



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Recruitment and Selection

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Executive summary	The organisation undertakes recruitment and selection using the Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) recruitment portal. This technology facilitates the principles outlined in this policy.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Recruitment and selection is one of the most important management functions. The whole process represents a significant investment in both financial and other resources. Our policy is to adopt good recruitment practice to ensure the recruitment of a diverse workforce that will add value to the organisation and assist in the achievement of providing a cost effective and quality service to the community it serves.

The organisation regards its employees as its most important asset, and that the quality of its employees has a direct impact on the continued effectiveness of the services provided. The delivery of efficient and effective services cannot be sustained if the organisation cannot recruit and retain 'the right person for the job', with the relevant skills, experience and attitude for the post.

The organisation's recruitment and selection policy and associated processes are underpinned by the basic premise of equal opportunities for all and the principles of equity, fairness, consistency, and merit based appointments.

This policy is designed to help appoint the best person for the job. It will also help to ensure that the organisation recruits a diverse workforce and will help to ensure that the process is cost effective.

The organisation is committed to ensuring that recruiting managers are competent to manage the recruitment process, and understand the equality standards, and receive training appropriate to their needs.

2 WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES?

Effective recruitment is central to the organisation's ability to successfully deliver services. We need to find people with the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and attributes to deliver our objectives and with the ability to make a positive contribution to our values and aims:

- All recruitment activity is managed effectively through the eRecruitment system, guiding managers through a best practice recruitment and selection process.
- The recruiting manager is responsible for adopting the most appropriate method to advertise a job.
- The recruiting manager is also responsible for considering the manner in which the job role will be undertaken to meet the customers' needs such as; flexibility of working pattern and hours, off-site working, location and the technology required to support this.
- The organisation recognises the need to increase the diversity of its workforce in order to reflect the community that we serve. Recruiters need to be aware of equal opportunities legislation and understand how discrimination can occur both directly and indirectly in the recruitment process.

The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on legislation relevant to recruitment and selection:

- The organisation is committed to the Disability Confident scheme. Therefore all applicants who indicate that they have a disability and meet the essential criteria for a job are guaranteed an interview.

- LGSS Organisational and Workforce Development will provide training across a range of mediums to meet recruitment and selection training which is appropriate to managers' needs.
- Anyone taking part in recruitment, whether undertaking short-listing, interviewing or undertaking assessments will be prompted in the eRecruitment system to access the recruitment toolkit which contains guidance on recruitment and selection techniques, the legislation applicable to recruitment and selection, and general good practice guidance.
- Recruitment processes will be monitored to ensure that they are non-discriminatory. Statistical reports will be sent to key management groups, to enable the organisation to assess how the policy is being applied.

Please note: When someone is released on voluntary or compulsory redundancy it would not normally be expected that they would be re-engaged as either an employee or an agency worker/ contractor in the same or similar job role or service area from which they were made redundant. Such action could indicate that the original decision on the voluntary or compulsory redundancy was not a value for money decision for the tax payer. Therefore any exceptions to this approach leading to the re-engagement of voluntary or compulsory redundant employees will have to be justified to ensure that the original terms of the redundancy i.e. cessation of work, has actually occurred. Managers who have recruited employees or procured workers who have previously been made redundant from the same service area will need authorisation from the Director, and the LGSS Director of People, Transformation and Transactional Services.

3 WHAT IS RELEVANT LAW IN RELATION TO RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION?

The key legislation applicable to recruitment and selection activities are set out below: *(Further guidance on the legal aspects of recruitment and selection, is available in the recruitment toolkit).*

The Equality Act 2010

This legislation focuses on promoting equality of opportunity by protecting and supporting individuals from discrimination by virtue of the following 'protected characteristics':

- Race (colour; nationality; ethnic or national origin)
- Disability
- Gender/gender identity
- Age
- Sexuality
- Religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

