

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

We want people to want to work at our Union. We recognise that recruiting talented people who share our Values – Empowering, Inclusive and Collaborative - is vital to our success in supporting students.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which people are actively encouraged and enabled to make their best contribution to our strategic aims, whilst also developing themselves and their careers. We are clear about the value we hope staff will bring to us and equally clear about the opportunities for contribution, learning and growth we offer in return.

This policy explains our approach to the recruitment and selection of high-quality people, in accordance with the law and the intentions above, and in which all recruitment and selection practices promote inclusivity, diversity and opportunity.

POLICY

Introduction

Our approach to recruitment and selection is based on the following principles:

- The need to recruit talented people who will make a real contribution to UoNSU by actively supporting our strategic aims and our Values, and deliver outstanding services to students.
- The offer of a stimulating and rewarding working environment in which people are actively supported to learn, to develop new skills and to grow their careers. This is underpinned by the expectations set out in our 'Commitment to Learning' approach.
- The desire to be recognised as an attractive employer by providing a holistic set of benefits and working practices which support people's family and personal commitments and aspirations. We want to be known as a good employer and as a great place to work.
- The intention to value and celebrate diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusivity. Our Values promote courtesy, openness and respect towards others. We value people, and we will make every effort to remove illegal or unnecessary barriers that prevent them from making a positive contribution to our Union and fulfilling their potential.
- Recognition that recruitment is a two-way process based on mutual respect, good information, professional processes and a supportive environment.

We will act in line with the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010 in which selection decisions are taken on the basis of an individual's skills, abilities, experience, knowledge, qualifications and training, irrespective of the protected characteristics and any other personal factor not relevant to the job.
- The Immigration, Nationality and Asylum Act 2008 so that only people who are eligible to work in the United Kingdom (UK) are appointed.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in which details of any previous convictions are provided by candidates at the selection stage, so that their relevance to the post for which they have applied can be considered.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 in which each vacant post will be assessed as to whether or not it falls into the category covered by the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults regulations.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) in which all data relating to applicants will be treated confidentially. Candidates will have the right to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the DPA.

Our Employee Proposition

Our Values

Our *Brand Vision* 'One Union Together', and our Values – Empowering, Inclusive and Collaborative – are the foundation for how we want people to experience the Union. There are two sides to this. The *Brand Matrix* sets out our intentions for how we want students to feel when they meet us and use our services, and our *Employee Experience* describes how we want staff to feel about working here.

The *Employee Experience* consists of five feelings – Valued, Fun, Trusted, Growing and Inspired. The link is clear and strong - staff who are engaged, supported and motivated by their work, performing at their best and delivering excellent customer service.

We aim to do this by actively living our Values - Empowering, Inclusive and Collaboration - and using the 'Living the Values' guide' to understand the principles and standards we're each expected to work to in our professional roles. The guide contains details of how the Values and behaviours apply across all roles. This will be included in our recruitment packs so candidates understand our ethos and expectations, and how they can expect to be treated if they join us.

'Commitment to Learning' Standard

UoNSU has a Learning and Development Strategy which facilitates the personal, professional and career development of all staff. We have an explicit commitment to support staff in performing their roles to the best of their ability and in fulfilling their potential. This is summarised in our 'Commitment to Learning' standard, which sets out the responsibilities of all staff to deliver our learning and development priorities. This is explained in our Learning and Development Policy.

We believe that this strategy and the policies which support it are an attractive proposition to potential applicants. We will include the 'Commitment to Learning' diagram in our recruitment information packs for all roles so that applicants understand the importance we place on learning and development for them as individuals and for the Union as a whole.

Recruitment and Selection Standards

The following standards will apply in the recruitment and selection of staff:

- We will always aim to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit.
- Everyone who applies for a job with us will receive fair treatment, will be supported throughout the process and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.
- We want all candidates to have a positive experience of their involvement with UoNSU, whatever the outcome of the selection process.
- We will review our recruitment and selection processes and methods regularly to ensure they are in line with our Values as a Union, employment legislation and represent best practice.
- We will be mindful of how we advertise and promote job vacancies. We will use a variety of media and methods which are attractive to a diverse group of applicants.
- Role Profiles/Job descriptions and Person Specifications will be reviewed to ensure that they are in line with our equality policy and our Values. We will take care that the criteria listed in our people specifications are relevant, specific and proportionate.
- We will say what we mean – we'll avoid unnecessary jargon and complicated language.
- Staff involved in recruitment and selection will receive training to support them in a variety of selection techniques and in making objective evidence-based decisions. Shortlisting and interviewing will be done by at least two people.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to the selection process to facilitate applicants with disabilities or particular needs being able to participate fully. Where appropriate, we will take action to improve access, support for and experience of disabled candidates, and those with special needs.
- We may take positive action to meet specific objectives, tackle under-representation or reduce the disadvantage affecting people with a protected characteristic. Where we do this, it will be to facilitate people accessing opportunities which they might not otherwise do. Selection for jobs will always be based on merit.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

There are a number of steps in recruiting and selecting for a role. This procedure outlines the key stages and provides guidance on them. Further advice and guidance is available from HR.

