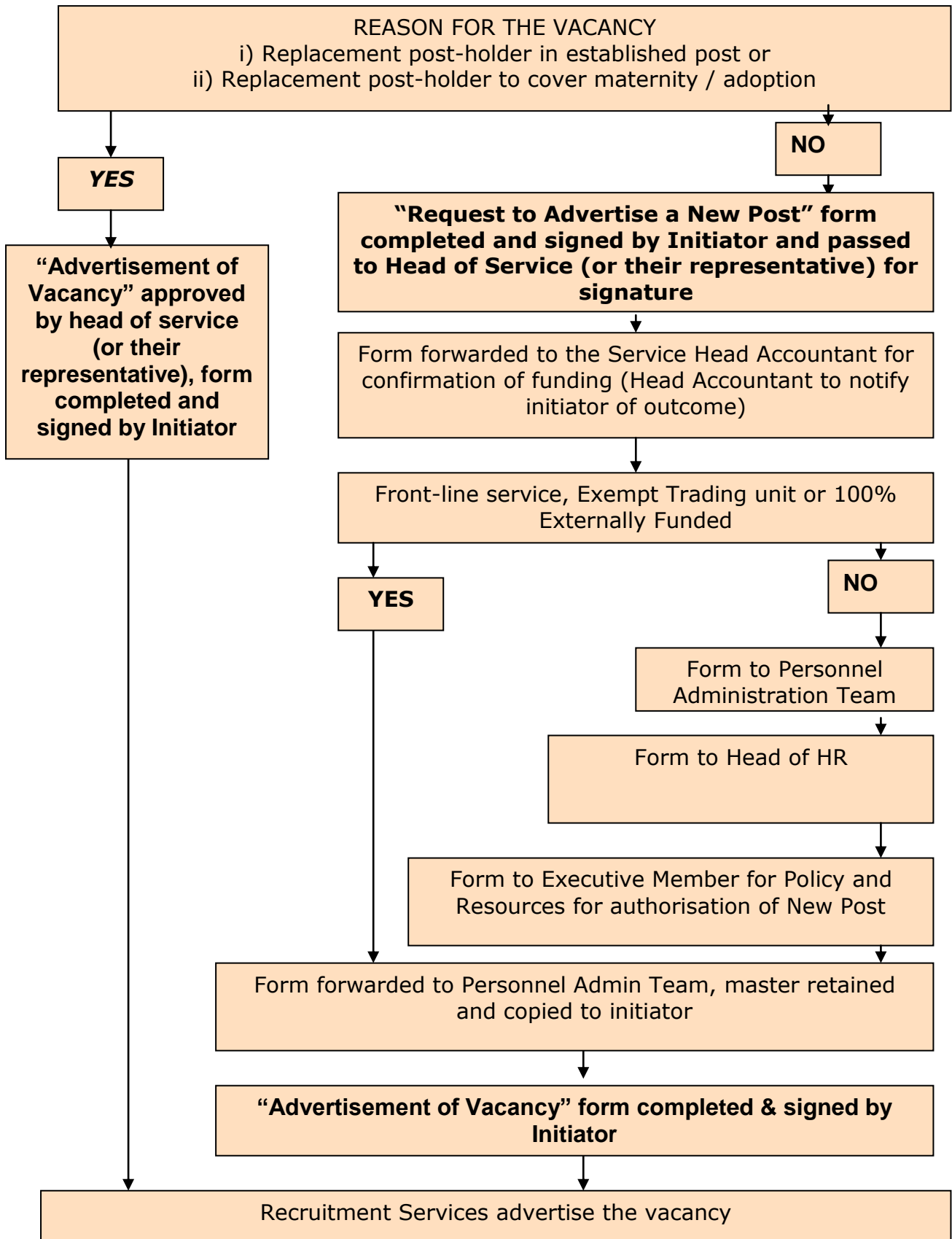
Advice must always be sought from the [HR ONE Helpline](#) if it is thought that a legal exception may apply.

- 5.7 **As reasonable adjustments may have to be made** in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 for those candidates with a disability, both the phrasing and application of requirements must take this into account. For example for a travelling officer post the requirement should be phrased 'ability to travel according to the needs of the job', rather than referring to an 'ability to drive' as this would be potentially discriminatory. It may also be necessary to review the application of the travel requirement and to consider whether alternative ways of working are practical if this would be a reasonable adjustment that would overcome a significant disadvantage faced by a disabled candidate.

# RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

## APPENDIX 2

### Authority to advertise a post





## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

### APPENDIX 3

#### Reasons for not advertising a post externally

- A) **Redeployment - Priority candidate:** is a DCC employee seeking redeployment as currently at risk of termination of employment and who meets the essential criteria for the post, or would meet them with reasonable training and support. In these instances, the employee will have priority status, and therefore only need to demonstrate that they meet the essential selection criteria to undertake the post. If they can do so they must be given a priority interview.
- Applicants are not entitled to a priority interview for a promotion post unless they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, when it may be a 'reasonable adjustment' to allow a priority interview for a post with a higher maximum salary than that at their substantive grade.
- Unless there is a justifiable reason, all recruitment activity should be halted (i.e. adverts not placed, no interviews of other candidates to take place), until priority candidates are interviewed.
- Appointing officers must seek advice from the HR ONE Helpline when contacted by, or in receipt of an application form from, an employee seeking redeployment.
- B) **Ring fencing:** agreed for specified groups of employees due to an internal reorganisation and for objective business reasons. For more information on this see the 'Reorganisation and Review Policy' or contact the HR ONE Helpline.
- C) **Short term requirement:** The requirement is short term and/or requires specialist skills that can be best met by casual staff. Please see Temp Solutions.
- D) **Secondment:** Secondment may be appropriate when an urgent business need arises or to provide an opportunity for staff development. All secondments are subject to a selection process. The substantive post must be kept open unless otherwise agreed with the employee, for example it may be agreed with the employee that they will be able to return to a similar post at their substantive grade
- E) **Temporary or fixed term contract:** If a temporary member of staff has been covering a post satisfactorily, an appointment may be offered if s/he matches the selection criteria and has been meeting the requirements of the post for at least six months. In all cases, the temporary member of staff must have been through a formal (documented) selection process, have been performance appraised and have no outstanding performance issues which would contradict their suitability for the post. An investigation by the

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Appointing Officer should also be undertaken prior to any offer being made to ensure no other staff are disadvantaged by this proposal (including checking the redeployment register). This should also involve consultation with the local Trade Union representatives.

- F) Previous suitable candidate:** A suitable candidate who has been subject to a competitive recruitment process in the preceding three months for the same post at the same establishment, was deemed appointable and matches the selection criteria and who was a suitable appointment for the original post may be appointed. There must be clear documented evidence that the candidate was the next available, suitable applicant for the original position. An investigation by the Appointing Officer should also be undertaken prior to any offer being made to ensure no other staff are disadvantaged by this proposal (including checking the redeployment register). This should also involve consultation with the local Trade Union representatives.

**G) Recognised training scheme**

Where a Devon County Council trainee has been temporarily appointed to a vacancy as part of an identified training scheme, s/he may, on satisfactory completion of the training scheme, be made permanent. Where this involves more than one trainee, the selection process that is followed must be fair, objective and clearly demonstrated.

**Writing an Advertisement**

**1. The advertisement must be:**

- Based on the facts detailed in the job description, person specification and the agreed selection criteria.
- Non-discriminatory and must avoid any gender, ageist or culturally specific language or any implication. It is unlawful to publish an advertisement that might reasonably be understood to indicate that disabled candidates may not be successful or that there is a reluctance to make reasonable adjustments.
- Brief to ensure it is cost-effective and maintains the applicants' interest.

**2. Types of Advert**

**2.1 Composite adverts** are seen as the most cost effective form of local advertising. Adverts appear in the DCC box, in a corporately agreed style. In order to reduce costs and present a more professional image all DCC advertisements appearing in the local press will appear in the following format:

- Location
- Job Title/hours/salary
- 15 - 45 words body text giving the essentials of the post
- Response details/closing date

The adverts pages on the Source can provide guidance on how to achieve this.

**2.2 Display adverts** are the best type of advert to use when you want to make more of an impact, such as with difficult to recruit vacancies or senior positions. Your advert appears on its own. The First Stop Desk professionally typeset your vacancy to maximise the impact of the advert.

**3. The advertisement must also include:**

- The statement: "Devon County Council is committed to equal opportunities in employment and service provision, and is only interested in your ability to do the job."

