

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF POLICY

Brief Description (max 50 words)	This policy and its accompanying set of guidelines apply to the recruitment and selection of all staff, with the exception of those engaged on a casual basis
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Policy Owner / Dept	People Business Partnering and Operations Team
Equality Impact Assessment <a href="#">Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Policy EIA.pdf</a>	This document has been assessed for equality impact on the protected groups, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This Policy is applicable as outlined in the 'scope' irrespective of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage, or civil partnership

### Amendment History

Version	Date	Reviewer Name(s)	Comments
1.0	June 2024	Claire Bickers Head of People Business Partnering and Operations	Updated Policy to include additional reference to all pre-employment checks, access to work, agile and campus working, market forces, applicant tracking system.
1.1	Jan 25	Debbie Holder	Changed to new template

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## 1. Introduction

The University recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. The University therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this. The University of Suffolk's recruitment and selection process is a partnership between People and Organisational Development's Resourcing Team and the School or Department. People and Organisational Development (POD) supports the recruiting manager by overseeing the process, but ultimately it is the managers' responsibility to carry out the main recruitment activities – defining the vacancy, shortlisting and interviewing - up to the acceptance of appointment.

This policy and its accompanying set of guidelines seeks to set out our respective roles and responsibilities, the minimum standards expected and advice on good practice. These guidelines apply to the recruitment and selection of all staff, with the exception of those appointed on a casual basis; the appointment arrangements for such staff are covered in the Engagement of Occasional Staff Policy.

Staff involved in recruitment and selection are required to comply with this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- University of Suffolk employees
- Job Applicants

Should service conditions apply to any part of this policy, this will be detailed as relevant.

## 3. Equality and Diversity

Employers have a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, to ensure that no unlawful discrimination takes place in relation to sex, race (includes nationality or citizenship), disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership, age, religion or belief.

Equality of opportunity is an integral part of the recruitment and selection process. Under our Equality and Diversity Policy, the University of Suffolk is committed to ensuring there is no unlawful Recruitment & Selection of Staff Policy

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discrimination. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the recruitment process to ensure no job applicant receives less favourable treatment than another job applicant on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

The University of Suffolk is a **Disability Confident Employer**, this means that disabled candidates may be offered an interview if they meet the minimum essential criteria. The recruiting manager needs to identify the minimum essential criteria for the role that are specified in the Person Specification. Examples of these could be the qualification, a set of specific skills relevant to the post, registration with a professional body, and level of experience.

Your contact in the Resourcing team will advise you of any such candidates once shortlisting is completed in the usual way. Candidates are invited to let us know of any adjustments they might need for the interview process e.g. an accessible room and appropriate lighting conditions for visually impaired candidates.

It is important to note that there may be occasions where it is not practicable or appropriate to interview all disabled people that meet the minimum criteria for the job. For example, in certain recruitment situations such as high number of applications, seasonal and high-peak times, we may need to limit the overall numbers of interviews offered to both disabled people and non-disabled people.

In these circumstances we may select disabled candidates who best meet the minimum criteria for the job rather than all of those that meet the minimum criteria, as we would do for non-disabled applicants.

Your Resourcing contact or People Business Partner is also able to offer further guidance on 'reasonable adjustments' to support the employment of disabled people – these might include changes to premises; adjustment of hours of work or starting and finishing times; provision of special equipment and/or training; etc. For support and adaptations beyond reasonable adjustments, we can consult the Access to Work scheme. This is an employment support grant scheme, that aims to support disabled people start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support for people who have a disability or physical or mental health condition.

#### 4. Monitoring the Recruitment and Selection Process

The monitoring and analysis of applicants through our recruitment stages is an important element in the University of Suffolk's recruitment process, for us to assess how our equal opportunities code is working in practice.

For all posts, applicants are asked to complete the equal opportunities monitoring form. This is retained by the People and Organisational Development team and not shared with any of the recruiting panel. Analysis of the collated data is reviewed by the People and Organisational Development team for equal opportunities purposes, in order that any anomalies can be addressed.

#### 4.1. General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) & Data Protection Act 2018

The Data Protection Act 2018 places responsibility on any organisation to process personal data (whether in manual records or in electronic form) in a fair and proper way.

The data contained in applications for employment may be used only for the purposes of short-listing, conducting an interview and establishing an employment record for the successful candidate. Information must not be retained any longer than is necessary for these purposes. Currently all recruitment records are shredded and/or deleted from electronic systems after 8 months (with the exception of those for successful candidates, which are then retained on the personal file during the period of employment and in line with our document retention policy). It is also important to remember that under the Data Protection Act, candidates can request to see certain information under the Data Protection Act. All such requests must be made to the Data Protection Officer.

Equal Opportunities information submitted by candidates is not available to recruiting managers or panel members. The People and Organisational Development team uses the data to –

- A) Identify disabled candidates under the Disability Confident Employer Scheme and;
- B) Collate and report on recruitment outcomes (anonymously), to monitor our recruitment policies and initiatives.