HR should be contacted for support where a candidate requires particular support or reasonable adjustment to apply or be assessed for a role.

Review the Vacancy

When a vacancy first arises, it is important to evaluate carefully the need for the role in the context of the Union's strategic plan. Questions to consider include whether the role needs to be structured in the same way, whether it's full or part-time or could be split, and how it could support the learning or career development of current staff.

All posts must be authorised by the relevant SLG member before being advertised.

Role Profile/Job Description and Person Specification

A Job Description/Role Profile and Person Specification must be produced or updated for any vacant post prior to recruitment starting. HR will provide guidance if required.

- The job description should accurately reflect all key parts of the role.
- The Person Specification should outline both the essential and preferable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge, specialist training, qualifications (where necessary) and experience required for the job.
- All of the criteria listed should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all candidates.

Suitable Appointee list

In most circumstances, UoNSU will advertise all vacant roles to be filled. However, if a suitable candidate was recently identified in a previous recruitment exercise for the same or similar role (typically in the previous six months) then the hiring manager may contact that suitable candidate to identify if they are still available and wish to be appointed.

Advertising the Role

Advertisements should be based on the Person Specification and should identify a number of the essential criteria in order to attract suitably qualified applicants. The general rule is that it's preferable to attract a smaller number of suitably qualified people than a large number whose qualifications or experience aren't a good match.

Roles are normally advertised both internally and externally to provide potential career development opportunities for existing staff whilst supporting our aims to enhance the diversity of our staff team.

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to use a recruitment agency. HR will advise on this. Roles advertised externally by traditional advertisements or via recruitment agencies will also be advertised internally.

The UoNSU operates a Recommend A Friend Policy to encourage staff to nominate good candidates for specific roles. Further details can be found in the Recommend a Friend Policy.

All candidates will be sent/signposted to recruitment information which includes details of the Union and the particular role. Clearly this will include the Job Description/Role Profile and the Person Specification. It will include UoNSU strategy and structure, and the departmental objectives so that people can begin to see the context and purpose of the role. It will also include and explain our 'Living the Values' guide, as well as our 'Commitment to Learning' standard. Through these, they begin to appreciate the importance of our Values and behaviours, and our approach to learning and development.

Shortlisting

All applications received by the deadline should be assessed against the Person Specification. To be shortlisted, they should meet the essential criteria as a minimum.

Shortlisting should be undertaken by at least two people to avoid any possibility of bias. Normally one of these people will be the line manager.

Any member of staff involved in a selection process who has a personal or family relationship with an applicant must notify their line manager in advance or as soon as it becomes known to them. We may ask another colleague to perform the shortlisting and interviewing instead to avoid any suggestion of favouritism or lack of impartiality.

Invitation to Selection

Candidates invited for selection should be given the date and the details of the selection process in writing with a reasonable amount of notice. Providing candidates with insufficient notice may not allow them time to prepare adequately and could also reflect poorly on our reputation as an organisation.

Candidates should be asked in advance, in good time, whether they require any particular arrangements or reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to participate fully in the selection process.

Selection

Line managers are recommended to use a range of selection methods to assess both the essential and preferable criteria in the Person Specification. Interview alone is a less reliable method and the use of other techniques, such as work simulations or psychometric tests, can help objective decision making by providing a wider range of information. HR can provide advice and guidance in this area.

The structure of the interview and the interview questions themselves should be consistent across all candidates. Legible and meaningful notes should be taken to record candidates' responses to questions and scores. These notes will be stored by HR as a record of the process and should candidates request feedback.

Where there is uncertainty about selecting a candidate, advice should be sought from HR. It's preferable not to appoint where the panel is unsure rather than making a mediocre or unsuccessful appointment.

Informing Candidates of the Outcome

All candidates, whether successful or not, should be informed of the outcome as soon as possible and within the timeframe you've told them they'll hear. If you aren't able to inform them within the time they expect, you should contact them to let them know when they can expect to hear. Unsuccessful candidates especially should be dealt with courteously and sensitively, and should receive written notification of the outcome.

There will also be the opportunity to identify excellent candidates to add to the talent pool for consideration should a post with a similar skill set become available within 6 months of the interview date.

Brief feedback should be offered to all candidates.

Job Offer and Checks

The line manager will generally make a verbal offer to the preferred candidate. HR will follow this up with a written offer of employment, summarising the main terms and conditions.

Offers are subject to proof of eligibility to work in the UK, appropriate checks such as Disclosure and Barring (DBS), and satisfactory references. Referees will not be contacted without the candidate's prior consent.

The information provided should be treated as confidential and should be used only to verify information collected through the selection process. Documents relating to candidates will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Pre-arrival

Induction to UoNSU starts once the offer is accepted and a start date is agreed. This is an important part of the new employee's experience and should be managed in line with our Induction Policy.

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