The 'two ticks' positive about disabled people symbol; this indicates DCC welcomes applications from people with disabilities and guarantees an interview if they meet the essential criteria for the job.

- Where any group (gender / disability / race etc) is underrepresented, a statement should be included such as "Men / women / disabled persons / minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in these roles and we would particularly welcome applications from this / these sectors of our community."
- Where the role requires a Criminal Records Bureau check this should be stated. Please see CRB Disclosure Policy
- Front line posts involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults should include the phrase "Devon County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".

#### 4. **Appropriate advertising media must be selected:**

- All DCC corporate vacancies (except those exempted in Appendix 3) must be advertised in the Choice Magazine and on the DevonJobs website.
- Subject to funding and approval, consideration should be given to advertising in local and national newspapers, professional journals, online media and press targeted at a range of groups including gay magazines, culturally specific media, men and women magazines to attract under-represented people. The First Stop Desk can advise on cost.

#### 5. **Deadlines for Receipt of Advertisements**

- **Local Press/Times Educational Supplement:** Any advert received by 10am on a Friday will be placed in the papers of the following week (with the exception of the Mid Devon/Tiverton Gazette which has a deadline of Tuesday noon for the following Tuesday's publication). Adverts sent via the Personnel Admin team must be received by 5pm Thursday.
- **Choice:** Adverts received by Monday 5pm will be placed in the Choice magazine and DevonJobs website for the following Monday. Adverts sent via the Personnel Admin team must be received by noon Monday. Adverts will be inserted for one week only, unless otherwise requested and will remain on the website until the closing date.
- **National/Trade Press:** Please contact the First Stop Desk (01392 383415) for further details.

#### 6. **Additional guidance**

See the adverts pages on the Source.

- 6.1 The following advice is available from Recruitment Services:
- Information regarding media selection.
  - Information on the success of previous advertisements.
  - Assistance with copy writing.
  - Consideration should be given to recruitment details being made available in languages other than English, in large print, Braille, Moon or Symbol and the spoken word if required by applicants.
- 6.2 Appointing Officers experiencing acute recruitment difficulties should consult with Recruitment Services. Bespoke ways of attracting relevant candidates for specific posts will be sought.

**Planning the interview**

**1. Timing.**

Enough time must be allowed for the interviews and making notes between each candidate. Each candidate should be scheduled for the same length of time, subject to any adjustments required for candidates with a disability. Think about the distances applicants have to travel, or any specific time requests, when allocating interview times.

**2. Agree roles.**

The panel members need to decide how they will operate as a team during the interviews, i.e. who is to chair, do introductions, conclude the interview, etc. It is usual for the Appointing Officer to chair the panel. The first interview of the day should **not** be used as a 'dress rehearsal'. The needs of disabled candidates must be taken into account and it may be a reasonable adjustment to change the roles where the process might put a disabled candidate at a disadvantage. For example a candidate with autism might find being questioned by three panel members daunting and having all questions asked by a single panel member may be a reasonable adjustment. Please see [employment of people with disabilities](#)

**3. Prepare and agree a core framework of questions**

The key points which candidates might be expected to cover in their answers. This should be drawn up by reference to the selection criteria in the person specification, before the interview process commences and must include at least one question on equality and opportunity. The different questions or subject areas should be allocated between the panel members in advance of the interview in accordance with the agreed roles.

**3.1** The Equality Act makes it unlawful to make pre-employment enquiries about disability or health, including asking a candidate to complete a health questionnaire provided by an occupational health practitioner, except for enquiries that are related to the candidate's ability to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the job.

**3.2 For posts involving contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults** the candidate's motivation and attitude towards safeguarding should be explored through questioning, seeking evidence and examples (limiting hypothetical questioning).

**4. General**

**4.1** Re-read the application form, job description and selection criteria to identify areas which may need further exploration and clarification at interview.

