

Recruitment and selection

Introduction

Getting the right people into your team is vital and you can only achieve this if you recruit properly. Before you recruit, you must complete the ['Recruitment and Selection for Chairs of panels and members' course](#). For Chairs of Recruitment Panels, this course is mandatory. But all members of a panel will find it helpful in making good, fair decisions. Also, make sure you read the HR Support website section on Recruitment.

There are also a lot of staff on fixed-term contracts and others who might be at risk of redundancy within the University. So, anyone needing redeployment within the University needs to be given preferential consideration for the post.

Get support from HR. If you are a new manager, you will definitely need it. If you are an experienced manager, you will welcome it!

Diversity, inclusion and transparency should be uppermost in your thinking about recruitment.

What to do

Recruiting a new member of staff can be a daunting and sometimes lengthy process. As a new manager, it is probably even more daunting. Fortunately, recruitment has a clear process. If you follow the University's guidance carefully you will be fine.

1. Do the training!

Managers regularly tell us that the thing they regret most is not doing recruitment well enough. They then have to deal with the subsequent problems of getting it wrong. So, start by doing the Recruitment training. It is online and it will save you time, effort and grief in the longer term.

2. Read the Recruitment section of the HR Support website

The HR Support website provides guidance on almost every aspect of recruitment. Browse the material and get a feel for the process.

3. Consult your manager

Your manager has probably had experience of recruitment and may be able to give you some advice. However, always check that you are following the right process.

4. Talk to your administrator and HR

Talk to your local HR contact and your departmental administrator/HAF about the potential vacancy. They will guide you through the process and help you be aware of potential pitfalls. They will also know whether there are colleagues within the department who are at risk of redundancy who may have a right to be considered for the post as a priority candidate.

5. Be ready to discuss these areas:

- a) **Is there a business case (and funding) for creating the post or filling the vacancy?** It may be that someone has left, is taking a period of family or other leave, or that the work has increased, or there is new work to be done. But this does not necessarily mean that there is a vacancy that must be filled. Perhaps the work could be done another way? Is there spare capacity within the team which would allow it to be shared amongst the rest of the staff (but be very mindful of workload issues)? Would the post be a development opportunity for someone in your team? Could the tasks be done another way, stopped altogether or automated? If the vacancy is due to someone being on family leave, could the work be postponed until they return?
- b) **What is the role?** If it's an existing role, have the skills and experience needed for the job changed since the last job description was created? If it's a new role your HR contact can help you draft a job description. Does it need to be full-time or could it be offered as part-time: offering as part-time is more inclusive and opens the vacancy to a wider range of candidates (eg those with caring responsibilities or a disability/health condition which precludes full-time working).
- c) **What are the essential and desirable criteria for the post?** What kind of experience, skills and qualifications are essential ('must have') for the role? And which are desirable ('nice

to have')? Be careful when defining the 'desirable' criteria as if you to get applications from several people who meet the essential criteria, the desirable criteria become the deciding factor. Make sure the 'essential' criteria are not something that could be easily taught as that could prejudice the chances of some applicants who might be perfectly capable of learning the task quickly but end up being excluded because they have not had the opportunity previously.

d) **Make sure that internal priority candidates are given preferential consideration.**

Your HR team will tell you if there are staff within your department who need to be redeployed who may have a right to be given first refusal on the role. If not, and you advertise, any internal University candidates who are 'at risk' of redundancy will need to be given preferential consideration.

e) **Where an internal appointment can't be made, how best to reach a good pool of candidates.** We want to create an inclusive and diverse workforce, so it is important to reach out to a wide pool. Think about where you might find people with the right experience, qualifications and skills? HR can advise you

f) **How best to find evidence that candidates have what you want.** Will you use interviews only? We strongly recommend a work-related test as well as interviews. Interviews can be unreliable predictors of success in a job so a test can be useful additional evidence of whether a candidate is suitable. If you are not an experienced interviewer, HR can support you and suggest ways to strengthen the selection process.

6. Run your recruitment and selection exercise

HR will guide you on this. You will need to set up a recruitment panel, taking diversity into consideration, especially but not limited to gender balance. The Chair of the panel must have completed the Recruitment and Selection training, but it makes a *lot* of sense for everyone to refresh their skills. Make sure everyone is treated fairly and that the same process is followed for everyone. The Implicit Bias course and the Recruitment and Selection course will help you with this.

7. Choose your preferred applicant

Once you have assessed everyone on the evidence they provided in their CV, covering letter and the interview (or interview plus tests) against the published selection criteria, you should be able to identify those who meet the essential criteria. If there is more than one, use the desirable criteria to choose between them. Retain all your notes and evaluation forms and give these to your administrator or HR. Be aware that your preferred applicant may turn the offer down so agree who your reserve candidate would be.

If no one meets the essential criteria, we strongly advise you to run the process again, thinking through the steps again. Did you have the right criteria? Did you spread your net wide enough? Do not be tempted to offer the job to the 'least worst'.

8. Ask your administrator or HR to make the offer formally

Only the HAF or HoD will be authorized to make the job offer but they will often agree that you can phone the successful candidate to let them know the outcome. But note that the offer is subject to conditions (references and any other pre-employment checks that need to happen such as right to work/immigration checks).

9. Plan the induction

Effective induction is the final stage in the recruitment process as well as the first in the individual's new role.

Further resources

Links

HR Support website guide to the [Recruitment process](#)

Access the [Recruitment and selection](#) and [Implicit Bias courses](#)

Here's a [CIPD report on recruitment and selection](#) you might find helpful

Related guides from this series: Listening

About this guide

This guide has been developed for staff who have recently taken on the responsibility of managing other staff members. Guides were produced to cover key topics to induct, guide and support managers through key areas of responsibility. These guides are intended to be 'living documents' and will be re-released over time. Please get in touch with feedback and suggestions: pod@admin.ox.ac.uk

