

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION GUIDELINES



1.0 INTRODUCTION



The recruitment and selection process is overseen by the Resourcing Team. However, responsibility for many aspects of the process lies with recruiting managers who will supervise the staff being appointed.

These guidelines have been written for all those involved in the recruitment and selection process and apply to the recruitment and selection of all staff to the University. They provide practical information on the various components of the University's process, the minimum standards to be met, advice on good practice, and help ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants and employees by promoting and maintaining professional standards, within a framework of consistency, fairness and good practice.

The use of these guidelines will be overseen by the Resourcing Team and will be reviewed and updated as necessary to take account of university developments, changes in recruitment activity and new legislation. Advice on interpretation or specific problems can be sought from the Resourcing Team.

It is expected that all staff involved in recruitment and selection will comply with following these requirements.

The University's recruitment documentation can be found on the Resourcing Pages and in the Hiring Manager toolkit on Eploy, our recruitment platform.

2.0 OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

These guidelines are designed to:

- promote staff awareness of their role and responsibilities in recruitment and selection;
- assist managers in attracting, selecting and retaining the most suitable candidates;
- encourage a systematic and objective approach;
- help individuals identify their training and development needs with regard to recruitment and selection;
- ensure an active commitment to equal opportunities;
- ensure compliance with employment legislation relating to recruitment and selection.

The outcome of their use should be:

- the creation of a positive image of the University and candidate experience for all applicants;
- high quality candidates with relevant skills and experience applying for UEA posts;
- that candidates are selected objectively on merit;
- that illegal discrimination does not occur;
- less likelihood of a poor selection decision.

3.0 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

All recruitment activity takes place against a background of rules and regulations – much of it laid down by employment legislation.

Custom and practice, rather than formal regulation, governs some other aspects of the recruitment process and requires that they are handled in a particular way. Where there are specific rules – for instance, about the composition of selection committees – these are included in the relevant section of this document detailing the steps in the recruitment of particular categories of staff. Those elements, which are common to all staff recruitment, might be described as ‘general principles’ rather than regulations, but it is as important for recruiters to be aware of these.



3.1 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

3.1.1 DISCRIMINATION

Employers have a legal responsibility to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the employment of staff.

Equality of opportunity is an integral part of the recruitment and selection process. UEA is committed to ensuring there is no unlawful discrimination (direct or indirect) on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, religion or belief, political belief, pregnancy or maternity, membership of a trade union, part-time working, or age.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the recruitment process at UEA to ensure no job applicant receives less favourable treatment than another job applicant on any of these grounds.

An individual who feels they have been discriminated against on one of these grounds may make a claim of discrimination against an organisation to an employment tribunal. The 'Burden of Proof' applied by a Tribunal to claims of illegal discrimination has two levels:

- 1) the Appellant (employee/applicant) has to show a prima facie case.
- 2) If 1) is met, the respondent (employer/prospective employer) has to prove, on the balance of probabilities, that the treatment of which the appellant complains was in no sense whatsoever based on grounds of discrimination, i.e. they did not commit an unlawful act of discrimination.



Where a case of unlawful discrimination is found, there is no ceiling on the Employment Tribunal award.

Discrimination naturally occurs in the selection process when one person is selected over another. Where selection is based on merit assessed against the requirements of the role this is not unlawful. Unlawful discrimination is where the decision is based on the grounds identified above.

The law defines four types of discrimination: Direct, Indirect, Victimisation and Harassment. The first two may occur in the process of recruitment and selection and are therefore defined below in this context.

Direct discrimination:

Occurs when a person experiences less favourable treatment than another on the basis of one or more of the areas of illegal discrimination listed above. For example, a decision is taken not to appoint a woman to a post because she is (or may become) pregnant or a person is not appointed because they are Asian.

Indirect discrimination:

Occurs when a general, apparently neutral, provision, criteria or practice is applied to all candidates, but which disproportionately disadvantages an individual who represents one or more of the categories of unlawful discrimination, AND which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, a panel may be trying to decide between two equally matched candidates, one male and one female both of whom obtained their PhDs in the same year. The panel may agree that the deciding factor is the number of post-doctoral publications. However as a raw measure this may be indirectly discriminatory as the female candidate may have taken time out to have children, and the comparison between numbers of publications since the year in which both obtained their PhDs may not take into account the difference in working years each candidate has had to publish.

Key areas of discrimination to be aware of in relation to recruitment are:

- direct and indirect discrimination;
- that public bodies, such as the University, have a duty to promote equality;
- that there is a legal duty to make adjustments for disabled candidates;
- that positive discrimination is illegal, for example selecting someone on the basis of their race, gender, age, etc., to balance the existing workforce;
- that positive action is not illegal, e.g. where support is given to help individuals qualify for consideration, e.g. from underrepresented groups.

Areas in which discrimination may occur in the process of Recruitment and Selection include:

- discrimination in recruitment methods, for example:
 - discriminatory language in adverts;
 - discriminatory placing of advertisements;
 - informal advertising - word of mouth, personal recommendation.
- direct or indirect discrimination in job criteria;
- discrimination in the assessment and selection of candidates;
- discriminatory questions or remarks at interview;
- failing to inform women on maternity leave of vacancies;
- salary differentials that cannot be justified.

3.1.2 DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, the University also has a legal duty to ensure that a disabled person is not disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice applied, or by a physical feature of an employer's premises. UEA will also ensure that job applicants and employees who are disabled, become disabled, or have had a disability receive no less favourable treatment than others on the grounds of their disability unless, after making reasonable adjustments, there remain material and substantial reasons why it is not possible to ensure this.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments also applies to the various stages of the recruitment and selection process, see section 3.1.3, as well as within employment, and as such it is essential that we have mechanisms in place to enable reasonable adjustments to be made within a reasonable timeframe. Discrimination can take place at any stage of the recruitment and selection process and as such adjustments may be required at the following stages

1. Advertisement/provision of recruitment information
2. Application/shortlisting/invitation to interview
3. Interview/testing/assessment/offer
4. Post-appointment

Some examples of reasonable adjustments within stages 1 - 3 above are detailed below:

- Providing recruitment information in alternative formats when requested, i.e. large print, audio, Braille;
- Accepting applications via alternative methods, i.e. audio tape, video;

- Providing alternative procedures for testing/assessment, i.e. oral rather than a manual test, extra time to carry out assessment;
- Providing alternative equipment or allowing candidate to bring necessary equipment, i.e. keyboard;
- Providing an interpreter or reader;
- Changing the location of an interview/testing room to ensure accessibility.



Please note that whilst an individual may request an adjustment to be made, as an employer we will determine whether we consider the request to be reasonable or not. Therefore each request must be considered on its own merits and a decision made as to whether the request is reasonable and will be facilitated.

You may receive a request by telephone, letter, email, in person or even via a third party. It is essential that you obtain as much information and clarification regarding the request from the individual or their representative and keep a written record of these details. As the recruitment process operates within tight deadlines it is essential that you discuss the matter fully with the Resourcing Team the same day the request is received, or as soon as possible thereafter. Once due consideration has been given to the request and a decision made as to whether the request for an adjustment is approved or not, the Resourcing Team will respond to the individual accordingly, or advise you on how to respond.



3.1.3 INTERVIEWING DISABLED CANDIDATES

Where a candidate advises that adjustments are necessary for interview, the University has a legal duty under the Disability Discrimination Act to make these reasonable adjustments. The nature of any adjustments to be made will depend on the nature of a candidate's disability. If the candidate is a wheelchair user, the room clearly needs to be accessible with suitable furniture if the candidate is attending in person. Consideration should be given to other arrangements, for example to enable a candidate with a hearing impairment to lip-read if required. Bright or strong light may discomfort those who are visually impaired. The panel should avoid sitting in front of a window that leaves the candidate facing the sun (they will see the panel only in silhouette), and air conditioning may need to be switched off to avoid interference to a hearing aid. Candidates with a visual or hearing impairment respectively may request the assistance of a signer or an interpreter.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the selection panel to ensure that appropriate and reasonable adjustments have been made in respect of any candidate with a disability, and to ensure that the conduct of the interview, its content and its tone, is similar for all candidates. Depending on the nature of the disability, the Chair may feel it more appropriate to offer the candidate a virtual interview.

