



## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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## **1. Introduction**

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- 1.1. The City of London's ability to recruit, select and retain the right people is of paramount importance to the organisation's continued success.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy document is to ensure that all recruitment and selection activities undertaken by the City of London are consistent with legislation and good employment practice. This will ensure that the most suitable person for each role is selected.
- 1.3. For clarification, the 'recruiting manager' referred to in this Policy document may be the direct line manager, the Chair of the Selection Panel, or the individual within the respective department overseeing the recruitment of the post.
- 1.4. This policy applies to all candidates seeking positions of employment or casual work.

## **2. Policy Principles**

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- 2.1. In keeping with the City of London's commitment to equal opportunities, all recruitment and selection activities will be carried out in a fair and open manner. At least one member of the panel should be trained in recruitment and selection.
- 2.2. All recruitment and selection decisions will be clearly recorded, free from discrimination and bias and capable of being justified by reference to objective selection criteria.
- 2.3. All vacant positions being advertised to fill will have:
  - a current job description which accurately highlights the key duties and responsibilities of the role;
  - a current person specification which sets out the knowledge, experience, skills and behaviours necessary to carry out the role; and
  - a grade allocated by the Pay & Grading team.

## **3. Responsibilities**

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- 3.1. Recruiting Managers together with Human Resources are responsible for:
  - Considering the ongoing need for a vacant role in its current form;
  - Considering the options available e.g. permanent recruitment, fixed term contract, opportunity for existing staff to act in a higher position;
  - Ensuring Chief Officer approval has been obtained in line with the Scheme of Delegation, and authorisation required by any relevant corporate group at the time, prior to commencing the recruitment process;
  - Ensuring that appropriate employment screening (for example DBS clearance) is identified for all relevant posts;



- Ensuring that if a Market Forces Supplement (MFS) is required for the post that the relevant approval has been sought prior to going to advert;
- Ensuring the position is set up on the CoL HR system, iTrent, with correct reporting lines;
- Completing the requisition form, along with a current job description, person specification and summary of terms and conditions applicable to the role;
- Ensuring all vacancies are placed through Corporate HR via Bank, Fleet, Wren Business Units or the R & D team for Barbican, GSMD and the 3 schools
- Ensuring the recruitment and selection policy and related procedures are consistently followed, including at appointment;
- Ensuring all potential applicants complete the relevant application form and supporting statement. CV's should not be accepted without a completed application form;
- Ensuring fair and justifiable selection decisions are made; and
- Ensuring effective induction of a successful candidate.

3.2. The HR Business Units and Resourcing & Development team are responsible for:

- making an initial assessment as to whether there are any individuals on the redeployment list for whom the role may be a suitable alternative (see the Redeployment Policy for further details);
  - Liaising with all external agencies regarding recruitment advertising;
  - Liaising with the recruiting manager to ensure that employment screening (for example DBS clearance) is appropriate to the role;
  - Producing recruitment packs;
  - Forwarding on all applications via email to the departmental recruiting manager;
  - Contacting shortlisted candidates to invite them to interview when received from department;
  - Informing unsuccessful interviewed candidates (as agreed with department);
  - Obtaining references and undertaking other necessary pre-employment checks for successful candidates; and
  - Producing and sending out conditional / final offer with new starter paperwork.
- NB. Roles of Grade F and above will be overseen by an HR Advisor within the respective HRBU

#### **4. Job Advertisements**

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4.1. All roles will be advertised internally to promote career progression opportunities across the City of London. Departments have a mechanism in place to ensure employees with limited or no access to the intranet are able to access the information either by job boards or guided navigation of the job site. Roles can also be advertised externally as required.

4.2. To ensure consistency in terms of branding, content and language all external job advertisements will be laid out in the City of London's corporate house style, and placed in the selected media by the City of London's retained advertising agency via the HRBU's/Corporate R & D team.