The recruitment toolkit sets out key provisions of the Equality Act in relation to recruitment, specifically:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Pressure to discriminate
- Discrimination 'by association' or 'by perception'
- Positive action, not positive discrimination
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and candidates

- Occupational requirements*
- Welcome statements*

(*An occupational requirement is where an employers is able to appoint members of a particular protected characteristic group where membership of that group is an 'occupational requirement' for the job. A 'welcome statement' is a special equalities statement targeting a specific group of people). It is strongly recommended that recruiting managers seek advice from the HR Advisory Team if considering the use of an 'occupational requirement', or a 'welcome statement' in an advert, because the legislation is specific about the justification for these.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This exists to support the rehabilitation into employment of reformed offenders who have stayed on the right side of the law. Under the Act, following a specified period of time which varies according to the sentence passed, all cautions and convictions (except those resulting in a prison sentence of over 30 months) are regarded as 'spent'. These sentences do not have to be revealed and may not be used as grounds for exclusion from employment. However, some jobs (e.g. some involving work with children and vulnerable adults) are exempt from the provisions of the Act. Where this applies, the organisation will indicate this during the recruitment process.

Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 it is an offence to employ a person without an entitlement to work in the UK.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

Recruiters must comply with GDPR 2018 for job applicants. Therefore, appropriate security measures should be taken to prevent unauthorised or unlawful processing, disclosure, destruction, loss or alteration of information.

4 WHAT TO DO WHEN A VACANCY ARISES?

The arrangements made for recruitment and selection must be appropriate to the needs of the job, the nature of the vacancy and the job market. Before preparing to fill a post, the recruiting manager should decide whether the post is still required or needed in its present form.

The recruiting manager should assess the way in which the role can be undertaken to ensure work takes place at the most effective locations and at the most effective times to meet business needs.

Subject to service requirements; every role in principle is suitable to work in a flexible way and consideration as to when, where and how the role is undertaken should be clear at recruitment stage.

4.1 Confirmation of authority to recruit and recruitment restrictions

The recruiting manager should ensure they have authority to recruit to a post. This is the recruiting manager's responsibility, and the eRecruitment system will require a manager to confirm this information each time they commence a recruitment activity on the system.

Similarly the recruiting manager will need to assure themselves that the vacancy is exempt from any recruitment freeze or restrictions in place in the organisation at any time, and the recruiting manager will be required to confirm this each time they commence a recruitment activity on the system. For example, where there

is major organisational change occurring and there is a temporary vacancy freeze agreed as part of the consultation process, higher level authorisation may be required before vacancies are approved for release for advertisement.

4.2 Preparing to recruit

Once the recruiting manager has confirmed that they need to recruit, they need to:

- Determine the contract type needed;
- Consider the flexibility of the role; when, where, how it will be undertaken. At this stage technology requirements should also be considered.
- Ensure they have the correct job description and person specification;
- Consider who will be involved in the recruitment process (i.e. shortlisting, interviewing, assessments and any other support, such as 'meet and greet') and.;
- Draw up a clear and realistic timetable for recruitment (i.e. taking account of timeframes if external advertising media is used); and
- Decide how to attract candidates via the advertisement – where service requirements permit; ensure reference to flexible working options is included.

4.3 Determining the contract type

The recruiting manager has a responsibility to consider the type of contract arrangement needed to meet current service requirements. Managers may wish to consider whether a permanent open-ended contract is appropriate, or whether the vacancy may suit a fixed term appointment, acting up, or secondment opportunity. Similarly the job may be suitable for flexible working arrangements (hours and pattern of work) rather than a standard working pattern and possibly carried out at different locations.

4.4 Job description and person specification

The recruiting manager has a responsibility to be clear about the content of the job and the attributes the job holder needs to undertake it. The job description and person specification are therefore an essential part of the preparation for recruitment.

The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on preparing these documents, and a template job description and person specification. Where a job description is new, or has been significantly revised, it should be submitted for job evaluation so that an accurate grade and salary scale can be determined prior to a recruitment and selection exercise.