It is also the responsibility of the panel Chair to ensure that where a candidate has declared that due to their disability they would require assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, arrangements are in place for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, in accordance with the **Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities Policy**, which can be found [here](#).

The interview of the disabled candidate takes place in the same way (allowing for adjustments) as with candidates who have not identified any disability. This ensures that all candidates are assessed against the same criteria and the same questions.

To be consistent with the approach set out in the preceding paragraph, discussion of any reasonable adjustments to the working environment or arrangements which might be required to enable a candidate with a disability to take up the offer of an appointment, if made, should not take place until the selection interview itself has been completed, as follows:

Should the candidate indicate a wish to discuss any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary if they are the preferred candidate they should be re-assured that the interview itself has been concluded, but as candidates will be the persons with the greatest insight into their own condition, they are welcome to offer their views on what type of adjustments may need to be taken into account, should they be the successful candidate. **However, it is of absolute importance that the candidate is told that this discussion is separate from and supplementary to the interview, and anything said during this discussion will not affect the decision of the panel in selecting the most appropriate person for the post.** In this way, seeking comment and advice on this from the candidate after the interview has closed should help to re-assure them that the same assessment criteria is being applied to all candidates and that all are being treated equally. During any such discussion at the end of the interview, care should be taken to restrict any questions relating to 'reasonable adjustment' to the impact of the individual's disability solely on their capacity to undertake the particular role under consideration. Equally, a candidate may choose to make no mention of their disability and in this case it is not necessary for the panel to refer to it, as any

discussions regarding reasonable adjustments can take place at a later time should they be the preferred candidate.

Following interview the preferred candidate is selected on merit.

If a candidate with a disability is the preferred candidate, i.e. the candidate most closely matched to the person specification disregarding their disability, the panel chair should liaise with the Resourcing Team in order that guidance on 'reasonable adjustments' can be explored, if necessary before the verbal offer is made. These may include changes to premises, adjustment of hours of work, provision of special equipment and/or special training, or of a reader or interpreter. Support (including financial) is often available from outside agencies with whom the HR/Senior HR Business Partners will liaise, if appropriate.

If a disabled candidate accepts a post, it is a requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act that appropriate adjustments are carried out before their start date and are monitored throughout employment.

3.2 DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Act 1998 places responsibility on any organisation to process personal data (whether in manual records or in electronic form) in a fair and proper way. Failure to do so may result in a criminal offence being committed.

The data contained in applications for employment may be used only for the purposes of shortlisting, conducting an interview and, if the application is successful, establishing an HR record and for compiling Higher Education Statistics. Information must not be retained any longer than is necessary for these purposes.

It is also important to remember that under the Data Protection Act, candidates can request to see shortlisting and interview notes as they form part of a set of information about the candidate. All such requests must be made to the University Data Protection Officer.

Personal data provided on the application form regarding Equal Opportunities must not be used for selection purposes. This data will not be available to panel members. Such data will be retained by the People and Culture Division only for as long as is necessary to provide equal opportunities monitoring statistics.



3.3 VERIFICATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO WORK IN THE UK

The provisions of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 require employers to verify that a person selected for employment is entitled to work in the United Kingdom (UK). The University is required to see and take a copy of an appropriate document before employment commences.

In order for us to comply with the above Act, the University requests verification of current immigration status to be provided at interview where possible. Candidates shortlisted for interview will be asked to provide an appropriate document as evidence of current immigration status in the UK. A list of approved documents for verification to work in the UK, as provided by the Home Office, can be found on the Resourcing webpages, under Recruitment and Selection, together with guidance on how to conduct a right to work check.

All candidates offered employment are required to produce an appropriate document before the first day of work. This applies to all employees, whether on indefinite or fixed-term contracts, and to all staff employed on a casual basis via casual contracts, Associate Tutor contracts or UEA4As.

The template 'invitation to interview' letter within Eploy and the information provided to candidates as part of the appointment

process covers the provisions of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 in respect of the requirement to check the eligibility to work in the UK of all potential employees.

Where appropriate documents are available, co-ordinators of recruitment processes and/or Chairs of Panels will need to see and verify appropriate documentation at interview. The successful candidate's document(s) must be uploaded to the candidates record within the Hiring Manager portal in Eploy.

All offers of appointment will be subject to satisfactory evidence of right to work. In addition, if the successful candidate fails to provide a document, has not provided the correct document, or requires specific immigration approval, the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will liaise with them directly to acquire this.

Students on a Tier 4/Student visa must meet a number of conditions **before** they can commence employment. They must hold a current student visa, must not work more than specified hours per week stated on their visa during term-time, typically 20, must provide evidence of semester dates covering the duration of employment, complete a Tier 4/Student visa declaration and cannot fill a permanent, full-time vacancy.

3.4 CERTIFICATES OF SPONSORSHIP

On 1 January 2021 a new points-based immigration system was introduced which applies to individuals of all nationalities, with the exception of British and Irish nationals, who enter the UK to undertake employment unless they hold alternative valid immigration permission.

As part of a new points-based immigration system, the Tier 2 (General) route used to enable visa nationals to work at UEA was replaced with a Skilled Worker route. Where a prospective employee does not have the right to work in the UK it may be possible for the University to apply for a Skilled Worker Certificate of Sponsorship in respect of employment into a specific post should eligibility criteria be met.

The Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will be able to establish if a candidate requires a visa as part of the pre-employment checks. Where sponsorship is required and eligibility criteria is met, the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will issue a Skilled Worker Certificate of Sponsorship via the UK Visas and Immigration Sponsorship Management System on behalf of the University.

Certificates of Sponsorship are issued for a maximum initial period of up to 5 years. The associated permission to enter/stay must be applied for by the individual who wishes to take up the post/apply for an extension within three months of the date of issue on the Certificate of Sponsorship.

The Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will also provide relevant information for applicants who meet the criteria to apply for a Global Talent visa, wish to apply for a Skilled Worker visa extension, switch into another visa route or who wish to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain.

This process is subject to strict immigration legislation and regulations which are frequently updated. The current regulations can be accessed on the [UK Visas and Immigration website](#) and on the Resourcing webpages, under Visas and Immigration.

3.5 PERMISSION TO ENTER/STAY



Once a Certificate of Sponsorship has been issued the individual for whom this has been approved must make a personal application to UK Visas and Immigration for either permission to enter, or permission to stay if they are already in the UK. The Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will provide guidance to the individual on the process to be followed.

The individual will continue to be responsible for their application for permission to enter or stay and will be required to supply UK Visas and Immigration with appropriate documentary proof in order for that application to be successful.

Permission to enter must be granted, and verified before the employee can commence work. Under certain circumstances it may be possible for the individual to commence work prior to the visa being granted and verified if they are applying for permission to stay in the UK. The Staff Immigration and Compliance Manager will provide further advice in such cases.

If an individual is unable to provide the necessary documentation the University may enforce a statutory bar on their employment.

3.6 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

For a limited number of posts, the University is required to seek a disclosure relating to any potential employee's criminal record. Disclosures are typically necessary for specific duties, positions and licences included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975) and/or the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) regulations, for example, regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children, specified activities with adults in receipt of health care or social care services and applicants for gaming and lottery licences. DBS clearance is also required where employees will as part of their employment undertake duties within the NHS.

UEA is a registered body with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which was established for these purposes. The University is required to adhere to a strict Code of Practice and has established guidance notes on the Disclosure Process to ensure compliance.

At the beginning of the recruitment process the Head of School/ Manager must indicate on the Vacancy Requisition Form whether the appointment is subject to a criminal record check and if so at what level. The Resourcing Team will confirm whether this is appropriate in line with DBS regulations, and if so, the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will be responsible for co-ordinating all applications concerning disclosure requests.