**4.2** Agree the appropriate terms and conditions.

- 4.3** The venue of the interview should be accessible, of an appropriate size and one which encourages the interviewers' and interviewee's concentration. It should be comfortable for interviewers and the interviewees (i.e. seating, heating, lighting, ventilation, noise level) and be well sign posted, with a waiting area and meet the needs of any disabled candidates.
- 4.4** Reception arrangements for candidates should be welcoming and the receptionist briefed, including covering any special requirements that a disabled candidate may have.
- 4.5** There should be no interruptions, office phones should be diverted and mobile phones switched off.
- 4.6** It is the Appointing Officer's responsibility to ensure that any reasonable adjustments that candidates with disabilities require are made. For example, ensuring that an interpreter is available if a candidate uses sign language or allowing a candidate additional time to prepare for an interview.
- 4.7** Ideally candidates should be able to view their potential workplace as part of the selection process.
- 4.8** The candidate must be asked to bring along documents to prove their identity and eligibility to work in the UK, a completed PO7 form if the job involves contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, as well as any qualifications required for the role (see [Appendix 6](#)). (Not required for internal candidates provided this information is already on file.)

**Pre-employment checks**

1. It is essential to establish the identity of the potential employee as all subsequent checks rely on it. This can be done from the documents required for establishing eligibility to work in the UK; see the Guidance on Ensuring Eligibility To Work. It is important to see **original certificates and documentation**. If a name has changed then verification is required, e.g. legal name change documents or a marriage certificate. If the documentation provided does not include a photograph then candidates should provide one to be kept on their personnel file.
2. Any job offer made before all checks have been completed must clearly state that it is conditional on satisfactory results for the outstanding checks.
3. **References**
  - 3.1 References need to be treated with some caution by the panel, as they have the potential to be discriminatory due to the possible prejudices of the referees and may be unlawful under the Data Protection Act. In addition, the Equality Act prevents references being taken that require disability or sickness absence details to be provided prior to interview. In view of this, for posts NOT working with vulnerable groups as stated in 3.2 below, references should be obtained after interview and for the successful candidate only.
  - 3.2 For posts involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults, references covering the previous five years employment history should be taken at short-listing stage and once received, followed up by a telephone call to verify them. Where this is not practical, for instance; where there are a large volume of short-listed candidates who because of the nature of their job have multiple previous employments, references may be taken for the successful candidate only. In any case, references should be received, satisfactory and verified prior to the candidate commencing employment.
  - 3.3 The references taken at short-listing stage as stated in 3.2 will not request details about the applicant's sickness records or disability, in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010. Further information regarding the applicant's sickness absence can be obtained after the interview and for the successful candidate only.
  - 3.4 References from the candidate's current employer may be taken after they have received the job offer but in any case, must have been received and be satisfactory, prior to the candidate actually commencing employment.



- 3.5 Appointing Officers must seek a reference from an applicant's current employer. If not in employment, a reference must be sought from the last employer. If in or just completed, full-time education, a reference must be sought from the school, college or university.
- 3.6 All references must be obtained by the Personnel Administrator or the Appointing Officer directly from the referees using the Reference Request Forms.
- 3.7 Appointing Officers should explore further with referees any concerns or omissions about performance or conduct. Written records of verbal conversations with referees should be kept by Appointing Officers and must be followed up in writing by referees.
- 3.8 Appointing Officers must cross-reference employment history dates and reasons for leaving, with those given by candidates on their application forms.
- 4. All new appointees to Devon County Council must be subject to pre-employment health screening**
  - 4.1 All appointments are subject to satisfactory medical clearance prior to appointment. It is unlawful to seek information about health / disability prior to a job offer being made (except as specified in 10.2) and the following procedure must be adhered to.
  - 4.2 Appointing Officers or the Personnel Administrator must complete pages 1 and 2 of the OH1 form in full and pass the whole form to the successful applicant after the job offer is made or post it to the successful applicant with the job offer.
  - 4.3 All successful internal and external applicants must complete the OH1 form. If they answer 'No' to the declaration on page 3 they should return the form to the nominated contact; pages 1-3 should be placed on the personnel file and the applicant deemed fit for the proposed duties. If the applicant answers 'Yes' the whole form should be forwarded directly to Wellbeing@Work for further assessment. Nb: unsuccessful applicants should not be asked to complete the form.
  - 4.4 Wellbeing@Work will inform the Appointing Officer or Personnel Admin of their medical assessment (grading 1, 2 and 3), along with any recommendations relating to the proposed employment; this assessment must be retained on the personnel file.
  - 4.5 If a manager has any concerns about the applicant's fitness for the post s/he should contact Wellbeing@Work.
  - 4.6 Rejection of applicants based on medical assessments should only occur following advice from Wellbeing@Work. Consideration of Wellbeing@Work advice must be given to what reasonable adjustments/restrictions could be made to accommodate an applicant with a disability. This may include involving the HR ONE Helpline and seeking advice from the local Job Centre Plus Disability team.

