

Document log

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Consulted:

Version	Review date	Name	Comments
v.2	17-Jan-2024	JSNCC	Sent for consultation and feedback

Approvals:

Approval refers to the approver's acceptance of the content and overall intention of this document, including acceptance of any commitments described in order to successfully deliver the initiative. The approver, where relevant, also confirms that this document complies with relevant strategies, policies and regulatory requirements

We approve the policy as described below, and authorise the use of it:

Version	Issue date	Authoriser	Approval date
v.2	15 Feb-2024	People Committee	

Associated documents:

Direct Fixed Term Contract Recruitment Guidelines, Single Person Appointment Procedures, Grades 1-10 Recruitment procedures, Lecturer or Senior Lecturer Recruitment Procedures, Readers Recruitment Procedures, Professorial Recruitment Procedures, Head of School Recruitment Procedures, Engaging Casual Workers – Policy & Procedures, Internal Secondments – Policy & Procedure, Employment Reference Policy & Procedure, Disclosure of Criminal Records Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy, Redeployment Policy, Search Committee Guidance, Declaration of Interests Policy

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POLICY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University's ability to attract and recruit the best people we can is fundamental to our success and long term future. A strategic, professional approach to recruitment and selection is essential to ensuring the best candidate is appointed.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to provide an overarching framework for the recruitment and selection of staff to ensure the process is conducted in a manner that is efficient and effective, and promotes equality of opportunity, and adheres to the principles of our safer recruitment practice statement outlined in section 2. below.
- 1.3. The principles outlined below will enable the University to meet its staffing requirements through a range of routes which, whilst allowing for flexibility of approach, will comply with relevant legislation.
- 1.4. To ensure appropriate implementation of this policy, the policy should be read in conjunction with the recruitment procedures listed in Associated Practices. The procedures provide more detail on key steps at each stage of the recruitment and selection process.

2. Safer Recruitment Policy Statement

- 2.1. The University of Kent is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, visiting academics, contractors and volunteers to share this commitment and adhere to the requirements of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
- 2.2. This policy and associated practices, provides the underpinning framework for safer recruitment and selection and continued monitoring based on statutory requirements and good practice.
- 2.3. The primary objective of this policy and associated recruitment practices, as detailed below, is to ensure that the University provides a robust recruitment process to try and identify those who would be unsuitable, to deter the small minority who seek to harm children, young people or vulnerable adults and to select and maintain a safe workforce. In this way, we aim to ensure that we provide the highest possible level of protection.
- 2.4. The second objective is to ensure that both the University and all of its staff meet their legal obligations, maintain adequate and auditable records and that we are not vulnerable to legal challenge either directly or vicariously.
- 2.5. All employees, paid workers, visiting academics and volunteers who are in regulated¹ activity will be required to have an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check carried out. This will include all relevant categories of staff and workers, even if not directly involved in teaching or

¹ Regulated activity refers to certain roles that involve working with children or vulnerable adults and is defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Whether a role falls into regulated activity will be determined by the activities and how often the individual undertakes them, where the role takes place and how often they work there.

supervising children, young people or vulnerable adults, if they have the opportunity to contact and meet the requirements as detailed within our DBS policy and procedures. This also includes any contractors or agency workers.

- 2.6. The University commits to all stages of the recruitment and selection process containing measures to deter, identify, prevent and reject unsuitable prospective employees, visiting academics, contractors or volunteers. The practical implementation of our recruitment and selection processes also aims to meet all legislative requirements, and any statutory or other guidance that may from time to time be issued in order to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe.

3. Scope

- 3.1. The policy covers the recruitment and selection of all employed staff, regardless of contract type. It does not cover the engagement of sole traders, self-employed workers, or individuals who work via third parties (e.g. agency personnel), however, where required the engagement of such individuals should follow the principles outlined below.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. The Human Resources team will co-ordinate the recruitment and selection process, and provide expert advice, information, training and support to hiring managers, Search Committees, and Chairs of panels in relation to this policy and associated procedures.
- 4.2. Human Resources will maintain records of those staff who have attended recruitment and selection training, unconscious bias and safer recruitment training and will ensure that at least one panel member is so trained.
- 4.3. Hiring managers, panel members, the Chair/Chair of a Search Committee and Human Resources are responsible for different elements of the recruitment process. Areas of specific responsibility are defined in the recruitment procedures and associated guidance.
- 4.4. All managers and staff involved in recruitment and selection are responsible for ensuring the process is conducted in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.