The UEA Guidelines on the Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure Process also contain information and advice about the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, whereby conviction for some criminal offences can be regarded as 'spent' after a specified period of time. Once a conviction is 'spent', the person does not have to reveal its existence in most circumstances and can answer 'no' to the question "do you have a criminal record?" on an application form, unless the position is subject to a disclosure or the organisation is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. For NHS employment convictions are never 'spent' and therefore for joint appointments between the University and the NHS, or in cases where an employee will as part of their employment undertake duties within the NHS, advice should be sought from the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.

It should be remembered that it is an offence for anyone who has access to criminal record checks to disclose information about spent convictions unless officially authorised to do so.

Where relevant, criminal record information will be checked and verified using the Disclosure and Barring Service after the completion of the recruitment and selection process and acceptance, by the incoming postholder, of the post offered.

The offer of appointment will contain a statement confirming the offer is subject to receipt of a Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) that is satisfactory to the University, and guidance on the process will be provided by the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.

The Staff Immigration and Compliance Team will be responsible for coordinating the application with the candidate, ensuring evidence of identity is checked before the DBS process commences.

The DBS will send a copy of the Disclosure document to the individual and the University will be notified of the result using the online application system. Satisfactory clearance will be followed up by letting the individual know their employment is no longer conditional in that regard. Clearance which is unsatisfactory to the University will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Further information on UEA's policy can be obtained by referring to UEA Guidelines on the Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure Process and employing ex-offenders which can be found on the Resourcing webpages.



3.7 FIXED-TERM EMPLOYEE (PREVENTION OF LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT) REGULATIONS 2002

Fixed-term appointments should only be made where a clear and stated business need can be demonstrated, and the reason for the fixed-term contract will be documented in the employee's letter of appointment. Examples of necessary and objective reasons or circumstances could include:

- the post requiring specialist expertise or recent experience not already available within the institution in the short term;
- cover for an identified period of specific staff absence, such as maternity/paternity or adoption leave, long term sickness cover or secondment;
- providing an existing post-holder with an identified short-term career opportunity;
- input from specialist practitioners;
- no reasonably foreseeable prospect of short-term funding being renewed nor other external or internal funding being available or becoming available. Where the short-term funding has already been renewed, continuing use of the fixed term contract would need to be justified by objective reasons;
- a situation where student or business demand can be clearly demonstrated as particularly uncertain.

These examples are those provided by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) Fixed-Term and Casual Employment Guidance for Higher Education Institutions, but this should not be taken as an exhaustive list.

In all cases, the Resourcing Team must be consulted prior to the advertisement of the proposed fixed-term appointment.

The Fixed-Term Employee Regulations were introduced to prevent employees engaged on fixed-term contracts (i.e. those where the employment contract has a stated end date) being treated less favourably than comparable employees on indefinite contracts. The impact of the Regulations is substantial for UEA, and the Higher Education sector in general, because of the high number of Fixed-Term Contract Research, hourly-paid and term-time staff within its employment.

The Regulations do not prohibit use of fixed-term contracts. However, the following key elements of the Fixed-Term Employees Regulations demonstrate the reduced attraction of employing staff on fixed-term contracts:

- a fixed-term appointment can no longer be simply terminated at the end of the fixed-term contract purely because that contract has expired. This would be deemed an unfair dismissal in law and the employee may have recourse to an employment tribunal on grounds of unfair dismissal. If the reason for cessation of the post is redundancy, a redundancy process must be followed to deem the dismissal fair;
- whilst there is no restriction on the length of an initial fixed-term contract, where there are two or more successive contracts that last more than four years in total there is an automatic right to an indefinite contract, unless there is an objective reason for continuing on a fixed-term basis; and therefore, as fixed-term employees may now subsequently become indefinite employees, the impact of advertising a post on a fixed-term, rather than an indefinite basis, should be considered in terms of the candidates it is likely to attract;
- no fixed-term employee should receive less favourable treatment than a comparable indefinite employee and if they perceive this to be so, may request a written explanation of the differences and make a claim to an employment tribunal. This less favourable treatment could include being selected for



dismissal purely on the grounds that they are employed on, and subsequently dismissed from, a fixed-term contract;

- all employees who complete more than two years' service, whether fixed-term or indefinite, now qualify for a redundancy payment if their service is terminated on grounds of redundancy;
- it will not be deemed a fair reason to dismiss at the expiry of a fixed-term contract on the grounds that an employee has not performed well. It is expected that performance will be managed throughout the contract. If performance is sufficient an issue that the employee should be dismissed, this would fall within another fair reason for dismissal – that of capability, but would need to be managed and dealt with as a separate issue to the expiry of a fixed-term contract.

4.0 UEA RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND COMMON FEATURES

The elements laid out in this section relate to the recruitment and selection process for all categories of staff within the University. Described as 'general principles' rather than regulations, it is important that those involved in the recruitment process are familiar with these.

The Resourcing Team is responsible for co-ordinating the recruitment and selection process for all advertised academic (ATR/ATS) and academic-related (ALC) appointments once shortlisting has been completed. For all other categories of staff appointments are co-ordinated by the Faculty, School or Division once shortlisting has been completed. Where there are differences in process between the two groups, being 1) academic and academic related staff, and 2) other categories of staff, any information and guidance which relates only to one of these two groups is identified within the relevant section.

The Resourcing Team also process Named Individual appointments.

4.1 RECRUITMENT TRAINING

It is the policy of the University that all those involved on recruitment panels shall have received appropriate training, but it is also recognised that this level of compliance will only be achieved over time. Therefore, as a minimum the Chair and one other senior member of the selection panel will have received training within the previous two years and will ensure that the principles of the training are complied with. The Organisational Development Team is responsible for co-ordinating recruitment and selection training programmes which include both initial and update training, and maintaining a record of those who have received appropriate training. For details on relevant training courses please visit [Learnupon](#).



4.2 MONITORING THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

The monitoring and analysis of applicants by protected characteristics is an important element in the University's recruitment process.

For all vacancies applicants are required to complete equal opportunities questions, which are only seen by appropriate colleagues within the People and Culture Division. Analysis of the collated data will be reviewed by the Resourcing Team in order that any anomalies can be addressed.

4.3 RECRUITMENT PLANNING

The appointment of any member of staff can be demanding and time-consuming, therefore preparation is important and careful planning is required.

At this stage a timetable for the recruitment and selection process should be determined. The recruitment process should not be unnecessarily delayed, since one consequence of a long process may be applicants withdrawing their applications having obtained employment elsewhere in the interim.

Should the School, Division or Faculty wish to spread the selection process over more than one day there may be additional cost implications and these plans should be discussed in advance with the Resourcing Team.

4.4 CREATING AND REVIEWING DETAILS OF THE ROLE: JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

When a vacancy arises, or additional staff resources are required, a job description and person specification must be compiled, or updated for replacement posts, by the School, Division or Faculty. These documents will provide the basis for all subsequent steps in the recruitment and selection process and will help to ensure that the process is carried out systematically and fairly. Template job descriptions and person specifications are available within Eploy. A well-prepared job description and person specification will enhance the recruitment and selection process in the following ways:

- Providing clarity on exactly what is needed;
- Format and target the advert to attract suitable candidates, deter unsuitable candidates and avoid too many unsuitable responses;
- Help to ensure that applicants have an informed understanding of the scope and purpose of the job and of their possible suitability for it, thereby enabling them to structure their application against the person specification, and increasing the chances of a good fit between job and candidates;
- Help the recruiting manager to identify how best to measure the identified criteria by:

- o Identifying the areas which need questions to be asked at interview;
- o Identifying appropriate selection methods such as presentations, in-tray exercises or psychometric exercises;
- Enable shortlisting to be carried out against objective criteria;
- Help to avoid discrimination;
- Enable Occupational Health to identify any special requirements or training the postholder may need;
- Help to structure a training plan for the successful candidate.



The aim of a job description is to set out details concerning the purpose of the job, its main duties and responsibilities, its place in the unit's organisational structure, and any necessary special working conditions such as shift working patterns. The person specification is of equal, if not greater, importance - it should set out the specific skills, qualifications and experience required to perform the role and will form the basis of the selection decision and enable the selection panels to ensure objectivity in their ranking of candidates.

