



RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY – SELF EMPLOYED STAFF

1 INTRODUCTION

Oxford Science Studies (OXSS) recognises that the achievement of its goals and the securing of its values are dependent on the recruitment and the retention of a skilled and committed workforce. This policy and procedure sets out our approach to this.

2 POLICY STATEMENT

All recruitment and selection activities will be conducted in a fair, consistent, effective and professional manner. An effective recruitment process contributes directly to the continuing success of the organization.

The organisation is committed to applying its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age or trade union membership, unless lawfully allowed for certain specific posts.

All posts with OXSS will or have the potential to involve working with children or to have interaction with children. Safe recruitment procedures must therefore be followed for all hires.

Normally appointments must be made in accordance with this policy and will, therefore, be subject to advertisement and interview. The Group HR Director must approve any exceptions in advance of formal appointment.

Appointments will be made subject to the receipt of: at least 2 written references; proof of eligibility to work in the UK; documentary proof of qualifications and a criminal record check.

3 AIMS OF THE POLICY

The purpose of the following procedural guide is to inform managers, employees and self-employed contracted staff of the aims and design of the recruitment, selection and appointment policy. It is designed as an aid to assist managers, employees, self-employed contracted staff and Human Resources to carry out the process in a fair, effective, efficient and systematic manner.

This will ensure that:

- The best candidate is appointed for the vacant post, with regard to objective criteria, which includes qualifications, skills, knowledge and quality of experience;
- Vacancies are filled within agreed timescales and in the most cost-effective manner; and
- Our recruitment procedure does not unlawfully discriminate at any stage of the process.

4 JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

A job description is an informative document, detailing the scope of accountability for key duties, responsibilities as well as the working conditions related to the job.

A job description has several purposes:

- Provides essential information for assigning the appropriate pay grade, job function and/or title for the job.
- Allows us to attract the best talent by providing clear expectations of the role.
- Supports the selection and assessment of candidates based on the competencies required in the role.
- Provides an individual with an understanding of the key accountabilities, duties and responsibilities they are expected to fulfill.

A job description is used in the recruitment process to inform applicants of the job profile and requirements to help ensure both OXSS and job applicants are on the same page regarding the job vacancy.

The job description continues to be of value beyond recruitment as it can be used as part of the performance management process to evaluate the employee's or self-employed contracted staff's performance against the job requirements.

It is good practice to keep job descriptions under regular review to ensure they continue to reflect a role's key accountabilities and responsibilities.

4.1 Job Description

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps. It must include:

- The job title
- The location of the job
- Grade or salary scale of the post
- The line manager to whom the postholder is responsible
- Any posts reporting to the postholder
- Main purpose of the job
- Main duties and responsibilities
- Any special working conditions (e.g. evening, bank holiday, or weekend work)

Other items that should be included in job descriptions are:

- A note that indicates that, as duties and responsibilities change, the job description will be reviewed and amended in consultation with the postholder;
- An indication that the postholder will carry out any other duties as are within the broad scope and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager or other authorised person.
- All roles are subject to Safe Recruitment and Child Safeguarding practices. Applicants will be informed in the job advertisement that a DBS Enhanced Disclosure will be sought; referees will be asked specifically whether or not they feel the applicant is a suitable person to work with children or other vulnerable groups; any gaps in CVs must be satisfactorily explained.

4.2 Person Specification

The person specification is of crucial importance and informs the selection decision. The person specification details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job description and, with the job description, should inform the content of the advert. The person specification should be specific, related to the job, and not unnecessarily restrictive - for example only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified.

The person specification must form part of the further particulars of a vacancy along with the job description in order that applicants have a full picture of what the job entails. The person specification enables potential applicants to make an informed decision about whether to apply and those who do apply, to give sufficient relevant detail of their skills and experience in their application. The person specification forms the basis of the selection decision and enables the recruitment staff to ensure objectivity.

The person specification details the requirements to do the job and will cover:

- Knowledge (including necessary qualifications)
- Skills and abilities
- Experience (see below)
- Aptitudes
- Personal qualities

The person specification will identify which elements of the above are essential or desirable.