Applicant Privacy Notice: [Privacy Notice](#)

#### 4.2 Preparation Stage

The recruitment and selection process should not commence, until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the area's strategic plans and budget has been completed.

The recruitment of staff will take into account the University's essential areas of service delivery and the changing resource, skills and knowledge to achieve these. The University recognizes the benefits that a diverse workforce brings and actively encourages the attraction of candidates from all backgrounds and with lived experiences which will support new or different ideas or approaches.

Recruitment forms an integral part of the University People Strategy and there may be occasions where 'positive action' initiatives are undertaken. 'Positive Action' is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to the steps that an employer can take to encourage applicants from people who share a protected characteristic (e.g. a certain gender or race) who are under-represented in a particular area of the workforce, for example.

Formal authorisation to recruit (ATR) to a post should be sought, before commencing the recruitment process.

If a manager believes that there may be potential difficulties in recruiting a post, they should contact the Resourcing Team for advice and guidance options for appropriate action (e.g. additional job board advertisement).

#### 4.3 Remuneration

All posts will be advertised in line with the University's Pay Scales (where applicable) and in line with the University Remuneration policy.

A Market Forces Supplement (MFS) may only be paid in exceptional circumstances. MFS is an additional temporary payment, in addition to the basic salary of an individual job or specific group of jobs, where market pressures would otherwise prevent the university from being able to recruit or retain employees with a particular skill or group of skills. Market forces can fluctuate, and market rates of pay go down as well as up. Where a MFS is paid this will be for a time limited period and regular review will take place. MFS can be removed where there is no ongoing business rationale for its continuation.

#### **4.4 Agile & Campus Working**

Our Agile Working Framework currently empowers 97% of our workforce to work in an agile way. We trust our staff to work in the best location for the activity being undertaken; but connection to colleagues and campus is essential – therefore all roles will require a regular on-campus presence, with a minimum average 60% campus attendance. 'Shades of agility' will vary between departments as required by the type of activity/role and during peak periods where more campus working is required. It is crucial that all departments ensure a connected and thriving campus for students and staff. Line managers will provide clarity on this.

#### **4.5 Advert & Job Description**

An advert template and job description (in the agreed corporate style / format in place at that time) must be produced or updated for any vacant post that is to be filled and shared with the Resourcing Team.

The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post and include wording, which aligns to our values and behaviours.

The specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of qualification, skills, aptitudes, knowledge, experience and personal attributes/behaviours for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used does not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.

#### **4.6 Advertising**

All vacancies will usually be advertised via the University's Applicant Tracking System (ATS). All vacancies will usually be advertised externally except in special circumstances (such as time limited or acting up opportunities, or where there is a known internal talent pipeline which should be explored in advance of external recruitment; or where a role may need to be held for redeployment purposes). Requests for internal only advertising should be discussed and agreed with the Resourcing & Talent Business Partner, or another senior manager of the People & OD Team.

The Resourcing Team will oversee and place all vacancy advertisements, except where a recruitment agency is to be used. Adverts are placed on the University's website, Linked In page and other relevant platform(s), if required. All requests should be discussed with the Resourcing

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Team and requests for more than one paid-for advert will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be charged to the School or Department.

All vacancies will usually be advertised for a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of four weeks, unless otherwise agreed with the Resourcing Business Partner.

#### **4.7 Applicant Selection**

Once a vacancy has expired, it is the Line Manager's responsibility to review and score each applicant, via the ATS system within 5 days, or an acceptable duration of time prior to the agreed interview date.

Shortlisting may involve the whole panel but must be carried out by a minimum of 2 people to avoid any possibility of bias, one of whom should be the direct line manager.

Upon completion of all applicant's scoring, contact must be made with the Resourcing Team to provide guidance on the shortlisted candidates selected for interview (e.g. confirmation of shortlisted applicants, interview date/s, times and interview format). Applicants will usually be given one week's notice prior to their interview taking place. The exception to this may be where an interview date has already been published on the advert. Any applicants who have not been successful in obtaining an interview will be informed by the Resourcing team via email correspondence.

#### **4.8 Interviews**

Interview panels should, where possible, be balanced in terms of gender and diverse regarding other characteristics such as ethnicity, age, disability. If an additional panel member is required, the Resourcing Team should be contacted. A list of staff members that have received specialist recruitment and selection training (including aspects of equality, diversity, and unconscious bias) is held by the Resourcing Team. Wherever possible, recruitment panels should also include one panel member, from a different School/Directorate.

The interview should be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the Recruiting Manager.

Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.

#### **4.9 Interview Outcome**

Once the interviews have taken place, a verbal offer should be made to the selected candidate within 5 days. An offer letter will then be issued by the Resourcing Team and upon acceptance, the onboarding process will begin.

Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courtesy and sensitivity and will, as a minimum, receive email notification of the outcome of the selection process.

Each unsuccessful applicant is entitled to request feedback from the Line Manager and is provided with their contact details, upon receipt of their unsuccessful notification although there is no

guarantee that feedback will be provided in every circumstance due to possible volume of candidates and capacity of recruiting managers.