It is important that both documents relate precisely to the needs of the job and that each criterion can be objectively justified.

Requirements that cannot be objectively justified may lead to indirect discrimination, by disproportionately disadvantaging particular groups of potential applicants; for example requiring a specific UK qualification where an overseas equivalent would be equally acceptable, see section 3.1.

When considering applications against the person specification criteria, please note that if the applicant does not meet the minimum threshold for any one of the essential criterion they should not be shortlisted. It is therefore important to avoid setting these unnecessarily high. If they are inflated beyond the level necessary for effective job performance, the risk is that the appointee may become frustrated in the role and leave. At the same time it is important that the criteria are not understated as this could result in the appointment of an ill-equipped candidate who may be unable to carry out the requirements of the role.

It should be remembered that in some cases a candidate who is considered 'over-qualified' may wish to apply for the job for personal reasons, and so long as they are clear about the role requirements and salary range offered this should not be seen as a problem.

The job description and person specification must be reviewed each time a post becomes vacant and it should not be automatically assumed that these remain unchanged since the last time an appointment to the post was made. Consideration should also be given to possible opportunities, for example, changes in work patterns, in technology and in methods of working, and any other factors that might affect the role, or other roles with whom the appointee will work.

For **ATR Academic and Research (RA) posts**, where it is known that the appointee will be undertaking research on NHS premises, and therefore may require a Research Passport, please ensure this is mentioned in the job description so the Resourcing Team can clarify from NHS guidelines whether this, and/or a Disclosure and Barring Service check is required.

The job description and person specification should be sent to the HR/Senior HR Business Partner for grading before a Vacancy Requisition Form is completed. Template job descriptions are available on Eploy.

4.5 VACANCY REQUISITION FORM

All vacancies must be submitted on a Vacancy Requisition Form via the Hiring Manager portal on Eploy. This form will capture all relevant information about the role as well as advertising, shortlisting and interview details.



Depending on the role and how it is funded it may require approval. Where approval is required, this will be automatically be requested via Eploy.

Recruitment to any UEA-funded like-for-like replacement posts which are already funded in a Division or Faculty budget, or Maternity cover posts will follow a light touch approval process and will require authorisation from the Finance Business Partner.

Recruitment to any UEA-funded additional post or replacement post with a change in grade or FTE will require approval from the Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor/Divisional Director and the Finance Business Partner.

Wholly externally funded posts without an R, O, T or E prefix will require Finance Business Partner approval.

Posts which are wholly externally funded with an R, O, T or E prefix or which are exempt from the approval process will not require approval.

4.7 ADVERTISING

Roles can be advertised internally or externally. In exceptional cases it may be necessary, in consultation with the HR/Senior HR Business Partner, to restrict the field of applications to specific staff. Internal vacancies are managed by the Resourcing Team and will be processed via Eploy.

The Resourcing Team will arrange the external advertising of all positions. Generally the post will be advertised on the UEA site, LinkedIn, jobs.ac.uk and free websites such as Adzuna, and other websites such as Indeed where appropriate. It is also possible to advertise in additional locations, although the School or Division may be required to meet any additional costs.

All job advertisements must clearly reflect the content of the job description and person specification and conform to the British Code of Advertising Practice, which requires advertisements to be 'legal, decent, honest and truthful'. The Code confirms advertisers must ensure that the public is not misled about the type of work involved or anything else that would influence their judgement.

The following points should also be noted:

- advertisements should be attractive, engaging and informative but concise, as further information on the role will be provided in the candidate brochure;
- stating some of the key criteria from the person specification in the advertisement should help reduce the number of unsuitable applicants;
- language used in the advertisement and information pack must not be directly or indirectly discriminatory and should be gender neutral;
- the advertisement should contain all relevant details set out in the Vacancy Requisition Form including whether the post is subject to a DBS check.

The Resourcing Team will review advert text before making it live. The time taken before the advertisement appears depends on the publication(s) chosen, but will not be less than a week for printed media and could be considerably longer in the case of monthly publications, so it is important to plan ahead to take into account this lead time. The Resourcing Team will be able to provide further advice on the choice of publications and on their copy deadlines.

Where the role requires a DBS check, additional information will be added to the Candidate Brochure and supporting documents will be added alongside the advert.

Current University vacancies can be found at <https://vacancies.uea.ac.uk>.

Where a member of staff is approaching the end of a fixed term contract, the UEA Code of Practice on Fixed-Term Appointments must be followed, in conjunction with the People and Culture Division. In relation to this process, where a manager is able to identify a vacancy as potentially suitable alternative employment for that individual, the People and Culture Division must be informed before any move to re-deploy the individual is made, as the post may need to be internally advertised among other members of staff who are also seeking suitable alternative employment.

4.8 NAMED RESEARCHERS

The normal expectation is that Research and Analogous posts will be advertised. However, it is recognised that in some cases research funding applications may identify particular individuals for employment on the research project concerned, typically because the named researcher has specific expertise and/or already had considerable input into this particular research area. Detailed guidance on when individuals can be named can be found on the [Recruitment and Selection webpages](#).

If the Faculty, School or Division considers that the success of a funding application is dependent on the employment of a named individual, the Resourcing Team should be consulted at an early stage to authorise the appointment without advertisement, but a job description and person specification should still be supplied for grading.

If a 'named researcher' identified in a funding application is no longer available when the funding is granted, the identified post will be advertised in the normal way.

4.9 CANDIDATE BROCHURE

The job description and person specification plus relevant information from the Vacancy Requisition Form will be incorporated into a Candidate Brochure by the Resourcing Team.

The purpose of the document is to provide applicants with general information about the University, the Faculty, School or Division and about the post for which they are applying.

The University has a standard format for providing information which is relevant to all posts and this is made available to all candidates and includes information about:

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Our values | • Job description | o Entitlement to work in the UK |
| • Our leadership framework | • Person specification | o Pension |
| • A sustainable university | • Travel to UEA | o Annual Leave entitlement |
| • Our campus | • Further information on: | o How to apply |
| • Norwich Research Park | o Salary | o Equal Opportunities |
| • Norwich | o Start date and duration of post | o References |
| • Details of the School, Division or Faculty | o Hybrid working | o Disclosure and Barring check |
| • Benefits | o Relocation expenses | |

4.10 SELECTION PANEL / COMMITTEE

For academic and most academic-related posts there are rules governing the composition of selection committees, and these are described in section 4.11. Where such rules are not laid down, it is a university requirement that a panel must consist of at least two people, include more than one gender and reflect the diversity of candidates where possible. It is advisable that the membership of a selection panel is identified at the beginning of the recruitment process. This helps maximise staff availability and allows selection panel members to be involved from the start of the recruitment process and to be fully acquainted with the job description and person specification prior to shortlisting and interviewing.

For all panels: It is recognised that not all panel members will be involved in shortlisting, but anyone who does shortlist must be a member of the interview panel.

It is important that those who conduct recruitment interviews understand and are confident about the process through which the shortlist was prepared. Having a clear understanding of the role is a necessary element in preparation for being a member of the interview panel, and good preparation is key to successful interviewing and a successful appointment. Once interviewing has commenced members of the selection panel should not be

changed, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

For academic (ATR and ATS) and academic related (ALC) posts panel members should be consistent with the rules governing the selection panel composition set out in section 4.11. The Head of School/Manager should approach prospective members and confirm their availability when completing the Vacancy Requisition Form. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor must approve panel composition before the information is sent to the Resourcing Team.



4.11 PANEL COMPOSITION

The Resourcing Team will be able to offer further guidance if required.

A. Academic selection panels i.e. for Professor, Associate Professor, Lecturer, will normally comprise the following:

- Chair: Dean of Faculty (or nominee) on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor
- Head of School
- A Senate representative or Senior Faculty member from another School
- 1-2 academic staff from the School
- 1-2 External Assessors* for Professor/Associate Professor roles

* External Assessors are those from outside the University who have expertise in the field into which the appointment is being made.