5. Principles

- 5.1. Recruitment to anything other than new posts should not commence until full consideration is given to the most effective and efficient way to meet the need, which may not always be a direct replacement.
- 5.2. The University has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment other than in cases of redeployment (see 5.4).
- 5.3. We are committed to ensuring that we make the best possible use of the considerable talent that exists within our workforce and for creating a future pipeline of talent that is ready to compete for roles within the University.
- 5.4. Employees who are seeking redeployment will be given priority consideration over other applicants, provided they have the relevant skills and experience.
- 5.5. In certain circumstances, specialist or urgent operational needs may mean that it is appropriate to fill a vacant role without advertising and/or or going through a competitive selection process. Such appointments are not intended to disadvantage good internal and external candidates, but to allow the University to move quickly for strategic reasons, retain

existing talent, utilise development opportunities such as apprenticeships, or to minimise replication of a process. Examples of when it may be appropriate to fill a vacancy without advertising:

- 5.5.1 Where the role is funded by an external research or other grant and the grant is obtained by providing the name and CV of a candidate, or a particular member of staff is on the grant as a named researcher or responsible for delivery of the grant outputs.
 - 5.5.2 Where the University needs to consider a single exceptional candidate whose work is important to the University's strategy for a position in the University but the timescales involved in the normal recruitment process would mean the candidate would be no longer available if the normal processes were followed.
 - 5.5.3 Where the University wishes to offer an opportunity to an existing employee either under its succession planning processes, or as a development opportunity identified during an RPD process.
 - 5.5.4 When there is an urgent need to ensure that a person is in post for business continuity reasons with as little impact on normal operations as possible.
 - 5.5.5 Where a similar vacancy has been advertised so recently (normally within 3 months) that the field of candidates has not changed, and is therefore known to the hiring manager.
 - 5.5.6 Staff given redeployment status are entitled to be given priority consideration where they meet all the essential criteria. If the hiring manager agrees there is a match, there is no need to advertise the vacancy externally.
- 5.6. All recruitment activity should be undertaken through the University's recruitment system. Vacant roles will normally be advertised on the University's jobs website and jobs.ac.uk.
- 5.7. All recruitment campaigns must comply with data protection requirements and:
- 5.7.1. All documentation and other data related to the process must be kept securely.
 - 5.7.2. There needs to be a clear, documented audit trail of decisions made throughout the process.
 - 5.7.3. All personal data must be treated confidentially and with due care, and consideration be given of the need to print or transport documents.
- 5.8. Equality & Diversity principles will be applied at all stages within the recruitment and selection process, and the Human Resources team will review and monitor each stage of the process:
- 5.8.1. Applicants will not be discriminated against by being required to have experience or qualifications that cannot be proven to be relevant to the role. Only those qualifications genuinely required for the effective performance of the role will be required and where possible and practicable to assess, equivalent skills knowledge and experience will be accepted in lieu of a qualification.
 - 5.8.2. As a Disability Confident employer, we guarantee to interview all applicants who indicate they have a disability and who have demonstrated, through the application process, that they meet the essential criteria for the role. All such candidates will be considered on merit.
 - 5.8.3. We encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments,

where we are informed by a candidate, will be made where possible to prevent them being placed at a disadvantage by any practice within the recruitment and selection process.