## 5. Pre-employment Checks

All offers of employment are conditional, subject to the following satisfactory pre-employment checks being undertaken. The relevant checks will be determined by individual circumstances and the post the candidate is being appointed to and will be outlined in the offer letter:

### 5.1 Verification of Right to Work in the UK

The University of Suffolk has a legal responsibility to ensure that all our workers and employees have the legal right to live and work in the UK.

#### 5.1.1 Proof of Right to Work in the UK

All new employees will be asked to provide evidence of their right to live and work in the UK. They must provide one, or a combination of original documents from the list of acceptable documents produced by the Home Office: [RTW Checklist](#). If they are not a British or Irish Citizen, Visas and Indefinite Leave to Remain must be in a current and valid document, such as a Biometric Residence Permit; a share code will be requested. Visas/stamps in expired passports cannot be accepted.

As part of the pre-employment checks, a Trust ID verification will be sent to candidates who hold a GB passport, allowing them to upload an electronic copy of their ID. For Non-British or Irish Citizens, a current and valid document, such as a Biometric Residence Permit will be required for ID purposes. In addition, a member of university staff will check original document/s in person, to check that they are genuine, valid and that there are no work restrictions that prevents the undertaking of the work offered. Copies of the documents will be signed and dated as genuine and valid, and these will be retained on the employee file.

#### 5.1.2 Skilled Worker Visa

Under the new UK points-based immigration system that came in to force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, the University may sponsor workers in skilled occupations. The Skilled Worker visa can only be applied to some roles. The list of skilled occupations can be found [here](#).

An applicant will need 70 points to be granted a visa, which includes meeting a minimum salary level for sponsorship. Salary requirements can also be found on the Skilled Occupations list, which is linked above.

Job applications must be assessed using criteria based on the knowledge, skills and experience required for the post and not receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of their national origin.

#### 5.1.3 Roles not Classed as Skilled

If the role is not eligible for a skilled worker visa, applicants may be able to apply for one of the other UK visa routes available. An applicant should ensure that they are eligible for one of these visas before they apply for a role with the University of Suffolk. Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) under the '[Apply for a UK visa](#)' section of the Home Office webpages.



## 5.2 Criminal Records

For a limited number of posts, the University is required to seek a disclosure relating to any potential employee's criminal record. Disclosures are typically necessary for posts that involve working with children and/or vulnerable adults, or for positions where abuse of trust may be a concern e.g. financial post. The University of Suffolk has established separate guidance notes on the Disclosure Process to ensure good practice in compliance.

At the beginning of the recruitment process the line manager should confirm whether or not the appointment is subject to a DBS check, and at what level, by carrying out the online check <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>. Please email the result to [jobs@uos.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@uos.ac.uk). The outcome must be included on the Job Description / within the recruitment information advertised.

The People and Organisational Development team currently oversees the processing of DBS forms for university staff appointments.

The guidelines on the Disclosure Process also contains information and advice about the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, whereby conviction for some criminal offences can be regarded as 'spent' after a specified period of time. Once a conviction is 'spent', the applicant is not obliged to reveal its existence in most circumstances and can answer 'no' to the question "do you have a criminal record?" on an application form, unless the position is subject to a disclosure or the organisation is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. The NHS is exempt and therefore for joint appointments advice should be sought from the People and Organisational Development team.

## 5.3 References

All offers of employment are conditional upon receipt of all satisfactory pre-employment checks.

Two references will be required (one of which must be from your current or most recent employer) and the references must cover at least the preceding 3 year period. There may be occasions where a written reference is also required to be supported / supplemented by a verbal reference. Any gaps in employment must be validated.

Personal professional referees will be required if a candidate is unable to provide 3 years employment references (e.g. college/university leaver with no prior work experience, recent traveler, somebody who has recently returned from living abroad).

For any gaps in employment, which are unable to be verified or which require explanation applicants will be required to provide a personal statement via their personal email address.

It is for the University to determine that the checks it has received are satisfactory

## 5.4 Pre-employment Health Questionnaire

All candidates will be required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. If the candidate answers Yes to any of the questions they will be referred to our Occupational Health provider to complete a pre-employment health assessment and may be invited to a pre-employment health

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consultation appointment before a 'fit to work' certificate can be issued may (this may also outline any reasonable adjustments to be considered or any other relevant information).

### **5.5 Registration & Qualifications**

Candidates may be required for certain posts to provide evidence of any academic or professional qualifications deemed essential. We will arrange for you to show these together with any relevant documents. We will also check any professional registration you have stated that is essential for the Job role.

## **6. Using Recruitment Agencies**

Use of a Recruitment Agency may occur in some / exceptional circumstances – including for very specialist or senior positions. Advice may be sought from the Resourcing Team who can contact a suitable agency for you. Once a person is chosen, the School or Directorate will sign the contract with the agency and make arrangements to pay the fees to the agency direct. The agency worker's details must be made available to the Resourcing Team, so the worker can be put onto the POD system, to be set up with a University IT account. Further details can be found in our Engaging an agency guidance.