B. Academic-Related selection panels, i.e. for ALC staff, will normally comprise the following:

Administrative (ALC) Staff (up to and including Grade 9)

- Chair: The Head of Division, or the Head of School or Sector or another senior member of staff
- 2-3 other members.

Administrative (ALC) Staff (Grade 10)

- Chair: Vice-Chancellor (or their nominee)

- Dean of Faculty/Head of Division or School
- 1-2 members of staff from another Division/School or External Assessors* where relevant.

C. Research and analogous selection panels, i.e. for R&A staff

- Chair: Principal Investigator (grant holder)
- 1-2 members of staff who are able to assess candidates against the requirements of the role.

D. Support Staff selection panels, i.e. for S&C, Tech, etc.

- Chair: Appropriately graded member of staff (higher than advertised grade)
- 1-2 members of the School or Division.

There may be occasions where other staff members would like to sit on interview panels, for example as a development opportunity. As long as all panel members and candidates are happy for this to happen there is no problem with this.

4.12 RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

Applications can be accessed at any time on the Hiring Manager portal. The usual deadline for receipt of applications is 11.59pm on the closing date. After receipt of the applications these should be assessed as soon as possible to determine which applicants are to be shortlisted using the process described in section 4.13. Candidates should be informed of the outcome within 7 working days of the closing date.



4.13 SHORTLISTING

It is UEA's policy that a shortlist is produced by assessing applications against the identified criteria in the person specification, basing all decisions on objective reasons. This should be undertaken, using the University Shortlisting Form, by at least two panel members. This can be found on the Resourcing pages and in the Hiring Manager Toolkit on Eploy.

Using the University Shortlisting Form helps measure and compare candidates against the identified criteria in the person specification (avoiding the danger of stereotyping and making decisions that cannot be justified). Structured scoring allows the selection panel to weight criteria should this be appropriate, see section 4.14, and compare each candidate's score with the person specification requirements.

For academic posts the Associate Dean (AD) for Research (for ATR posts) or Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning (ATS posts) should be routinely consulted prior to finalising the shortlist of candidates. If a post has been advertised as ATR/ATS both should be routinely consulted.

Each person shortlisting must use the same criteria which are taken from the person specification, and any weighting applied must be applied consistently by each person who shortlists. It is important that selection criteria are applied consistently to each applicant to ensure the process is fair and systematic, and that those applicants most closely matched to the person specification are shortlisted.

However, care needs to be taken when considering the results, to ensure that a high overall score does not disguise a low score in a crucial area. If a candidate scores zero against any one of the essential criteria their application need not be considered further. However, the panel may decide on a higher minimum threshold, for example that a score of 3 or less against any, or one particular, essential criterion eliminates the applicant from further consideration. If used, the minimum threshold must be applied consistently to all applicants, including those on the Redeployment Register.

However, it is a requirement of the Redeployment Register processes that any Redeployment Register candidate who meets the essential person specification criteria at the minimum threshold is invited for interview, regardless of the score compared to others who also meet the minimum threshold.

Where a candidate is considered to be 'over-qualified', they may wish to apply for the job for personal reasons, and so long as they meet the person specification criteria and are clear about the role requirements and salary range offered this should not be seen as a problem.



It is important to remember that the reasons for appointing or not appointing a particular candidate may be challenged under discrimination legislation or requested by a candidate who wishes for constructive feedback, and under the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, candidates can ask to see shortlisting and interview notes as they form part of a set of information about the candidate. All such DPA requests for information must be made to the University Data Protection Officer.

The completed Shortlisting forms are also used for monitoring the process.

It is normally expected that not more than four candidates will be shortlisted for each post, but it may be helpful for Schools/ Divisions to identify one or two reserves who can be invited to interview should any of the initially invited candidates be unable to attend. If there is a wish to invite more than four candidates to interview for Academic or Academic Related posts please speak to the Resourcing Team.

If none of the applicants meet the criteria detailed in the person specification, managers need to review the job and recruitment documentation to consider whether to start the recruitment process again or look at alternatives. Where no candidates are suitable for shortlisting the Head of School/Manager is strongly advised not to lower the essential qualifications and experience needed for the role to match the best of the available candidates. Doing so may result in performance issues and may also be subject to a discrimination claim against those who would have been eligible to apply had the lowered criteria been advertised. In these circumstances Heads of School/Managers are advised to start the recruitment process again.



Shortlisting forms must be completed before shortlisted candidates can be contacted.

4.14 WEIGHTING CRITERIA

When considering the key criteria for the post, it may be helpful to consider which of these, among the essential characteristics, are the most important. These can be teased out from the others by applying a weighting factor to whatever score is achieved by each applicant. For example if a weighting factor of 2 is given to a particular criterion against which an applicant scored 5, then the weighted score will be 10 (i.e. 2×5), or if a weighting factor of 3 is applied, the weighted score would be 15 (3×5).

4.15 SELECTION TESTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Consideration should also be given to whether the inclusion of job-related selection tests or presentations as part of the selection process will help assess criteria within the person specification that may otherwise be difficult to test at interview.

If selection tests or presentations are undertaken, they must be directly related to the requirements of the job to minimise bias in the selection process and to help assess the candidate's skills against these. Care also needs to be taken to ensure tests are fair and that these do not assess standards which are greater than those necessary to undertake the job.

In all cases recruiters should ensure that job-related tests are clearly explained to the candidates, that all candidates are subject to the same tests under exactly the same conditions, and that presentation topics do not favour any one candidate, or one group of candidates above another.

Disabled candidates may need adjustments to enable them to perform the same selection tests and these must be taken into account in advance, see section 3.1.3.

PRESENTATIONS

It should be standard practice for a presentation to be included in the selection process for all **Academic** (ATR/ATS) posts. Details of presentations including title and duration will be decided by the Recruiting Manager and provided in the invite to interview email.

It may also be appropriate for other candidates to give a presentation as part of the selection process. **Academic-related or Research** candidates may present to the selection panel at the beginning of their formal interview, or to other selected members prior to the formal interview.

However, whenever a presentation takes place outside the formal interview it must be specified to each candidate in advance whether or not this activity will form part of the selection decision. Arrangements for feedback from observers of the presentation to the selection panel should be made in advance and should be the same for each of the candidates attending for interview.

Where a presentation takes place prior to the formal interviews, a structured form for comments by the invited audience is advised and a template can be found in the Hiring Manager Toolkit on Eploy.

4.16 INTERVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

Once the shortlist has been agreed all shortlisting forms, and the names of those to be invited to interview, should be sent to the Resourcing Team by:

1. The Manager for **academic (ATR and ATS) and academic related (ALC) staff**, or
2. The member of staff within the Faculty/School/Division (usually the PA to the Head of Faculty/School/Division) who will be responsible for co-ordinating the remainder of the recruitment process **for all other categories of staff including research (RA) staff**.

The person in 2) above will then be responsible for the following arrangements detailed below:

- Co-ordinating the interview schedule with the panel Chair or their nominee. The interview duration will depend on the post and the school/division but it is advised that interviews should normally last a minimum of 30 minutes, with a minimum of 45 minutes for **academic and academic related staff**, and one hour for professorial appointments.

- Contacting candidates who have been shortlisted. A template interview invite email is available on Eploy. This can be amended and must include information regarding any selection test or presentation that may be required. If selection tests or presentations are to be used, all candidates should be given the same written/oral information as to how long they will take, the topic area(s) they will cover and what, if anything, they should prepare in advance.
- For roles where the job holder will work with children, shortlisted candidates must be asked to declare any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, for example:
 - o If they have a criminal history;
 - o Whether they are included on the barred list;
 - o Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin where they were convicted;
 - o If they are known to the police or children's social care;
 - o If they have been disqualified from providing childcare;
 - o Any relevant overseas information.
- If the interview is in person, ensuring the interview room is booked and any relevant equipment is available. If presentations are to take place within the School for

academic and academic related posts, the Head of School's PA should make the associated room booking and equipment arrangements and will also be responsible for any catering arrangements for presentations and/or interviews.