- 5.8.4. To ensure our staff are diverse and reflect the diverse profiles of our students and the surrounding communities, where there is evidence of under-representation in certain jobs or at certain levels, we may actively target applications from those groups through the use of Positive Action Statements on adverts or use of specialist recruitment agencies.
 - 5.8.5. We do not require disclosure of spent convictions, in accordance with Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation, unless the nature of the role is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record. In these cases, the offer of employment is subject to satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks.
 - 5.8.6. We will always strive to achieve diversity in the composition of Selection Panels and Search Committees (where appropriate) as outlined in 5.11 below.
- 5.9. To preserve objectivity, integrity and avoid conflicts of interest:
- 5.9.1. If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this to the Chair as soon as they are aware of the individual's application so that a decision can be made regarding their continued involvement in the recruitment and decision-making process.
 - 5.9.2. If a candidate has named a member of staff involved in the selection process as a referee, the candidate will be asked to provide details of an alternative referee.
 - 5.9.3. In all cases, where the applicant has a close personal or familial relationship with a manager to whom either the Chair or the ultimate line manager reports to; this must be reported promptly and via the Disclosure of Interests policy.
- 5.10. In exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of the Reward and Recognition Manager, the salary range advertised may be up to the top of the relevant pay scale discretionary point.
- 5.11. A fair and consistent approach will be taken to select the best candidate for the role using objective selection criteria based upon the Person Specification. A selection panel will assess the suitability of candidates at both shortlisting and interview stages using the criteria listed in the Person Specification.
- 5.11.1. A panel should comprise at least two members.
 - 5.11.2. Wherever possible, all selection panels must comprise of mixed gender and larger panels should have a gender-balanced composition (unless otherwise agreed with Human Resources). It is acknowledged that balanced panels may not always be achievable due to the urgency of the need, workforce composition and/or specialism but hiring managers would be expected to make reasonable efforts to achieve this.
 - 5.11.3. At least one member of the panel needs to have completed University Recruitment and Selection Training within the previous 5 years.
 - 5.11.4. At least one member of the panel needs to have completed the University Unconscious Bias training. This could be the same member as in 5.11.3.
 - 5.11.5. Where the role being interviewed for covers regulated activity, at least one panel member must have undertaken safer recruitment training (this could be the same member as in 5.11.3 and 5.11.4 above). The interview will include questions regarding safeguarding and discuss any gaps in employment history.

PROCEDURE

6. Authorisation Process

- 6.1. Prior to the start of any recruitment, authorisation must be gained to recruit which should include details on alternative delivery options which have been considered, other than like for like replacement, budget information and the relevant completed Job Description and Person Specification should be attached.
- 6.2. A Job Description and Person Specification must be produced or updated before any vacant role can be authorised and advertised.
 - 6.2.1. If the role is new it will need to be Job Evaluated before starting the authorisation process.
 - 6.2.2. If a role has been changed, depending on how significant the changes are, it may need to be Job Evaluated before starting the authorisation process.
 - 6.2.3. The criteria within the Person Specification must be relevant and appropriate to the level of the post.
 - 6.2.4. Suitable equivalent alternatives to any specified essential qualification criterion in the Person Specification should always be identified, where possible and considered e.g. where a generic non-specialist qualification is considered essential, the Person Specification will include both equivalent qualification and equivalent work experience. The Hay job evaluation framework should be used as a guide for explaining what is meant by equivalent experience.

7. Managing Vacancies & Applicants

- 7.1. Vacant roles will normally be advertised on the University's jobs website and jobs.ac.uk as a minimum.
 - 7.1.1. The duration of the vacancy advert may vary as it is dependent on the availability of candidates and current market conditions but would normally be for two weeks.
 - 7.1.2. All applicants will be required to complete a standard application form and provide a full chronological employment history that addresses any gaps in employment.
- 7.2. The selection panel's primary aim is to select and appoint the best person for the job.
 - 7.2.1. To ensure fairness, the selection process needs to be rigorous and structured. It is however important to maintain a degree of flexibility to ensure the most appropriate means is used of selecting a candidate for the post in question.
 - 7.2.2. The use of job-related selection tests or asking candidates to give presentations is useful for assessing elements of the Person Specification that are difficult to test during an interview. They need to be objective and relevant to the appropriate criteria in the Person Specification. Advice and guidance on the relevance and suitability of such tests can be sought by hiring managers from their designated Human Resources contact.
 - 7.2.3. Appointment decisions should be explicitly based upon evidence, though the evidence required may differ according to the type of role. CVs, covering letters, application forms, interviews and skill-specific tests are usual.
 - 7.2.4. Salaries on appointment will be made within the evaluated grade. New appointments

will normally be at the bottom of the appropriate pay scale, however, the University acknowledges that there may be justifiable reasons to appoint above the bottom of the salary scale. A number of factors need to be taken into account when agreeing the appropriate starting salary:

- 7.2.4.1. Level of relevant experience, knowledge and skills the successful candidate would bring.
- 7.2.4.2. Anticipated level of performance/contribution taking into account performance during the selection process and track record.
- 7.2.4.3. Internal consistency – the salary levels of colleagues performing roles of similar responsibility, particularly with relation to Equal Pay legislation.
- 7.2.4.4. Current salary (where it is relevant in the case of similar experience).