- 4.3. It is essential to use the most cost effective form of advertising in all cases, and the spend on advertising must be proportional to the salary being offered and the likely ease of filling the post. Online advertising option will be the default position and most posts will be advertised on-line only to ensure value for money and accessibility. If a print option is deemed the best route for advertising (because a business need is established) the copy will contain a maximum of 50 words with signposting to the website for further information. This approach ensures value for money and the ability to maximise accessibility for applicants based on current application trends.
- 4.4. All roles approved for external advertisement will additionally be placed on the City of London's internet job pages to enable potential applicants to either apply online or download the recruitment pack.
- 4.5. All vacancies at grades A-C will be forwarded to local job brokerages (which include Job Centre Plus) in line with the Community Strategy on the promotion of local recruitment. This will be carried out by the HRBU's at the same time as the agreed external advertising. The Economic Development Department maintain the list of brokerages which are regularly reviewed.
- 4.6. The Recruitment Pack should be in the City of London's standard format. This should contain background information on the City of London, Job Description, Person Specification, Recruitment Timetable and an approved summary of the Terms & Conditions eg. pay scales, holiday entitlement, hours of work etc.

## **5. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications**

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- 5.1. Job descriptions will be in the City of London's standard format and for new or amended roles, the new/revised job description must be submitted to the Pay & Grading team in good time for evaluation to take place prior to recruitment activities commencing. For further information on this, see the [Job Evaluation & Grade Review Scheme](#), within the Employee Handbook.
- 5.2. The Person Specification will be in the City of London's standard format and will list the core behaviours, skills, knowledge, abilities, and experience or qualifications, which are required to perform the duties of the role effectively.
- 5.3. Job descriptions and person specifications will:
  - Not contain jargon and/or unexplained acronyms or abbreviations;
  - Be readily understandable to potential applicants for the post (e.g. written in plain language – see [www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk) for further information);
  - Avoid ambiguity about responsibilities and be clear about the postholder's accountability for resources, staff, etc;
  - Highlight any employment screening requirements (for example DBS or Disclosure Scotland clearance) of the post;
  - Use inclusive, non-discriminatory language and criteria relevant to the role; and



- Not be an exhaustive list of responsibilities but define the main areas of responsibility and key activities expected of the post holder. It will also contain corporate standard sections around health and safety, equal opportunities and flexibility.

## **6. Posts with an Employer Justified Retirement Age**

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6.1. In certain instances, an employer may impose a retirement age for specified roles. This is an “Employer Justified Retirement Age” (EJRA) and advice should be sought from HR before imposing an EJRA.

## **7. Selection Panels**

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7.1. All selection processes will be conducted by a panel. The Recruiting Manager will select panel members prior to the closing date of the vacancy to enable them to assist in the shortlisting process.

7.2. Subject to operational feasibility, all shortlisting and interviews for a given position will be carried out by the same panel.

7.3. Panels will:

- consist of a minimum of two people, usually chaired by the line manager (i.e. the recruiting manager) of the vacant post;
- the Chair of the panel must have received training in fair recruitment. If an HR professional is available (dependent on resources) they should be included on a panel. For jobs of Grade I and above, the Director of HR or someone acting on their behalf must sit on the panel;
- reflect a sex and ethnicity balance, wherever possible;
- declare if they already know a candidate;
- promptly undertake recruitment and selection activities to avoid the loss of candidates; and
- ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and equally in line with the requirements of this policy.

7.4. All Chief Officer vacancies must be reported to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and the employing Committee.

7.5. Standing Orders cover the composition of panels required for Chief Officer recruitment and the Chief Officer Appointment Procedure should be followed.

## **8. Applicants**

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### **8.1. Internal Applicants**

Where an internal candidate meets the person specification criteria, they will be invited to attend an interview. Where there is a high volume of shortlisted applicants, the desirable element of the person specification may be used to shortlist further.



NB. It should be noted that in line with the AWR all temporary workers and employees on fixed term contracts within the City of London Corporation can apply for internal only vacant positions advertised on the intranet.

Where internal candidates are unsuccessful, at either the shortlisting or interview stage, constructive feedback should be provided either in person or by telephone, as deemed appropriate.

Where an internal candidate is appointed, their start date in the new role will be negotiated between the previous and new employing departments (at the latest this will be at the end of their contractual period of notice).

### 8.2. Feedback for External Applicants

Where an external applicant has not been shortlisted for a post, feedback is not generally provided.

### 8.3. Applicants with a Criminal Conviction

All applicants are required to disclose any 'unspent' convictions at the application stage. In addition, all 'spent' convictions must additionally be declared for those posts identified by the department as exempt from Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (predominantly posts requiring a DBS clearance). The time required before a conviction is spent differs depending on the nature and length of the sentence. Corporate HR can assist with further information regarding how a conviction becomes spent.