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- 4.7 Wellbeing@Work will store health questionnaires, confidentially, in line with DCC's Data Protection Policy (Occupational Health and Well-being) and professional standards.
- 5. All new appointees to Devon County Council involving contact with Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults must have a completed satisfactory enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.**
- 5.1 Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check. Please see; CRB Disclosure Policy. This process is managed by the Corporate Records Disclosure Service in the Corporate Resources Service.
- 6. Eligibility to work in the UK**
- 6.1 Under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 it is a criminal offence to employ someone without entitlement or permission to work in the UK. Section 15 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 requires all employers in the UK to make basic document checks on every person before they start work to help ensure that they do not employ illegal workers. Employers are also required to recheck documents at least every 12 months if the employee has time-limited leave to enter or remain in the UK. Employers incur a fine of up to £10,000 per illegal employee. A new offence of knowingly employing an illegal worker can incur an unlimited fine and/or up to two years' imprisonment.
- 6.2 To ensure that recruitment practices are not discriminatory, all short-listed applicants, regardless of any protected characteristics, see 5.2 of policy, must be asked to produce documents as evidence of their right to work in the UK. For more information and guidance on appropriate documentation, please see 'Ensuring Eligibility to Work'.
- 6.3 Copies of the appropriate documentation as specified in 'Ensuring Eligibility to Work' must be taken for all new appointees. The Appointing Officer must date and initial copies of the documentation before it is filed in the appointee's personnel file.
- 6.4 DCC are not licensed to sponsor migrant workers who do not already have relevant visas to work in the UK.
- 6.5 Any visa to work in the UK should be checked with the Home Office to ensure its validity.

7. Candidates applying for posts within Children's Services where they will have unsupervised access to children (i.e. any Children's Home, Fostering/Adoption Service, Intervention posts, Family Centres or Specialised Schools), must comply with the Disqualification from Caring for Children Regulations 2002. See Disqualification from Caring for Children.
8. **All new appointees to Devon County Council must provide verification of qualifications, membership of professional bodies, driving licences, etc.**
  - 8.1 Original professional qualifications and/or highest level of study certificates should be seen at interview and a note of confirmation made by the Appointing Officer.
  - 8.2 Any professional registration or membership requirements must be verified, e.g. ensure social workers have current registration with the General Social Care Council (GSCC). A copy should be taken and kept with the interview notes and a copy placed on the successful applicants personal file.
  - 8.3 For travelling officers intending to use his/her own vehicle, it is the Appointing Officer's responsibility to ensure that their driving licence is verified. Employees shall have included and maintain in their policy of insurance a clause indemnifying the County Council against all third party claims (including those concerning passengers) arising out of the use of the vehicle on official business, provided that this requirement shall not apply where an undertaking has been given by an insurer to the County Council or the appropriate association of local authorities.
  - 8.4 The Appointing Officer must date and initial copies of documentation placed on the personnel file of the successful candidate.

# RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

## Terms and Abbreviations

Corporate	Refers to the whole of Devon County Council except for schools.
CPU	Central Placement Unit: an internal DCC service providing support for redeployees.
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau checks
DCC	Devon County Council
DCSF	<u>Department for Children, Schools and Families</u>
First Stop Desk	DCC Recruitment Services advertising team
GLPC	Greater London Provincial Council – the format used for JE job descriptions and person specifications.
GOQ	Genuine Occupational Qualification: where being of a certain gender or racial group is a genuine occupational qualification such as providing personal services to promote the group's welfare, e.g. Chinese project worker providing an advice and counselling service for Chinese young people; female care staff to bathe female clients.
GOR	Genuine Occupational Requirement: where being of a particular race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is a genuine and decisive requirement of doing a job, e.g. a Roman Catholic head teacher for a Roman Catholic school.
JE	<u>Job Evaluation</u> : a process to tackle inequalities at work by awarding equal pay for work of equal value.
Job	A generic term, which covers a specified range of duties and responsibilities, under a single job title. A 'job' may apply to one or more employees.
NJC 'Green Book'	<u>The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service</u> (or Green Book) is the guide to national pay and conditions for local authority employees.
OH1	<u>Pre-Employment Health Declaration</u>
OPQs	Occupational Personality Questionnaires
Post	Refers to an employment held by a member of staff and is specific to them individually.
Priority candidate	A DCC employee seeking redeployment who meets the essential criteria for the post, or would meet them with reasonable training and support.
Prism 1	Starters form for Payroll

