



Talent Acquisition Policy & Procedure

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1. Introduction

The success of any organisation depends on the quality of its workforce. To provide quality and effective services to the people of Wythenshawe, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (“the Group”) requires a highly skilled, flexible, and motivated workforce.

The Group’s Talent Acquisition processes are efficient and effective. This is to ensure we recruit individuals with the competencies that align with the Group’s culture, values and behaviours and possess relevant skills, knowledge and, where applicable, qualifications.

2. Scope and Application

Talent Acquisition methods will;

- Meet the needs of the Group’s operational and strategic requirements;
- Embrace the Group’s commitment to equality and diversity in line with UK Employment Legislation;
- Attract the right calibre of candidate and ensure the best candidate for each post is appointed based on merit;
- Provide a framework for decision making where variation to standard process is necessitated
- Ensure appointments are made on the basis of the candidate’s suitability for the position based on job specific criteria
- Help promote a good image of the Group as an employer of choice;
- Provide a quality service to jobseekers that is consistent, fair and transparent.

Line Managers are empowered to take responsibility for the recruitment and selection of their direct reports and the Human Resources (HR) team will provide internal training, guidance and support to colleagues on the relevant processes and systems, where applicable.

3 The Recruitment and Selection Procedure

3.1 Evaluating the Vacancy

Before embarking on the process to populate a vacant post, extend a fixed term contract / secondment or create a new role within the structure, the post will be carefully reviewed by the recruiting manager and in consultation with their appointed HR Business Partner to ensure there is an ongoing requirement for the post or understand the need for the role. Authorisation will be required via the recruitment system.

Key questions that will be considered are;

- Is the job still needed / what is the reason for extension / what need will the new role fulfil?
- Is the job fulfilling its purpose / what is its purpose?

- Can the duties of the replacement / new / extended post be better distributed to other roles within the structure?
- Does the job design reflect future service / organisational requirements?
- Is the Job Description and Person Specification up to date?
- Are there any financial implications?
- Are the working hours and working arrangements of a particular post still appropriate?

3.2 Reviewing Job Description / Person Specification/ Behaviour Based Competencies

Job Descriptions will be concise, presented clearly and will be critically reviewed in order to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Job Descriptions will be:

- short and succinct, containing statements that encapsulate the main purpose, duties and expected achievements of the job;
- plain, jargon free and easily understood;
- performance standards, responsibilities and outputs rather than a list of tasks and duties;
- properly aligned to operational and strategic service requirements;
- incorporate organisational values, equality and diversity and employee development/essential training; and
- Incorporate competency based behaviours required in the role

The person specification forms the basis for assessment and decision-making at every stage of the recruitment process. It sets out the skills, behaviours, and underlying competencies, which enable a person to perform a job successfully and in accordance with the Group's values. It also identifies where there are essential qualifications required for the post. No criteria listed as a protected characteristic within Employment Legislation will act as a barrier to employment, unless the criteria is fundamental to the job, clearly justifiable and meets the legal requirements.

3.3 Vacancy Authorisation

Vacancy requests and authorisations are completed electronically within the Group's recruitment system by the respective manager, vacancy requests are automatically forwarded to HR to review and subsequently submitted to the relevant Budget Holder for approval.

3.4 Matters of Probity

Panel members must withdraw from the process if a family member or close connection applies, or if their knowledge of the applicant is such that they cannot maintain objectivity. All conflicts of interest must be made known at the earliest opportunity.

Panel members must not in any circumstances coach candidates through the interview process, as this may put other candidates at a disadvantage.

Where a candidate declares that they are related or closely connected to someone who is an employee or board member of the Group, HR will obtain matters of probity approvals either before interview or prior to making any verbal job offer as appropriate and in any case prior to any offers of employment being made.

3.5 Shortlisting for Interviews

Shortlisting is undertaken by the recruitment panel on-line via the recruitment system, against key criteria selected from within the Person Specification, this ensures consistency in approach and enables any application feedback provided to be transparent and objective.

Video interviews may be used to assist with long lists of shortlisted candidates, in order to reduce the number of shortlisted applicants to a reasonable number to approve for interview.