- Identifying available slots in the Hiring Managers diary for interviews which candidates can self-select.
- Organising any virtual interviews if these are required, including sending a Teams link into the candidate (see section 4.18).
- Keeping the panel Chair updated of any changes to arrangements, and acting on these as necessary, for example withdrawal of candidates and inviting reserve candidates in their place; difficulties with timing, etc.
- Ensuring Right to Work is seen and verified at the interview stage where possible.

4.17 INTERVIEW EXPENSES

Interview expenses will be reimbursed only to **academic and academic related** candidates. Reimbursement will be made only for claims submitted on an interview expense form and accompanied by appropriate receipts. It should be noted that Schools pay 50% of the airfare cost for overseas candidates. Expenses are not reimbursed to candidates who are offered and decline a post. We recommend overseas candidates are invited to a virtual interview in the first instance and a campus visit can then be arranged as a second stage interview where required.

4.18 VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

With the introduction of hybrid working, panel members may wish to hold virtual interviews via Microsoft Teams.

In certain circumstances where in-person interviews are taking place, Microsoft Teams interviews can be arranged for candidates who are unable to attend campus.

If at all possible, a virtual interview should take place on the same occasion as other candidates' interviews for the post in question. However, it is recognised that time differences and other factors may make this impossible. If it is not possible for the interview to take place as scheduled and it is held on a different occasion, the virtual interview must involve the same selection panel members (unless the Chair of the Panel has agreed otherwise after discussion with the Resourcing Team) and follow the same format.

4.19 TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

These are actively discouraged and are unlikely to be required given the use of Microsoft Teams, however where no other arrangement is possible this must be discussed with the Resourcing Team in advance and will require a teleconference phone so that all panel members can hear the candidate's responses.

When using teleconferencing facilities careful planning is needed if a presentation is to form part of the selection process, to ensure this can be delivered by the teleconferenced candidate, and to the same audience as those attending in person.

The panel should also be aware that with a teleconference interview you are not able to establish with certainty who you are speaking to, and whether they have access to supporting equipment, information and assistance which those attending in person would not have access to while being interviewed.

4.20 VISITS TO CAMPUS

Candidates who have been invited to attend an interview may be asked to meet departmental staff and learn more about the post and about the University in general. If a visit to the University is made available to any candidate, regardless of whether any part of the visit is to form part of the selection process, all candidates must be given the same opportunity to attend. However, declining the offer of an informal visit should not count against any candidate. Wherever possible a short tour of UEA should be given to each candidate highlighting the place of work where the role will be based. This is particularly useful in the case of people new to the area. It is important that subjective feedback arising from this process is not taken into account.

4.21 THE INTERVIEW

Please refer to section 3.1.3. for detailed guidance on interviewing candidates with disabilities.

It is important to remember that interviews are a two-way process. The panel will wish to establish whether the candidate is suitable for the post; and the candidate will also be deciding whether they wish to take the job, by finding out more about the post, the organisation, and the people with whom they will be working.

The panel will want to make best use of the limited time available to find out as much as they can about the candidate.

Therefore interviews should be conducted in an environment which facilitates a constructive dialogue between panel and candidate. There should be no interruptions; if there is a telephone in the room (including mobile phones), calls should be diverted or phones switched off, and the room size and layout should be conducive to an environment in which the candidate feels at ease.

All candidates should be offered the same opportunities to demonstrate their suitability and to ask questions of the selection panel.

Panel members should use a structured and competency-based approach to interviewing, as explained in the University's Recruitment and Selection training sessions, designed to discover all relevant information and assess the competencies of the applicant. Structured interviews follow a previously agreed set of questions which relate to the person specification and job description and should be designed to draw out the candidate's past knowledge, skills and experiences, in order to assess their competence and predict their future potential. This is an effective method of focusing on the match between the post and the candidate and assists the selection panel in obtaining specific information against a set of clearly defined criteria.

A previously agreed set of primary questions should cover each area of the person specification criteria and should be asked of each candidate in the same way, to ensure a consistent format to the interviews where there are a number of candidates to be seen. This does not mean that secondary questions cannot be asked to probe further or clarify the answer to the primary question. Indeed it is likely that these will be necessary in order to obtain a more complete response from the individual in relation to the original primary question, and as such the supplementary questions are likely to vary between candidates. Care should always be taken to ensure that questions are not, and cannot be construed as, directly or indirectly discriminatory.

Whilst we do not provide a copy of the interview questions in advance, Hiring Managers are able to inform candidates of the

question topics (such as leadership skills, communication skills etc) in advance of the interview as identified in the person specification if asked. This information must be provided to all candidates to ensure this is a fair process.

Candidates should provide a full employment history including reasons for gaps in employment. Any queries should be



Where the job holder will be working with children structured questions should include:

- o Finding out what attracted candidates to the post and their motivation for working with children;
- o Exploring their skills and asking for examples of working with children which are relevant to the role;
- o Probing any gaps in employment or where candidate have changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reason for this.

For such roles any potential areas of concern should be explored. Areas of concern which may lead to further probing include:

- o Implication that adults and children are equal;
- o Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
- o Inappropriate idealisation of children;
- o Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children;
- o Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Selection panel members should meet in advance of the interviews to discuss the interview criteria, format and agree on the questions panel members will ask. When preparing for the interviews, panel members need to be familiar as possible with the shortlisted applications, the job description and the person specification in order to identify the areas that need further exploration or clarification at interview. For some criteria it may be appropriate to ask only one or two questions to encourage candidates to talk at length on certain subjects. For other criteria it may be more appropriate to ask a series of short questions. The key elements are that the questions themselves are designed to ensure the person specification criteria are objectively assessed, and that there is consistency in the order and manner of questioning of the primary questions that are to be asked of all candidates.

One should be aware that perceptions, stereotypes and assumptions exist, and may lead to a panel member's subjective judgement, as might a lack of cultural awareness - for example a lack of eye contact is considered a mark of respect in some cultures but may seem evasive to others. It is therefore important that judgements are based on the degree to which each candidate matches the objective criteria as stated in the person specification.

At the end of the interview, following questions by each of the panel members, the candidate should be invited to ask any questions they may have.

If the answer is not clear, or the panel do not have the authority or the available information to respond, it is acceptable to explain to the candidate that a full answer cannot be given at this stage but can be provided later if they are the preferred candidate. This is preferable to providing information which may not be accurate, or agreeing to something which subsequently cannot be supported, and which may influence the decision of a candidate on whether or not to accept a post. Examples may be agreeing to the request for an extended period of leave at the same time each year, which would subsequently prove difficult to combine with other colleagues or workload commitments; or to agreeing to financial support for an ongoing course of study where subsequently it is found that there is no budget to do so.

4.22 NOTE TAKING

Note taking acts as an aide memoire throughout the process, and most candidates will expect some form of note taking to take place. However, it is important that the panel member maintains appropriate eye contact with the candidate during responses to their own questions, and therefore it may be helpful to agree, before the interview begins, who will make notes for another panel members while they are asking their own questions.

All interview documentation (for example shortlisting forms, records of interview and notes recording discussion) are potentially disclosable under the Data Protection Act if an applicant requests sight of them.

In the event of an Employment Tribunal ALL related documentation is disclosable, such as related emails between panel members, handwritten notes on CVs, references, etc. and it becomes an offence to destroy documents after they are requested.

Completing the interview assessment form itself during the course of the interview should be avoided, as this may prove distracting to the candidate and prevent them giving their best answer.