Failure to disclose an unspent conviction, or a spent conviction in relation to posts exempt from Section 4(2) (predominantly posts requiring a DBS clearance), may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The existence of an unspent conviction will not preclude candidates from consideration for jobs other than in circumstances where a previous history of offences is of real and relevant concern to an employing department (e.g. a candidate with an unspent conviction for fraud applying for a job involving cash handling). Where a post requires DBS clearance or security vetting, failure to meet the required clearance may result in the withdrawal of the offer. Advice should be sought from Corporate HR, and a risk assessment carried out prior to a final decision.

### 8.4. Applicants with a Disability

The City of London is a Disability ("two ticks") Symbol user. To encourage applications from people with a disability, this symbol will be placed on all job adverts and recruitment documentation sent to candidates.

The City of London will produce/provide recruitment information in an accessible format, on request, to disabled applicants/prospective applicants.



As a user of the symbol, the CoL will guarantee an interview to any applicant who has a disability and meets the essential criteria of the person specification, with reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Appointment of any applicant to the post, however, will be based on merit.

## **9. Assessment of Candidates**

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### **9.1. Interviews**

To ensure consistency and fairness, interview questions will be phrased to avoid bias and all candidates will be asked competency based questions (i.e. questions related to the criteria on the job and person specification).

Probing follow up questions and/or questions relating to the information provided by the individual on their application form may also be asked as necessary. Care will be taken, however, to avoid questions being asked that could be construed as being discriminatory (e.g. questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job).

### **9.2. Tests & Assessment Centres**

Where it is proposed to use tests or assessment centres within the selection process, the manager should consult with the Corporate HR – Resourcing & Development Team regarding the assessment process.

Tests should be relevant to the post, fair to all candidates and based on the essential criteria.

They should be applied equally to all candidates with reasonable adjustments being made for candidates with disabilities.

All individual results should be recorded in the recruitment papers and collective results should be retained centrally.

Further information and guidance on the use of tests and assessment centres is available from the Corporate HR - Resourcing & Development Team..

## **10. Selection & Offers of Employment**

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- 10.1. The selected candidate will be the person who best fulfils the requirements on the person specification.
- 10.2. Candidates who are unsuccessful at the interview stage will be notified promptly and courteously, and will normally be provided with the opportunity to request verbal feedback. This should be carried out within two weeks of the date of interview.



- 10.3. All offers of employment will be made subject to satisfactory references and pre-employment checks (see Pre-Employment Screening Policy within the Employee Handbook for further details on pre-employment checks).
- 10.4. Applicants for City of London Police support roles will follow the vetting process in line with Professional Standards requirements carried out by the City of London Police HR team.
- 10.5. Requests for references should seek objective and verifiable information and not subjective opinion. Where possible, one reference should be from the most recent employer. Any concerns regarding information provided in references should be followed up, with advice from Corporate HR.
- 10.6. All appointments are subject to a probationary period (see the Probation Policy within the Employee Handbook for further details on probation periods).
- 10.7. Salaries on appointment will be offered at the minimum spinal column point for the post unless an appropriate business case can be made. Appointments between points 2 – 4 can be made with Chief Officer approval and a justifiable business reason (eg matching a previous salary – ensuring verification of the salary from the applicant's previous payslip/employer). This should be undertaken in consultation with the HR Business Partner. Where there is a case for appointments to increments above point 4, the Chief Officer must agree this with the Director of HR via their [HR Business Partner](#).
- 10.8. All offers should be made by the recruiting manager/line managers and communicated to the HRBU team.
- 10.9. Contracts of Employment will be issued by the HRBU using the City of London Corporate Template, the post-specific terms of which should be agreed by the recruiting manager.

## 11. Headhunters

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- 11.1 For Chief Officer recruitment and some senior/hard to fill posts the use of headhunters may be deemed necessary. If so, tenders for submission should be forwarded to a selection of executive search companies by the Resourcing & Development Manager and HR Business Partner who will then forward the documentations (job description, person specification and background information) to the selected search companies in the required format. The R & D Manager will make an initial recommendation based on their experience, value for money and the ability to work to the recruitment timetable. However, the recruiting manager/Committee will make the final decision.