Essential criteria are those without which an appointee would be unable to adequately perform the job; desirable criteria are those that may enable the candidate to perform better.

Knowledge can be derived in a number of ways, for example through education, training, or experience.

For some jobs a particular qualification(s) may be essential, while for others no single qualification may be appropriate and a particular type of experience may be just as relevant as a formal qualification. Where qualifications are deemed essential these should reflect the minimum requirements necessary to carry out the job to an acceptable standard.

Required abilities should be expressed in terms of the standards required, not just in terms of the task to be

undertaken, and should be as specific as possible. For example, avoid statements such as ‘Ability to write reports’; instead, indicate the expected standard, such as ‘Ability to write detailed financial reports that encompass departmental budgeting, annual variances, and forecasting’.

Great care must be taken if physical requirements are specified. The Disability Discrimination Act requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to jobs to make them suitable for people with a disability. It is therefore important that any physical requirement is stated in terms of the job that needs to be done. For example a job may require that the appointee ‘must be able to travel to a number of different locations’. In this instance, it will be necessary to consider if the ability to drive is required, or whether or not reasonable adjustments can be made for non-drivers.

5 AVOIDING DISCRIMINATION

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of any protected characteristics. Discrimination is unlawful irrespective of whether it was intentional or not. Steps must therefore be taken to ensure that job descriptions and person specifications are not discriminatory. For example, requiring a role to be full-time potentially discriminates against women who, statistically, are more likely to work in part-time roles. Consider whether the role really needs to be full-time or could it be done by two people working part-time in a job-share? If you need someone to speak to customers in Malay, you don’t need to advertise for a Malaysian, you need to ask for someone who speaks Malay. If you want someone who is hard working, don’t advertise for someone who is youthful or energetic, you need to ask for someone who can evidence they can handle a demanding workload. Make sure, before assuming that the job is one to which an occupational requirement applies, that it can be performed effectively only by someone with a particular protected characteristic as permitted under the Equality Act 2010.

6 PUBLICISING THE VACANCY

Job adverts are written from the Job Description and Person Specification and should contain the following points, if possible (not always possible on free ads like Daily Info).

- OXSS name and logo
- Title of vacancy
- Salary
- Brief details of the job
- Key details of the person specification
- The necessity of a criminal records check.
- How to access further details of the vacancy
- Method of application and to who applications should be submitted
- Where known, the date and location of the interview
- A statement reflecting OXSS’s commitment to equality of opportunity

The majority of posts will also be concurrently advertised externally to maximise the chances of attracting the best candidate. Consideration should also be given to advertising in locations/publications likely to increase diversity in the workforce.

Advertisements for positions which involve working with children will make specific reference to the to OXSS's Safe Recruitment Policy. Applicants will be made aware that:

- Any gaps in CVs will be explored at interview
- Contact details for at least 2 referees must be provided. Referees will be asked specifically about the candidate's suitability to work with children
- This role meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- All applicants who are offered work will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions

7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR INTERVIEW

Invitations to interview should include:

- Date, time and place of interview
- Directions to the interview venue, if applicable
- A request that the candidate make it known if they have any particular requirements related to access to the venue or any other need related to a disability. If applicable
- Details of any presentation or task that form part of the selection process
- A request that the candidate bring with them permission to work in the UK documents and qualification certificates – this must be requested of **ALL** candidates
- Pre-interview guidance notes
- The job description

The pack may also include, depending on the role guidance notes and a criminal convictions declaration form.

It is best practice to write to candidates who have not been shortlisted but if this is not possible due to limited resources, the application pack should make clear that if not notified after a certain date or period, applicants should consider themselves not to have been shortlisted.

8 CRIMINAL CONVICTION DECLARATION FORMS

Criminal declaration forms belonging to candidates who have not been shortlisted for interview will remain sealed and will be shredded. Short-listed candidates' forms will be opened and checked for relevant convictions. If it is deemed that a conviction is relevant to the post, the candidate may be withdrawn from the list of interviewees. Further guidance on this can be found in the Rehabilitation of Offenders policy [and the application pack guidance notes].

Criminal convictions declaration form template is integral in the online application form.

9 INTERVIEWING

Interviews should be scheduled as soon as practically possible.