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## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

### POLICY HISTORY

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact	Version/Implementation Date	Review Date
Dec 2007	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Amendments due to age discrimination legislation.</li> <li>2) Amending instructions for job description and specifications due to JE and processes for red circled applicants.</li> <li>3) Revising instructions for employment checks.</li> <li>4) Incorporating advertising guidance.</li> <li>5) Updating hyperlinks.</li> <li>6) New policy format and tidying up.</li> <li>7) Addition of flowchart and list of terms and abbreviations.</li> <li>8) Remuneration section changes.</li> <li>9) Numerous other small changes to update or improve text.</li> </ol>	P&S	Dec 2007	
Dec 2007	<p>Recruitment Standards document separated into chapters for easier reference.</p> <p>Link to Secondment on the Source added.</p>	P&S	May 2008	
Dec 2007	Section 11. Paragraph 11.4.5. Amended to add 'or an accredited officer'.	P&S	July 2008	
Dec 2007	Section 10. Paragraph 10.5. Amended from 'must ... be interviewed' to 'must ... be invited for interview'.	P&S	Sept 2008	
Dec 2007	Section 12 amended. New para. added 12.6.6. in line with new contractual requirement.	P&S	1 Oct 2008	
Dec 2007	Section 12 amended - link updated in para. 12.4.4 to go to new reference request forms.	P&S	24 Oct 2008	

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Dec 2007	<p>Document reformatted. Sections to be available individually as PDFs and in one combined Word document.</p> <p>Section 12.7 updated in line with Eligibility to Work in the UK guidance.</p>	P&S	11 Nov 2008	
Dec 2007	<p>Updated health screening procedures.</p> <p>Additional safeguarding guidance added throughout.</p> <p>Additional service sources for guidance added.</p> <p>Guidance added to check the redeployment register.</p> <p>Links to accreditation guidance added.</p> <p>Addition: Recruitment paperwork relating to unsuccessful candidates must be stored and disposed of securely.</p> <p>Added 'It is essential to establish the identity of the potential employee as all subsequent checks rely on it.'</p> <p>Guidance added on taking copies of identity documentation for new appointees.</p> <p>Removed details of probation timings and referred to Probation on the Source.</p> <p>Other minor updates e.g. P&amp;P changed to CR Service, hyperlinks updated, etc.</p>	P&S	Being updated during 2009 but not implemented until next version.	
May 2010	<p>Reformatted and updated in light of legislation and new Safeguarding procedures. Sent to Moira Andrews; Bob King; Andy Turner; Steve White &amp; Helen C to take to TCC 17/3/2010 for consultation. TCC did not have any feedback. No other feedback rec'd.</p>	P&S AP/HA	May 2010	
July 2010	<p>Amended following policy sections to delete reference to Independent Safeguarding legislation as new Government has halted this to review it: - Policy 6.3, 6.5, 7.2. Procedure – last bullet point 1.1, amended 1.6, 4.4, deleted last bullet point 5.2,</p>	P&S HA	July 2010	

	amended 9.3.6, removed reference to ISA in 10.1, amended bullet point 3 sect 3 App 4, amended sect 5 App 6, deleted 5.2 App 6. Removed ISA from Terms at back.			
December 2010	Policy amended following Equality Act 2010 changes	P&S	December 2010	
	Policy amended re process for requesting references – Equality Act requires absence records and disability info to be taken for successful candidate only.	P&S	February 2011	
	Updated in line with Equality Act 2010 – Positive discrimination and Occupational Requirement replacing GOR & GOQ		April 2011	
October 2013	Amendment to DSE, Safer Recruitment Service and Removal and Disturbance Scheme Links.  Update references from HR Helpdesk to HR ONE Helpline	HR ONE	October 2013	
January 2014	Replacement of references to Vacancy Management with Turnover Management  General tidy up of format and links	HR ONE	January 2014	