4.23 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PANEL CHAIR

Before the Interviews start the Chair should ensure that:

- all panel members are clear about the function, purpose and content of the post being appointed to, the timing of the interviews, the question(s) that each panel member will ask and the order of questioning;
- the panel has agreed when and how the panel decision will be communicated. Note that it is better to allow more time than you think you may need in case the decision is not straightforward;
- each panel member has documented their question(s). Note that there is no need to document any supplementary questions asked in the body of the interview which will vary between candidate's dependent upon their responses;
- the same criteria (and weighting if used) are detailed on each panel members Interview Assessment Form. The criteria are to be drawn from the person specification and nothing should be added to these;
- where possible, arrangements have been made to collect the 'verification to work in the UK' documentation which each candidate will have been asked to demonstrate where available. The Chair of the panel, or the person to whom has delegated the task, should view the document and sign and date a copy, noting that the original has been seen on in person documentation;
- appropriate and reasonable adjustments have been made in respect of any candidate with a disability, and to ensure that the conduct of the interview, its content and its tone, is similar for all candidates;
- where a candidate has declared that due to their disability they would require assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation, arrangements are in place for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, in accordance with the Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities Policy, which can be found on <https://my.uea.ac.uk/divisions/health-and-safety-department/health-and-safety-requirements/fire-safety>



During the interviews the panel Chair should ensure that:

- the candidate is introduced to the panel members and provided with an outline structure of the interview;
- the interviews keep to schedule;
- panel members ask the agreed questions in an appropriate manner;
- should any questions be asked which may be considered directly or indirectly discriminatory the Chair may inform the candidate that they need not answer;
- panel members complete the Interview Assessment form between interviews;
- the candidate has an opportunity to ask questions;
- any disabled candidates are given an opportunity to discuss their disability should they indicate a wish to do so, in the context of reasonable adjustments should they be the preferred candidate, see section 3.1.3 for detailed guidance;
- at the end of each interview, they ensure necessary documentation has been collected where available, e.g. verification of right to work in the UK, interview expenses form, contact details, and that candidates have been notified of what will happen next and when they are likely to be informed of the decision of the selection panel. This should typically be within 5 working days of the interview.

Following interview the panel Chair should ensure that:

- all panel members are engaged in discussion and that each panel member has the opportunity to comment and express their own views;
- the process is respectful and everyone's voice is heard;
- each panel member has allocated numerical scores to each candidate and entered these on to the Interview Assessment form;
- the scores and rank order are correct on the Interview Assessment

Summary Form which the panel Chair is responsible for;

- where there is no outright first choice, appropriate discussion takes place to establish a preferred candidate and the rationale for the decision is documented on the Interview Summary form;
- if a candidate with a disability is the candidate most closely matched to the person specification, disregarding their disability, and therefore the candidate to whom the post is to be offered, the panel chair should liaise with the Resourcing Team in order that guidance on 'reasonable adjustments' can be explored. Support (including financial) is often available from outside agencies with whom the People and Culture Division will liaise, if appropriate;
- if the panel wishes to offer a salary above the bottom point of the salary scale, this is approved via Eploy before any verbal commitment is made to the candidate of choice;
- where the appointment is for a Lecturer post and the preferred candidate has had Lecturer experience elsewhere, the panel should agree whether this is sufficient to dispense with the need for a formal probationary period, or whether the probationary period should be reduced from the default of five years. If a reduction is agreed, the duration of the reduced probationary period should not be less than two years, to allow the appropriate review to take place after one year;
- if, **for academic posts only**, the panel Chair is not the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, the preferred candidate is approved by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor before the candidate is contacted;
- the Create a Placement Form is fully completed and submitted on Eploy.

If the candidate is likely to require a visa no offer should be made, either formal or informal, before consulting with the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.

4.24 THE INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT FORM

Each panel member will have a copy of the University's Interview Assessment Form, a template can be found in the Hiring Manager Toolkit on Eploy, to assist them in assessing each candidate against the requirements of the role. The criteria against which candidates are to be judged must be stated on the form and must be drawn from the person specification. No criteria other than those that appear on the person specification may be added

The pre-planned and agreed questions that the panel member is to ask each candidate are to be documented on the form. There is no need to document the follow on, probing, questions that will vary with each candidate.

On the basis of the candidate's responses, each panel member gives each candidate a numerical score from 0-6 against each criterion stated on the form.

It is advised that the scores and any comments are completed for each candidate immediately after their interview concludes. However, these scores may be subsequently adjusted throughout the process as the panel member sees fit so long as the scores are

based on their objective judgement, and will be used by the panel member, along with any documented comments they may have made, to contribute to the panel discussion which takes place at the end of all the interviews, see 4.25

Once the panel member is content with their final scores for each candidate, these will be automatically ranked in order of preference, with the candidate who achieves the highest score being ranked 1, the next highest being ranked 2, etc.



4.25 DECISION-MAKING

On completion of all interviews, each member of the selection panel will be invited by the Chair to give their individual assessment of each candidate using the completed Interview Assessment Forms, and any weighting factors agreed, as a basis for the discussion.

As part of the discussion to establish the panel's preferred candidate, the scores of each panel member will pre-populate the Interview Summary Form. A template can be found in the Hiring Manager Toolkit on Eploy and will automatically rank the overall order preference.

If all panel members agree on the first-choice candidate the decision is straightforward. Should there be a mixture of first choice preference it is important that the panel discussion explores further the candidates involved to establish sound reasons based on the person specification for choosing one candidate above another, and that this rationale is summarised on the Interview Assessment Summary Form.

The Chair of the selection panel must send the Interview Form to the Resourcing Team (staff.recruitment@uea.ac.uk) then complete the Create a Placement Form on Eploy with the offer details.

If you are requesting a higher salary please provide justification as to why. Without this the Reward Team will be unable to consider the request. If the panel wishes to offer a salary above the bottom point of the salary scale, approval will be sought via Eploy once the placement form has been submitted. This must be approved before any offer is made to the candidate of choice.

If the candidate is likely to require a visa no offer should be made, either formal or informal, before consulting with the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.

If the selection panel concludes that none of the candidates meet the criteria detailed in the person specification, the Hiring Manager should consider whether to start the recruitment process again or look at alternative options. Where no candidates are suitable for appointment the Hiring Manager should avoid lowering the essential standards of the role (qualifications and/or experience) to match the best available candidates. Doing so may result in performance issues and may also lead to a claim of discrimination by those who would have been eligible to apply if the lesser criteria been advertised. Therefore in these circumstances Hiring Managers are strongly advised not to make an appointment and speak to the Resourcing Team on how to proceed.

4.26 REFERENCES

The purpose of a reference is to obtain information from a third party, in confidence, to provide a factual check on a candidate's employment history/qualifications/experience and/or an assessment of the candidate's suitability for the post in question. References continue to play an important part in the recruitment and selection of many groups of university staff but should be used cautiously and should not be seen as a substitute for objective and systematic assessment, through interview, against the person specification.

It is UEA's policy to only obtain references for ATR and ATS staff and roles working with children prior to interview where possible. Candidates are asked to provide names and addresses of two people who have consented to act as referees on their behalf, one of whom should be their current or most recent employer. References are sought for shortlisted candidates prior to the interview unless a candidate has specifically asked on their application form that an individual referee should not be approached at this stage. In this case, should the candidate be the preferred choice following interview, the reference must be sought immediately after the interview takes place, with the agreement of the candidate, and any offer must be made subject to receipt of a reference satisfactory to the University.

Although references are a useful means of supplementing other information obtained during the recruitment process, they should, nevertheless, be treated with an element of caution. References are subjective assessments and care should be taken in their interpretation and the weighting given to them in the selection process. It is unlikely to be clear how much time and attention has been given to providing the reference; the reference policy of the providing organisation; or the experience of the person providing the reference in undertaking such a task; and the judgement and knowledge of the referee, whether from a known or unknown person, cannot always be relied upon as objective.

For all other posts, references will only be required for the successful candidate upon their acceptance of the post.