The eRecruitment system asks recruiting managers about any hazards that are relevant to the job, so that potential applicants can assess whether the hazards are relevant to their ability to undertake the job.

4.5 The shortlisting and selection panel

The recruiting manager should identify who will be involved in the shortlisting and selection decision, to ensure their availability in the timescale planned. The panel composition may change at selection stages. However all selection decisions should be taken by at least two panel members and it is recommended, to ensure consistency, that at least one panel member is involved throughout the selection process.

The organisation is aiming towards equality of opportunity; therefore it is good practice to try to ensure appropriate representation of under-represented groups on recruitment panels. Mixed panels can help candidates, who may be members of protected characteristic or under-represented groups, feel at ease during the selection process.

Panel members should have relevant skills, experience and training in recruitment, selection and equality standards. It is advisable that at least one person taking part in the recruitment and selection activity is appropriately trained. The recruitment toolkit sets out details on relevant training available.

Panels may have members from outside the organisation. This may include service users, or representatives from external agencies. It is the recruiting manager's responsibility to ensure these panel members are appropriately briefed on their role and the equality standards.

Where the organisation will be the employer for the post, recruiting managers are responsible for ensuring that the procedures are followed and take responsibility for the selection decision.

4.6 Attracting candidates

The purpose of the advertising content is to:

- Attract a pool of applicants with the required experience and qualifications;
- Discourage potential applicants who lack the required experience and qualifications from applying;
- Present a positive image of the organisation as a good potential employer, reflecting the community it serves;
- Make the requirements of the job clear;
- Where service requirements permit; make the options for flexible working clear and,
- Meet the legal requirements of good recruitment practice.

The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on producing an effective job advertisement, particularly online advertisements. The eRecruitment system provides a contact form within the system, so that queries relating to the job can be directed to the recruiting manager.

4.7 Attracting applicants from under-represented groups

It is important that the organisation has a diverse workforce reflecting the local population, with the optimum mix of skills and experience.

The organisation may want to adopt a more targeted approach to vacancies so that consideration is given to the workforce profile in terms of diversity in the area where the vacancy has occurred. A targeted approach should be based upon available data on workforce composition and previous job applicant history for the employment group.

To specifically attract applicants from under-represented groups, managers may wish to consider the following;

- Enhancing recruitment literature by showing commitment to diversity , promoting flexible working practices, and equalities training;
- Involving of community groups in developing advert text and improving associated recruitment information;

- Targeted media advertising, using specialist press relevant to under-represented groups ;
- Generic advertising to attract applicants to a particular type of post rather than a specific vacancy;
- Holding an open day to tell potential employees about the service area; or
- Targeting internal advertising as staff development opportunities and encouraging secondments.

The organisation may consider investing in positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups; and offer targeted development opportunities to employees from groups that are under-represented at particular levels in the organisation. The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on the difference between positive action and positive discrimination, and legal requirements regarding 'welcome statements'.

If there is difficulty in recruiting, or the recruiting manager wants to look at other initiatives, it is recommended that the recruiting manager seeks advice from the HR Advisory Team.

5 COMMITMENT TO REDEPLOYEES

Ring fencing a vacancy

Some vacancies will be ring-fenced to specific redeployees. If the recruiting manager wants to ring fence a post, they should seek approval for this with the HR Advisory Team when they seek approval to fill a vacancy. Ring fencing limits the number of applicants to a defined pool. It may be considered appropriate for example where:

- The vacancy is being offered as a redeployment opportunity in a redundancy situation;
- There is no overall increase in headcount due to a matching arrangement in a restructuring programme; or
- An existing fixed term contract is expiring.

Please note that ring-fencing situations are not dealt with through the eRecruitment system.

6 ADVERTISING

6.1 Recruiting managers may advertise internally or externally, unless there are specific instructions by the organisation not to do so

The organisation supports the progression of existing employees, but recognises that effective development opportunities, supported by performance appraisal is a more effective way of developing employees' experience and skills, thereby supporting internal candidates who wish to apply for other jobs within the organisation, rather than applying a blanket requirement for all jobs to appear as an internal advert before an external advert appears.