3.6 Recruitment Panel / Interview

Appointments are made by a recruitment panel, specifically brought together to make objective decisions on who may best fit the role. Detailed documented evidence will be kept on the process undertaken. The panel will have;

- Knowledge of the Group's vision, values, and behaviours;
- Knowledge of the relevant service, its current and future direction;
- A panel chair (the recruiting manager).
- A representative from HR may sit on the panel or be available to provide advice, ensure consistency and compliance with relevant legislation;

The choice and number of panel members will be appropriate to the vacancy.

All interviews will have a clear structure to assist the panel in remaining objective, and focused throughout. The process allows flexibility and the necessary freedom for skilled interviewers to probe and use supplementary and additional questions as required.

A consistent scoring system is used. Individual panel members assign a score for each candidate against a set of agreed interview questions.

Interviews may be held face-to-face, remotely and/or as part of an assessment center.

3.7 Outcome of the Interview / Offer

The recruiting manager (panel lead) will be responsible for contacting the successful applicant and making a verbal conditional offer, which will be followed up in writing. The Recruiting Managers should inform the HRBP when making an offer of employment so that supporting documentation can be prepared. Where a candidate has requested feedback on an unsuccessful application, advice should be sought from the HRBP prior to providing any feedback.

3.8 Onboarding

The Group has an online platform which links to the current recruitment system and allows the Group to proactively engage with successful applicants prior to them starting. The Onboarding site provides a warm welcome to candidates, includes key information and audio-visual content which ensures candidates have a feel for the Group's culture prior to starting.

The Onboarding portal also allows the successful candidate to submit reference details, and complete their personal / new starter details and submit a photo for their ID Pass securely and electronically on-line. In addition, successful applicants may also choose to undertake some on-line training prior to starting with the Group.

3.9 Reserve List

Where there is more than one appointable candidate identified, the details of the other appointable candidate(s) may be held in our reserve list for up to a period of six months provided consent is received.

When a suitable vacancy becomes available within the six-month period, the Group would endeavour to contact the candidate on our reserve list to discuss the next steps.

3.10 Feedback to Unsuccessful Candidates

Feedback is a very important part of the process and is key in terms of the Group's reputation regardless of whether a candidate's application has been successful or not. Where feedback is requested, a nominated panel member will liaise with HR and provide agreed objective feedback to the candidate, providing an overview of the results of any tests and exercises as well as assessments from the interview. The feedback will be accurate, factual and helpful. Feedback may be provided verbally or in writing.

4 Pre-employment Checks

All offers of appointment are conditional subject to receipt of:

- Two satisfactory references in writing (one of which should be the most recent employer)
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK

- Evidence of qualifications where specified in the person specification (copies of these will be taken)
- Satisfactory DBS check result (where appropriate for the role)

If any of the above criteria are not met, the conditional offer will be withdrawn. Where the relevant criterion(s) have been met, then the offer of employment will be confirmed.

In addition to the above, where a panel has concerns over a potential candidate's previous record of sickness, they reserve the right to refer the candidate for a pre-employment health check.

4.1 References

References are only considered for appointable candidates. Successful candidates have the ability to provide details on-line via the Group's Onboarding platform.

4.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

There are certain posts which by virtue of their job, come into contact on a regular one to one basis with vulnerable adults and/or children, and therefore require a DBS check. Some roles may require checking against the children and/or vulnerable adults barring lists. In order to ensure the Group complies with its statutory obligations and is able to discharge its full duty of care towards its tenants and customers, DBS checks will be undertaken as part of the recruitment process as appropriate.

The HR department regularly reviews vacancies as to whether they should be subject to a basic, standard, enhanced DBS check and if the role requires checking against the children or adult barring lists ensuring compliance with the DBS Code of Practice. The applicant will be notified of any DBS requirement as part of the recruitment process; and if so, at what level, and what the potential effect of a criminal record history/banned record might be on the recruitment and selection process and any recruitment decision.

The fact that someone has a criminal conviction is not an automatic barrier to employment with the Group; each case will be considered on its own merits and the Group will discuss any matter revealed through a DBS check with the individual before making any decision.