A set of interview questions is available and certain questions will be required to be asked, some will be asked on a case by case basis. Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate and should be designed to seek evidence of how the interviewee meets the criteria on the person specification. Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g., questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job). Notes are then taken at interview and recorded on the tutor Database. Such notes must relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification.

A commitment to equality and diversity is a responsibility of everybody who is involved with OXSS irrespective of the role and level that is being hired for. Great care should also be taken during the interview process to ensure that the individual is willing to work within a diverse culture, uphold the values of OXSS and to demonstrate a commitment to the Equality Act 2010.

10 DISABLED APPLICANTS

Where the candidate being interviewed has a disability for which adjustments may need to be considered, the candidate's requirements should be discussed with him/her once the planned questioning is complete. The outcome of these discussions must not influence the consideration of the candidate's application. If the disabled candidate best meets the person specification, consideration must be made regarding what would be 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of the person in question. On considering these, if it is considered that the adaptations needed would not be deemed to be 'reasonable' under the Disability Discrimination Act; the Manager will draft a letter to the applicant explaining why the adaptations cannot be made. Reasons for not making adjustments to the working environment must be both material and substantial and must be documented.

11 MAKING A DECISION AFTER INTERVIEW

The information obtained in the application, the interview, and in any selection tests will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made.

The Recruitment Manager will make a provisional offer to the preferred candidate subject to satisfactory references and Disclosures (if appropriate) being received.

12 PRE-ENGAGEMENT CHECKS

A number of checks are required to be undertaken before a formal offer of work can be made. It must be ensured that any offer of work given, is conditional, subject to receipt of documentation as shown below.

12.1 References

References should only be used after interview to confirm, but not influence, a decision. Candidates' permission must be sought prior to seeking references.

Appropriate referees are those who have direct experience of a candidate's work, education or training, preferably in a supervisory capacity and a reference must be obtained from the current or previous employer, where possible.

References are confidential and must be sought 'in confidence' and may be shared with Management staff. References must only be kept in the personnel file.

12.2 Eligibility to Work in the UK

The Immigration, Asylum and Immigration Act 2006 makes it an offence to engage anyone who does not have permission to be in, or work in, the UK. To avoid making assumptions about such permission, it is the hiring staff responsibility to ask all appointees for evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. It is unlawful racial discrimination to carry out checks only on potential staff members who by their appearance or accent seem to be other than British. It is therefore a requirement to ask all candidates attending interview to bring with them evidence of their right to work in the UK.

For every new member of staff we must (a) see, (b) check and (c) copy either one or two documents to prove entitlement to work in the UK. The documents must be originals, not copies.

The Home Office requires that we must in particular:

- Check that photographs appear to be of the prospective member of staff/employee;
- Check that dates of birth are consistent with the apparent age of the person;
- Check that expiry dates have not been passed;
- Check that UK government stamps or endorsements do allow the type of work you are offering; and
- Get a third document (such as a marriage certificate) to explain the reason if the two documents produced are in different names.

We will make a copy of the relevant parts of the documents. These are: the front cover and all the pages which give the prospective employee's/member of staff personal details, especially the photograph and signature; and any page containing a UK government stamp or endorsement which allows the person to do the work we are offering.

A list of acceptable evidence is available from the HR Department.

12.3 Criminal Conviction Information

All posts within OXSS are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with barred list (formerly List 99). Because of the nature of our business, all employees/members of staff have the potential to come into contact with children and therefore are exempt under the Exemption Order of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A Disclosure request will only be undertaken for the successful candidate, and all candidates will be informed of this process in the invitation to interview. It should be

noted that this may delay the offer a position until the disclosure process is complete. Where an applicant has been living overseas and equivalent check to the DBS will be requested.

We will obtain a separate barred list check and conduct a risk assessment if an individual is going to start work before the DBS certificate is available.

12.4 **Qualifications**

Proof of academic qualifications and any others considered essential for the post must be verified.

13 **APPOINTMENT**

Offers of work will be conditional upon the above checks being satisfactorily carried out. Offers of employment/engagement will be confirmed in writing by the HR team.

14 **PERSONAL DATA**

OXSS processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.