Similarly the requirement for all jobs to be advertised internally is not always an effective source of applicants for all jobs, particularly for specialist job, or jobs where experience suggests that internal applicants do not apply. Therefore it is the recruiting manager's decision as to whether to advertise internally first, or to advertise concurrently internally and externally.

However it remains a recruiting manager's responsibility to ensure that before placing an external advert, they have complied with any authorisation process the organisation may put in place from time to time, for example a temporary cessation of external advertising as part of a recruitment freeze. The recruiting manager will be required to confirm this on the eRecruitment system each time they place an external advert.

The eRecruitment portal will display both internally and externally posted adverts in the same location on the site. Therefore external applicants will be able to see internal vacancies, but a pre-screening question will mean that they are not able to apply.

All external adverts will automatically be posted to the Job Centre Plus website which is free of charge.

6.2 Internal advertising

If a recruiting manager wants to place an internal advert only then the eRecruitment system will mark it as 'Internal only'. These posts are only open to applications from the organisation's employees and agency workers placed within the organisation. Recruiting managers must ensure that the relevant pre-screening question on the eRecruitment system is used to filter out external applicants who are not eligible to apply.

If a vacancy is not filled internally, and requires external advertising, it can be re-posted as 'external' and the pre-screening question removed.

6.3 Using electronic job boards, and other advertising media

Recruiting managers will be signposted to free external advertising through the eRecruitment portal. However, within the eRecruitment system, recruiting managers may wish to use other electronic job boards which are chargeable. The recruitment toolkit contains guidance about the processes regarding electronic jobs board and other advertising media.

6.4 Exceptions to the requirement to advertise a vacancy

All organisation vacancies will be advertised. However, in certain circumstances, with the agreement of the HR Advisory Team, it may be possible to fill a vacant post without advertising the vacancy. These circumstances are detailed below:

- Temporary vacancies of less than six months - where a manager may fill a vacancy by either directly approaching an existing employee(s) to undertake some/all of the duties of the vacant post on a temporary basis, or they may use agency workers.
- Acting up arrangements within teams and some secondments - recruiting managers are advised to speak to the HR Advisory Team in these circumstances as, although most secondments are appropriate to advertise through the eRecruitment system, some types of secondment may not be appropriate to advertise.
- Part time vacancies of 8 hours or less per week - where a manager has extra hours (temporary or permanent) to allocate (up to 8 hours) then these may be offered to an existing employee rather than advertising (based on the difficulties in recruiting someone to work on a contract for less than 8 hours per week). If there is more than one employee able to take on the additional hours, the manager is advised to discuss how these extra hours may be

allocated between them, or to hold a ring-fenced interview process to determine who will undertake the additional hours.

- Ring-fenced vacancies - (please refer to [section 5 - Commitment to redeployees](#) above).

7 USING THE ERECRUITMENT SYSTEM TO START A RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Managers should use the eRecruitment portal to enter the relevant information for the recruitment activity. The system will prompt the recruiting manager to:

- Indicate the Oracle/ERP unique post reference number (for organisations with the system interface),
- Upload the relevant job description, person specification, and any other documents to support the recruitment activity, and
- Upload any relevant organisation specific documentation which is of particular importance to the advert including flexible working option
- Guide the recruiting manager to complete the advertisement text

The recruiting manager should ensure they have authority to recruit to a post. This is the recruiting manager's responsibility, and the e-recruitment system will require a manager to confirm this information each time they start a recruitment activity on the system.

Similarly the recruiting manager will need to assure themselves that the vacancy is exempt from any recruitment freeze or restrictions in place in the organisation at any time, and the recruiting manager will be required to confirm this each time they commence a recruitment activity on the system. For example, where there is major organisational change occurring and there is a temporary vacancy freeze agreed as part of the consultation process, higher level authorisation may be required before vacancies are approved for release for advertisement.

