



University of Essex



# Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

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# Aim

The University Strategy sets out our ambition to grow, thrive and to advance our mission of excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities. Our staff are at the centre of the University's success and it is essential we continue to attract, recruit and retain talented staff to enhance our strategic ambition.

## 1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy outlines the University's approach to recruiting the best candidates, promoting equality of opportunity and complying with relevant legislation. The policy is supported by, and should be read in conjunction with, the University's [Resourcing Guidance](#) and [Underpinning Framework](#).

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 The principles outlined in this policy apply to the recruitment and selection of all employed staff.
- 2.2 The policy does not cover the engagement of sole traders, self-employed workers, or those who work via third parties (agency staff)

## 3. Definitions

3.1 Terms referenced throughout the document are defined below:

- Hiring Manager: The Manager or member of staff who is responsible for undertaking the recruitment to a vacant post. The Hiring Manager is also known as a Recruiting Manager in the e-recruitment (iTrent) system.
- Chair: The member of staff responsible for chairing the selection panel.
- Selection Panel: The members of staff who act as decision makers as part of the shortlisting/interview process.
- Head of Department: In the context here, this means both Heads of Academic Departments and Heads of Professional Services Sections.
- Department: Means both Academic Departments and Professional Services Sections.

- **EXAMPLE:** The Department of History is recruiting for a Lecturer. The Head of Department is the Hiring Manager as the new Lecturer position will report to them. The Chair of the selection panel will be the Faculty Executive Dean. The rest of the Selection Panel will comprise staff/external experts in accordance with the Ordinances.

## 4. Role and responsibilities

4.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff involved in recruitment and selection to follow this policy and the supporting guidance.

4.2 The People and Culture Resourcing Team are responsible for:

- Providing professional advice and guidance on strategies and advertising approaches that will attract the best talent.
- Providing professional advice on any other aspect of the recruitment and selection process including selection methods.
- Providing professional advice on recruitment-related employment law and equality and diversity issues.
- The University's compliance with its sponsor license and related immigration matters.
- Recruitment related administration including managing candidate applications and enquiries, referencing and other pre-employment checks, and producing contractual documentation.
- Developing appropriate training, development and guidance for staff undertaking recruitment and selection.
- Monitoring and continuously improving the recruitment process and associated IT systems
- Monitoring and analysing the diversity of applicants and successful candidates to ensure we maintain a balanced workforce and put in place plans to deal with any imbalances should they occur
- Managing the University recruitment budget.

4.3 Heads of Department are responsible for:

- The proper delivery of the recruitment and selection process for all posts within their department in accordance with this guidance, the accompanying underpinning framework and best practice advice from the Resourcing Team.
- Ensuring all staff involved in recruitment are made aware of this guidance and undertake the training provided to develop the skills necessary to recruit and select.

- Following the HERA job evaluation process where applicable.

4.4 Hiring Managers are responsible for managing and overseeing the recruitment and selection process, and will be responsible for:

- Undertaking appropriate training on recruitment and selection.
- Working within this guidance and the accompanying underpinning framework, ensuring that the recruitment process is conducted in a fair and transparent way.
- Obtaining the appropriate permission to recruit through Unit 4 Business World.
- Writing a job description and person specification for the vacancy using the University's templates where applicable and ensuring that there is a focus on behaviour and values as well as duties.
- Writing a clear and concise job advertisement that clearly reflects the job description and person specification in accordance with University policies and guidance.
- Providing HR with full and complete documentation for advertising, which matches the approval that has been granted, and the HERA job evaluation reference if applicable
- Identifying selection panel members (including the Chair if different to the hiring manager) in accordance with the University Ordinances for academic roles and seeking necessary approval of the panel composition.
- Selecting candidates for interview (with other panel members) according to whether they possess the requirements identified in the person specification for the vacant post.
- Arranging an interview date, booking interview rooms and putting in place any other logistical arrangements.
- Agreeing (in conjunction with the Chair) the format for the interviews and selection methods to be used.
- Providing the Resourcing Team with the shortlisting grid, interview decision grid, and appointment form.
- Managing the induction of the new employee, which starts with recruitment
- Treating all information gained through the selection process as confidential and notifying HR of any potential conflicts of interest.

4.5 Chairs of selection panels are responsible for ensuring that:

- They have received the appropriate information and training in recruitment and selection and unconscious bias, including knowledge of relevant University policies.