## 12. Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment

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### 12.1. Elements of Safer Practice

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and promoting the welfare of these groups at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants. Main elements of the process include:

- Ensuring the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults;
- Ensuring that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults;
- Obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
- Obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults, and following up any concerns;
- A face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults as well as his or her suitability for the post;
- Verifying the successful applicant's identity;
- Verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- Checking his or her previous employment history and experience;
- Verifying that s/he has the health and physical capacity for the post; and
- The mandatory check of the DBS children's barred list and/or the DBS adult's barred list, and where appropriate, an Enhanced Disclosure via the DBS.

Following this policy and other relevant policies will ensure these requirements are met.



## 12.2. Statement

The CoL's explicit policy statement about our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is as follows:

*“This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and as part of the selection process the successful applicant will be required to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service check. The City of London Corporation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”*

This statement should be included in publicity materials, recruitment websites, advertisements, candidate information/recruitment packs, person specifications, job descriptions, competency framework, and induction training.

## 12.3. References

Particular diligence is required for references with regarding to safeguarding. Any concerns, however minor, should be followed up with advice from Corporate HR.

A copy of the job description and person specification should be forwarded with the reference request to the referee. The referee should be reminded that they have a responsibility to ensure the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission, and that relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

On receipt, references should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If any questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or gives cause for any concern, the referee should be contacted and asked to provide answers or amplification as appropriate. Any oral information received from the referee should be documented. The information given should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his or her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.

- Referees should be asked to give their specific opinion of the applicant's suitability to work with children – there is a current question in our reference template but on occasions referees do not return our template so it is essential that the recruitment advisor ensures that this question is addressed and there is a record on the applicant's file that this has been done.
- If deemed necessary by the recruiting manager, telephone enquiries should be made to each referee to verify the written reference – this should be discussed with the HR Business Partner and recruiting manager



Any information about past capability issues, disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case, with advice from HR if appropriate.

A reference template specifically for posts where there are safeguarding implications will be used by the HRBU's where appropriate.

#### 12.4. Involving Students, Young People or Vulnerable Adults

Involving students in the recruitment and selection process in some way, or observing short-listed candidates' interaction with them is common and recognised as good practice. This can be achieved in various ways. For example, candidates for teaching posts might be asked to teach a lesson, shorted-listed candidates might be shown around the school by students and a governor or senior member of staff, and/or meet with students and staff. Candidates for social care positions may, for example, be asked to interact with a group of appropriate young people or vulnerable adults, facilitated by a senior member of staff.

#### 12.5. Safer Recruitment Checklist

All posts identified as requiring safer recruitment practices should use the safer recruitment checklist.

### **13. Record Keeping & Confidentiality**

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- 13.1. The original applications of all applicants, together with brief written records detailing the reasons for their rejection or inclusion at each stage of the process, will be retained securely for a minimum of 12 months from the date that an appointment decision is made and then destroyed securely. It should be noted that documentation may be released to a third party in the event of a complaint to an Employment Tribunal or Data Protection request. Recruiting managers must return all relevant recruitment and selection documentation (from all panel members) to the HRBU within 10 days of the interview.
- 13.2. In accordance the *Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006*, proof of an employee's right to work in the UK must be sighted, verified and maintained on the employee's personal file. Employees must not start work before this has been done.

### **14. Monitoring**

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- 14.1. The application of this policy will be monitored in line with the City of London's commitment to Equal Opportunities. At the end of each recruitment campaign, equality monitoring information will be produced and analysed as part of an annual review.



## 15. Further Information

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- 15.1. The following documents further support the Recruitment and Selection Policy:
- [Corporate HR Colnet page \(Recruitment Guidelines and template documents\)](#)
  - [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
  - [Pre-Employment Screening Policy](#)
  - [Disclosure & Barring Service Policy](#)
  - [Redeployment Policy](#)
  - [Agency Worker Guidelines](#)
  - [Selection Tests Policy](#)
  - [Safer Recruitment Checklist - Schools](#)
  - [Safer Recruitment Checklist – HRBU Departments](#)
  - [Community Strategy](#)
- 15.2. Further information and tools to support the recruitment and selection process can also be obtained from the [Corporate HR website](#).