In certain circumstances, an employee may be permitted to start working pending the results of their DBS check. However, they will not be permitted to work alone with vulnerable adults or children and an impact assessment must be completed by the line manager to define responsibilities during this time. The fact that employment has started in such circumstances does not mean that the employment offer cannot be withdrawn if the DBS check result is unsatisfactory once received.

5 Methods of Assessment

The assessment methods to be used in the selection process will be carefully considered by the panel to determine the methods to be utilised in addition to an interview.

Job simulation exercises, personality and job relevant ability tests will improve the quality and quantity of information available as the basis for selection decisions. The use of a range of assessment tools will prove to be a cost effective investment. In all cases, assessment methods will be relevant, reliable and valid. HR can support recruiting managers in the development of an appropriate assessment centre.

6 Recruitment Schemes

The Group is committed to providing solutions to worklessness within the community.

This policy will support the work of other teams within the Group in relation to apprenticeships, traineeships and Wythenshawe Futures and other work based initiatives. The Group may ring fence relevant entry level positions in the first instance to such employment schemes prior to advertising the post externally and/or utilising secondments where appropriate.

7 Executive Search

For more senior posts within the Group structure, a reputable consultancy firm may be used to assist in attaining a good shortlist from the widest pool of suitable candidates, in addition to using online recruitment advertising, the national press and relevant trade journals. All candidates whether they are internal or external will be assessed in the same way and the panel will arrive at a decision based on merit.

8 Secondments / Acting Up

Consideration will be given to the use of secondments / acting up, to be utilised on a short-term basis and to assist with employee development initiatives. A number of factors will need to be considered before deciding to temporarily populate a post in this way, such as the level of post, whether the need for the post is of a permanent nature, level of knowledge required, qualification, how to cover the work of the employee being seconded/acting up and other associated risks.

9 Talent Management and Succession Planning

The Group will identify, through its Performance Management Framework, business critical roles and key talent as part of Resources and Succession Planning for the future. The Executive team reserves the right to appoint (either permanently or on a fixed term basis) individuals to roles within the business for a number of reasons including but not limited to development purposes or for the purposes of succession planning.

10 Disability Confident Employer

The Group is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all and does not discriminate against any applicant on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of belief) sex, sexual orientation, at any stage of the recruitment process.

The Group has been accredited with the Disability Confident symbol and is positive about disability, and is committed to ensuring all disabled applicants, who meet the requirements of the person specification of the advertised post, would be offered an interview.

Reasonable adjustments will be made at all stage of the recruitment process, where possible, to facilitate a disabled candidate to participate fully in the process, and in order for a successful disabled candidate to undertake the post.

11 Record Keeping and Data Protection

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of recruitment for the following reasons:

- to make informed decisions;
- to assist in monitoring the Group's adherence to best practice;
- to enable accurate and objective investigation of complaints as speedily as possible;
- to enable an accurate and speedy response in cases where complainants invoke their statutory rights under discrimination and data protection legislation.

The following information is vital for achieving these objectives;

- the on--line application form, supplemental information and related documents;
- on-line short listing data;
- assessment tests and exercises;
- candidate's on-line or written exercise responses, test score sheets, presentations and where applicable handouts;
- panel members' notes.

All such information should be provided / made accessible to the HR member supporting the recruitment panel and no personal copies should be retained by any member of the recruitment panel.

All applications will be treated confidentially and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and relevant General Data Protection Regulations. All personal information provided by candidates will be treated as confidential, and will only be considered by those staff with a legitimate interest in the appointment or in ensuring the proper application of the Group's policies and procedures. The Group has a privacy notice for applicants which is available electronically to applicants, and a Data Retention Policy which sets out how long recruitment records ought to be retained for.

The Group will not permit an applicant to view references that are given in confidence without the referee's permission.

12 Responsibility, Consultation Monitoring and Review

It is the ultimate responsibility of the HR Team to ensure fair application of the recruitment and selection procedure across the Group and that the policy is adhered to at all times.

The policy has been reviewed and consulted with the Recognised Trade unions, and the Board.