- Interviews are conducted in a fair and equitable way and in accordance with University policies and guidance.
- The panel has an agreed list of appropriate questions and the arrangements for asking them are well understood by panel members.
- All panel members treat all information gained through the selection process as confidential.
- A member of the panel is designated to prepare or give feedback to candidates upon request
- HR are notified of any potential conflicts of interest of the panel members.
- The selection decision is demonstrably free from bias and discrimination.
- For professional services posts, discussing the offer with the Resourcing Team before proceeding.
- For academic posts gaining relevant approvals for the offer before proceeding.
- Making the formal offer to the successful candidate, or delegating this responsibility to the Hiring Manager.
- Providing all interview notes to the Resourcing Team after the process has concluded.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.6 Selection panel members are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are familiar with this policy and associated guidance.
- Undertaking appropriate training.
- Questioning interview candidates in a fair and legislatively-compliant manner.
- Note taking during each interview.
- Ensuring all their paperwork is given to the Chair at the end of the interview process.
- Treating all information gained through the selection process as confidential.
- Notifying People and Culture or the Chair of any potential conflicts of interest.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a requirement under immigration rules that interview notes are kept on file. Notes are also required for employment law purposes should we receive a legal challenge to an appointment decision

# 5. Core principles

5.1 The University has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment that should attract a diverse range of talented applicants. All vacancies must be advertised, additionally any post which is for a period of six months or more in duration must be advertised externally.

5.2 The University will recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the university based on the advertised job and person criteria.

5.3 The University will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with relevant employment legislation and the University's Equality and Diversity policies, procedures, and commitments.

5.4 All recruitment campaigns must comply with data protection requirements and:

- All documentation and other data must be kept securely.
- A clear, documented audit trail of decisions made throughout the process must be recorded.
- All personal data must be treated confidentially and with due care.

5.5 To ensure our staff reflect the diverse profile of our students and the surrounding communities, when there is evidence of under representation in certain jobs or at certain levels, we may actively target applications from underrepresented groups through the use of Positive Action Statements in our recruitment advertising.

# 6. Use of social media in recruitment and selection

6.1 Social media is an important tool in sharing vacancies with a wide audience. It is recommended that Hiring Managers engage with social media advertising by retweeting or sharing advertisements either through their department's social media networks, professional networks or their own personal networks.

6.2 A candidates' social media profile or presence should not be used as part of making shortlisting, interview or appointment decisions. Selection must be undertaken using the information provided in the application and presented through the interview process, the panel should select the candidates who best meet the essential and desirable criteria as advertised in the person criteria. If, during the course of a recruitment campaign, a panel member becomes aware of a candidates' social media profile that raises concerns about their suitability, you should discuss this with the panel Chair, who should refer to

the Director of Employee Relations and Reward for advice. Where any such information is considered, the University will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

## 7. Confidentiality

7.1 Hiring Managers and panel members must treat all application information as confidential.

## 8. External sources of support and information

8.1 There is no single Act governing recruitment and selection, but there are many statutes dealing with employment relationships that have an impact on pre-employment issues. The most significant example is the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against job applicants (and existing workers) because of one of the protected characteristics:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance#overview>

8.2 The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 governs right to work checks in the UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide>

8.3 Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and governs the lawful processing of applicants' data: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

8.4 The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), the professional body for HR have produced a factsheet providing an overview of recruitment and the relevant laws:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/Export/ToPdf?path=%252fknowledge%252ffundamentals%252fpeople%252frecruitment%252ffactsheet>

## 9. Related university policies and procedures

9.1 Full details regarding the recruitment process can be read in the Resourcing Guidance on staff directory <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/directories/human-resources/resourcing-guidance.pdf>

9.2 This policy is supported by an Underpinning Framework <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/directories/human-resources/underpinning-framework.pdf>



9.3 The composition of recruitment panels for academic appointments is governed by the University Ordinances and must be adhered to: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/about/governance/ordinances.pdf>

9.4 Social Media policy <https://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/directories/organisational-development/social-media-policy.pdf?la=en>

# 10. Equality, diversity and inclusion statement

We are committed to meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (EA), which requires the University not to discriminate as required by law on account of age, disability, gender reassignment\*, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The University will always act lawfully and this may include taking action to support people with particular protected characteristics, including disability and sex. In addition to its obligations under the EA, the University shall adopt policies, practices, and procedures that define expected standards of behaviour and specify any additional characteristics, beyond those required by law, to which protection is provided, for example, in relation to political belief, social background and refugee status.

\*The University's policies, practices and procedures specifically extend to all gender identities including trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people.

For the purposes of this Policy Statement the term 'trans' is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. The term 'non-binary' is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with 'woman' or 'man'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

# 11. Monitoring

The operation of this policy will be monitored on behalf of USG by the People, Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group as part of its role to monitor on behalf of USG, the implementation of the University's people strategies, policies and practices, including those relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); promote dissemination of good people management practice throughout the University and draw to the attention of USG any areas of concern requiring attention.

# 12. Policy information

**Title:** Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

**Policy Classification:** Policy

**Security Classification:** Open

**Security Rationale:** [If the document is Restricted, this should contain an explanation as to why and who can access it.]

**Nominated Contact:** [Resourcing@essex.ac.uk](mailto:Resourcing@essex.ac.uk)

**Responsible UoE Section:** People and Culture

**Approval Body:** USG

**Signed Off Date:** 12 July 2022

**Last Review Date:** 12 July 2022

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