8 AFTER THE ADVERTISEMENT APPEARS

8.1 Application form

To ensure a fair and equitable recruitment process, candidates are required to complete the standard online application form. Applicants will be able to access 'Applying for a job-advice on making an application' to help them complete the form. Applicants will have access to a copy of the job description and person specification and a generic hazard assessment for the post.

Casual enquirers or those who write unsolicited letters of application should be responded to in a positive way. However applicants must still follow the normal online application process.

8.2 Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A CV may be accepted for particular senior appointments. The recruiting manager should seek advice from the HR Business Partner in these circumstances. Applicants will complete an abridged application which allows them to attach their CV, yet complete essential information needed to manage the recruitment process, and provide employee data, should they be the successful candidate.

8.3 Assistance to individuals with disabilities

The key accessibility issues are for visually impaired applicants and applicants with a learning disability. Therefore all jobs advertised externally will be advertised through the Job Centre Plus website, where specialist assistance is located.

When an employee is unable to complete the application form in the eRecruitment system unaided, and this ability is not essential to the performance of the job, appropriate help may be given. The eRecruitment system asks the applicant to indicate this when they have been given such assistance. Specifically for visually impaired applicants, the eRecruitment site is compatible with screen magnification software, which is recommended by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB).

9 **SHORTLISTING**

Shortlisting cannot begin until after the closing date, and should ideally be undertaken by members of the selection panel. The recruiting manager has a responsibility to ensure that:

- Candidates are shortlisted only against agreed criteria from the person specification using information contained in the application;
- A record of the shortlisting process is made on the online system;
- The selection of candidates for interview can be justified; and
- Applicants are notified promptly through the e-recruitment system that they have, or have not, been shortlisted.

9.1 Disability Notified (DN)

Under the organisation's commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme, where applicants, who indicate they have a disability, must always be interviewed if they meet the essential criteria.

9.2 Redeployees

Under the organisation's commitment to redeploy employees who are 'at risk' within the organisation, redeployees need only demonstrate during the recruitment and selection process that they meet the essential criteria in the person specification.

If a redeployee meets the essential criteria for shortlisting the recruiting manager should ensure they are shortlisted. This means that redeployees are given proper consideration in line with the organisation's statutory obligation, but there is one shortlisting exercise rather than recruiting managers having to undertake it twice.

It is the expectation that redeployees are interviewed ahead of other candidates wherever practicable, and the redeployee will be assessed on the essential criteria. However some more complex selection processes may require a range of selection methods and assessment, and in these circumstances this may mean that the redeployee has to be assessed on the same day as other candidates. This must not detract from the fact that a redeployee must be assessed on the essential criteria, and the recruiting manager needs to be mindful of bridgeable gaps in training to enable the redeployee to meet the essential criteria.

9.3 High volume of applicants

If there are a substantial number of applicants who meet the essential criteria, and it would be impracticable to interview them all, the recruiting manager, in consultation with the shortlisting panel, should determine the criteria to be used to reduce this to a manageable number. The criteria must be justifiable and based on elements of the person specification. The recruitment toolkit provides guidance on applying weightings to criteria in order to make the shortlisting process more manageable.

This process should be applied after considering whether redeployees or disabled applicants have met the essential criteria, because the organisation has a commitment to assessing them on the essential criteria.

Conversely, if there are no applicants who meet the essential short-listing criteria to form a shortlist, the post should be re-advertised.

10 ASSESSING THE APPLICATION FORM FOR ISSUES

10.1 Where eligibility to work in the UK is restricted

The online application asks applicants a series of questions to clarify whether applicants have any restrictions placed on their ability to work in the job they are applying for. It also asks the question as to whether the applicant is applying in anticipation of Tier 2 Sponsorship being required. Therefore such applicants will not be held on a 'reserve list' because their eligibility to work in the job they are applying for will be clear. The recruitment toolkit contains further information about eligibility to work in the UK.