The above factors are all interdependent e.g. in all cases internal relativities, and the impact on other staff performing like roles must always be considered before offering a starting salary above the bottom of the scale. Internal relativities, based on respective levels of performance and knowledge must always be a primary consideration. Before any offer is made, hiring managers wishing to make a higher salary offer must speak to their HR contact.

- 7.2.5. Where an offer needs to be in excess of £100k,(either base salary or base salary plus any market supplements) the signed approval of two Executive Group members and the Director of HR & OD is required.
- 7.2.6. Offers of employment are made by the Chair of the selection panel and must comply with the University's compliance policies (e.g. evidence of eligibility to work in the UK, satisfactory internal/external references, where the role is undertaking regulated activity referees will be specifically asked about the candidate's suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults). For some roles, the offer is also subject to additional checks such as DBS or essential qualification checks.
- 7.2.7. Any offer of employment will be conditional and start dates should not be confirmed until all pre-employment checks have been completed.
- 7.2.8. Offers may be withdrawn if additional information comes to light (including non-compliance by the hiring manager with the University's recruitment and selection policies) although the advice of HR must always be sought before such action is taken.

REVIEW

In compiling this policy due regard has been given to the impact it may have for staff with protected characteristics. Further information can be found in appendix one (equalities impact analysis).

This policy complies with any relevant employment or other applicable legislation. It will be reviewed periodically and in line with any changes to relevant legislation and/or University practice.

As and when a full review is undertaken trades union and staff representative partners will be consulted in line with the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the University's Joint Staff Negotiating and Consultation Committee (JSNCC) and other relevant stakeholders, as required.

END.

TJW/01.10.23

Appendix one/ Equalities impact analysis

PART ONE: Initial assessment

Name of policy/process/change	Recruitment & Selection Policy
Owner of change	Human Resources/ People Services
Equalities analysis completed by	Terri Williams, Head of People Services
Date of analysis	01 October 2023

What is the purpose of the policy/process and its aims?	To detail the principles and steps in regard to recruitment and selection activities. This policy aims to make clear who is in scope when any such activity is undertaken (all current directly employed staff and potential applicants, regardless of contract type) and to detail the principles of approach and outlines roles and responsibilities for each stage.
Who does it cover?	All staff
How often will it be reviewed?	In line with any applicable legislation and relevant University experience/changes in practice.

Equality considerations

Could there be any implications for a protected characteristic group (as defined by the Equality Act (2010)) in this (or the application of) policy/practice/change?

Please tick all that are relevant:

✓ Notes: describe the nature of any direct/indirect impact (positive or negative) and how the impact has been considered/addressed

Age	✓	It is possible that a member of staff or prospective candidate could be impacted because of their age, mitigations are in place to reduce the risk of this in regards to blind shortlisting being undertaken whereby recruiting managers are not given access to any personal information, careful consideration of required qualifications both within advertisements and job descriptions/person specifications. Selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as outlined in section 5.11 above.
Disability	✓	It is possible where a member of staff or prospective candidate has a disability or a medical condition there may be a greater impact, especially in relation to completing applications, shortlisting, attending interviews or undertaking assessment tests – reasonable adjustments will be made to all aspects of the process to ensure fair access for all as outlined in section 5.8 of the policy.
Gender reassignment	✓	Whilst this information is captured from existing staff and prospective candidates at the application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. Additionally, selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.
Marriage and civil partnership	✓	Whilst this information is captured from existing staff and prospective candidates at the application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. Selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.

Pregnancy and maternity	✓	It is possible where a member of staff or prospective candidate is pregnant there may be an impact, particularly in regards to selection. To mitigate this, there is an expectation that managers take into account individual circumstances when setting up selection and testing activities. Selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.
Race	✓	It is possible that an existing member of staff or prospective candidate could be impacted because of their race. Whilst this information is captured at application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. All shortlisting is undertaken blind without personal information and selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.
Religion or belief	✓	Whilst this information is captured from existing staff and prospective candidates at the application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. Selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.
Sex	✓	Whilst this information is captured from existing staff and prospective candidates at the application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. All shortlisting is undertaken blind without personal information and selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.
Sexual orientation	✓	Whilst this information is captured from existing staff and prospective candidates at the application stage, there is no requirement to disclose and no equality information is shared with recruiting managers. Selection panel members are required to undertake relevant training as detailed in section 5.11 above.

NB: Where an impact has been identified that does not have immediate mitigations a full equalities impact analysis (part two) should now be undertaken.

END.