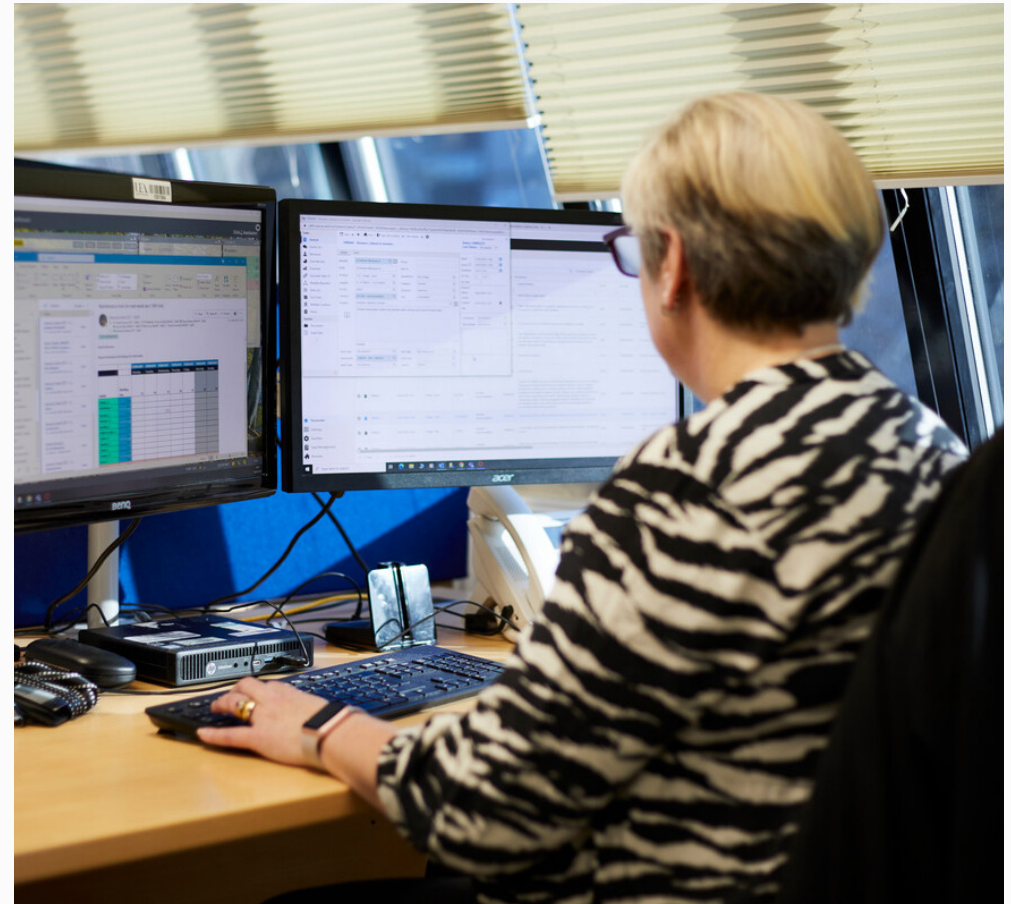
References will not usually be required for internal applicants.

References will be requested by the People and Culture Division. Where interviews are being arranged within the School for posts requiring references prior to interview (e.g. working with children) please email the candidates' names to staff.recruitment@uea.ac.uk

The University should:

- o Not accept an open reference e.g. to whom it may concern;
- o Not rely on applicants to obtain their references;
- o Ensure one reference is from the candidate's current/most recent employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority;
- o Obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed;
- o Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer;
- o Always verify any information with the person who provided the reference;
- o Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source;
- o Contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided;
- o Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate;
- o Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or more recent post;
- o Ensure any concerns are satisfactorily resolved before appointment is confirmed.

NB. When asked to provide references for an employee whose role involved working with children, managers must be satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide facts (not opinions) of any substantial safeguarding allegations but should not include information about allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.



4.27 MAKING A VERBAL OFFER

Following the selection interviews, the Panel Chair, or Head of School/Manager may wish to contact the successful candidate to confirm the intention to make an offer of appointment and to discuss the terms of that offer, prior to the issue of an offer of appointment by the Resourcing Team. Note that a verbal offer of employment is binding.

If the candidate is likely to require a visa no offer should be made, either formal or informal, before consulting with the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.

The normal expectation is that the starting salary will be the minimum point on the advertised scale, and post approval is also based on the minimum point, so where there is a wish to offer a post at any salary point above the minimum this will need to be approved before a verbal offer is made.

4.28 WRITTEN OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

The Resourcing Team are responsible for producing and issuing all offers of appointment for advertised positions and named researchers. The HR Support Centre are responsible for issuing these for posts which have gone through an Expression of Interest process.

All offers will be subject to:

- an Occupational Health Pre-Placement Questionnaire Assessment (see 4.30);
- evidence of qualifications for appropriate posts;
- confirmation of entitlement to work in the UK;
- receipt of satisfactory references (not typically required for internal candidates).

and may be subject to:

- UK Visas and Immigration permission to work in the UK;
- a Disclosure and Barring check (individual must show original DBS certificate to employer before they take up post or as soon as practically possible afterwards).
- a probationary period; and



- for Lectureships or Tutors, a requirement to undertake a course of study in the University's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice or the Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Education, wherever possible to begin in the first year of appointment. Appointment will be subject to completion of the course and achieving FHEA.

It is the expectation that all appointments will be UK based with any overseas working agreed in advance by exception only. This will apply where colleagues are asked to work from home. [Guidance and approval process for working outside the UK](#) provides an overview of issues that must be considered when looking to engage staff based overseas.

The University has been supporting a mix of at home and on campus "hybrid" working for many teams since 2020. This has given us the opportunity to explore together the best levels of on campus work for different roles, taking into the account the space available, the role requirements, and individual staff preferences where possible.

Following extensive consultation and UEA's hybrid working pilot, a new University Hybrid Working policy is now in place. This moves us from our hybrid working pilot over the last few years to a clear long-term approach.

Further details can be found in the [Hybrid Working Policy](#).

4.29 RETENTION OF RECRUITMENT RECORDS

The Data Protection Act regulates the use of personal data and states that personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary. It is the policy of the University to retain recruitment documentation for 12 months from the date of appointment of the successful candidate. Should a complaint about the selection decision be received subsequent to the recruitment process the University will need to produce such written records to defend the decision that has been made. It is important therefore that reasons for rejection are based on the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification.

All supporting recruitment documentation for Expressions of Interest should be sent to the HR Service Team.

Heads of School/Managers should be aware that interview notes about a candidate can be disclosed to that candidate under the Data Protection Act, see section 3.2. Any such requests should be referred to the University Data Protection Officer.

4.30 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SCREENING

All offers of appointment for new staff are subject to occupational health clearance satisfactory to the University following completion of an Occupational Health Pre-Placement Questionnaire. If a further assessment is required by the University's Occupational Health Service a link to the Occupational Health portal will be sent to the individual where they can provide relevant information directly to Occupational Health. Further advice on the UEA process can be obtained from the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team.



4.31 FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Some candidates request feedback in order to assist them in future applications or interviews. This can occur because they have not been shortlisted, or because they have not been appointed following interview. Care should be taken when providing feedback and this should be as constructive as possible to benefit the unsuccessful candidate.

It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to inform all shortlisted candidates of the outcome of their interview and provide feedback where requested. The Resourcing Team can provide advice on this if needed.

4.32 FOLLOWING ACCEPTANCE

Once acceptance has been received the successful candidate will complete the onboarding process and provide relevant information and documentation. Once all pre-employment checks have been completed, appointees will receive a welcome letter, welcome brochure and information on induction. Recruiting managers will also receive guidance on induction which will help them plan for when the appointee starts, taking into consideration any hybrid working arrangements.

Managers are advised to keep in regular contact with the appointed candidate, particularly where there may be a considerable delay between interview and start date as they work their notice elsewhere.

4.33 RESEARCH PASSPORTS

The Research Passport is a streamlined system introduced by the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) to assist the issue of an honorary research contracts (HRC) to researchers who have no contractual relationship with the NHS and who need an honorary research contract to carry out research in NHS organisations. It provides a system whereby researchers only have to collect evidence of the necessary checks once, in order to support their applications for HRCs at multiple NHS organisations. Full details are available [here](#).

If it is likely that the appointee will need a Research Passport the recruiting manager should alert the Staff Immigration and Compliance Team at the earliest opportunity during the recruitment process so that arrangements can be made prior to the appointee's start date.

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An internationally renowned university, UEA is ranked 26th in the UK (Complete University Guide 2026) and is in the UK Top 25 for research quality (Times Higher Education Rankings 2026) reflecting the international excellence of its research environment. We are in the World Top 60 (QS World Rankings for Sustainability 2025) and the World Top 9th for reduced inequalities (Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2026). The University holds UK Teaching Excellence Framework Silver status.