10.2 Possible conflict of interest

The online application requires applicants to ensure that they inform the recruiting manager of any conflict of interest with the job they are applying for. This includes employees considering or engaged in any other work or business which might relate to their duties as part of the organisation, declaring any financial/personal interests they, their partner/spouse or close relative has or may have in other organisations associated with this organisation or its partners. Declaring any details of any political association that could affect impartiality when carrying out the job or, any close personal relationship to any employee of the organisation.

If a candidate has indicated a possible conflict of interest, it can then be explored during the recruitment and selection process.

Recruiting managers should refer a potential conflict of interest to the Chief Fire Officer, seeking HR advice as appropriate, to decide whether there is a conflict of interest as a result of the information disclosed in the application form, or at interview. In circumstances that relate to financial/personal interests in other organisations the Chief Fire Officer will refer this to the organisation's Monitoring Officer.

If a conflict is identified, applicants will not be considered for employment. If an employee fails to inform the organisation of a possible conflict of interest it could result in disciplinary action being taken and their employment being terminated.

11 THE SELECTION PROCESS

11.1 Selection methods

Selection decisions can be based on a range of selection tools. These will include the application and interview and may also include work-based exercises, presentations or psychometric tests.

The recruiting manager is responsible for determining the selection methods to be used. The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on interviews and other selection methods. The selection activities must address the key criteria in the person specification.

11.2 The selection day

The recruiting manager should ensure that:

- Appropriate arrangements have been made for candidates with a disability who have responded to the standard email, informing them to contact the recruiting manager to indicate such requirements;
- The structure of the interview is appropriate to the job to be filled. A range of standard questions plus supplementary and follow up questions may be used in the light of the candidate's responses;
- Interview notes and the selection outcome are recorded. The recruiting manager is responsible for scanning and uploading the interview notes for the preferred candidate into the eRecruitment system.
- Panel members assess candidates against the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification at the end of the selection process;
- Where a rating system is used the ratings can be justified; and
- The selection activities and decision are conducted by at least 2 people at all times
- Unsuccessful applicants are informed of when they will hear whether they have been the preferred candidate, or unsuccessful, as promptly as possible

The selection process is a two way process in which the recruiting manager assesses the applicant, and the applicant assesses the organisation as a potential employer. It is therefore advisable to ensure the candidates:

- Are advised about the selection process and methods, and
- Understand how they will be assessed;
- Are given the opportunity to ask questions to find out about the job and the organisation; and
- Are advised on how and when they will be informed of the selection outcome.

It is strongly recommended not to allow informal interviews.

11.3 Psychometric tests

Tests can be used to measure intelligence, aptitude and dimensions of personality. The key point about any test is that it will provide only a very specific piece of information about a candidate. If a recruiting manager uses psychometric tests they are responsible for:

- Using a fair, reliable, well validated test, and following the guidelines of the test rigorously;
- Being able to justify what element of the specification a test will provide information about;
- Making any necessary adjustments for candidates if they are disabled, or provide an interpreter if required;

- Using the information to assess the specific point on the specification only;
- Using qualified people to administer and implement and interpret the tests; and
- Offer feedback to applicants on the tests.

The LGSS Learning and Development Team can provide a range of psychometric testing.

12 MAKING A DECISION ON THE PREFERRED CANDIDATE AND MAKING A CONDITIONAL OFFER

12.1 Making the verbal conditional offer

When the recruiting manager has identified the preferred candidate, they should contact the individual to make a verbal offer. The verbal offer should cover the key terms of the offer including the job title, salary and hours/pattern of work and flexible working options. The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on making a verbal offer.

An offer of appointment is conditional upon the attainment of appropriate and satisfactory pre-employment checks. These differ according to whether the preferred candidate is an internal or external candidate, and the setting in which they are required to work.

12.2 Starting salary

The salary the recruiting manager is able to appoint to in a grade may be dependent upon [policy A2 – Pay](#), therefore the recruiting manager should ensure they understand the policy in relation to starting salary. Once a decision has been made, the successful candidate should receive an email setting out the terms of the conditional offer of employment.

12.3 Informing the unsuccessful candidates

Unsuccessful candidates should be informed promptly that they have not been selected. It is good practice to provide feedback if they request it. This should be given based on the assessment of how they met the person specification.

13 PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

The following pre-employment checks are carried out for the preferred candidate only:

- Satisfactory references
- Evidence of relevant qualifications
- Medical clearance
- Proof of identity
- Proof of entitlement to work in the UK
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, where appropriate to the job

The organisation reserves the right to ask about unspent convictions, as per the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A preferred candidate may be made an offer conditional on satisfactory completion of these checks.

The recruiting manager retains the responsibility for ensuring the process is adhered to. Where a potential problem that cannot be resolved is highlighted

during the checks, it may be necessary to inform the candidate that the conditional offer cannot be confirmed into a formal offer.

13.1 References that are satisfactory to the organisation

References will normally be taken up only for the preferred candidate only. For external candidates, two references that are satisfactory must be received before an individual may start work. Although agency workers are able to apply as an internal applicant, they are technically not an employee, so two references should be obtained.

For internal candidates only one reference is required, except for regulated posts that still require two. The reference must be from the candidate's current or most recent manager. References should always include the current or most recent employer, and the second reference should normally be from a previous employer. In the case of school leavers, it may be appropriate to ask to see their Record of Achievement. Testimonials, affidavits and references addressed 'To Whom It May Concern' are not acceptable.

For candidates applying to work in Regulated Services (whether external or internal candidates), in accordance with safer recruitment practices, managers must undertake a telephone verification exercise for references received. The recruitment toolkit contains guidance on telephone verification of references.

The referee, through the eRecruitment system, will have access to the person specification and job description and will be asked for structured information that relates to these documents and which relies on evidence, rather than opinion. The referee will then log into the system to provide the reference. If there are any concerns raised in a reference, the recruiting manager is advised to contact the referee to explore these further, and may wish to seek advice from the HR Advisory Team. References should be treated as confidential; however an employee can make a request to see references about them. The recruitment toolkit contains further guidance.

13.2 Evidence of qualifications/ essential memberships

Evidence of relevant qualifications will normally be taken up for the preferred candidate only. Where possession of a specified qualification is an essential element of the person specification the preferred candidate should be asked to provide the relevant original certificates before a formal offer of appointment is made. This does not mean that the individual has to provide all their qualification certificates; just those that are relevant to the job. If the preferred candidate is required to drive as part of the job role they should be asked to provide their driving licence.

Internal candidates may be asked for evidence of qualifications if they differ from their current position's requirements.

All copies should be taken and uploaded to the eRecruitment system, so it can be placed on the appointed candidate's personal file.

13.3 Medical clearance

Medical clearance should only be obtained for the preferred candidate after the conditional offer has been made. Medical clearance must be obtained for:

- An external preferred candidate. (Although agency workers are able to apply as an internal applicant, they are technically not an employee, so a medical should be obtained.)
- An internal preferred candidate where the new role has a change in the nature of duties. Examples may include: change to physical exertion such as lifting and handling; additional mental exertion such as management responsibilities; change to work arrangements such as shift or night working.

A preferred candidate whose offer is made subject to medical clearance may not start work until medical clearance has been obtained. Only the organisation's Occupational Health (OH) provider is authorised to provide medical clearance, either through paper or online screening or, at the request of the OH provider, through one-to-one discussion with the individual and/or consultation with the individual's GP or other relevant individuals.

A copy of the OH provider's response to the recruiting manager should be uploaded onto the eRecruitment system, so it can be placed on the appointed candidate's personal file.

13.4 Proof of identity

Proof of identity will be requested for the preferred candidate only. This applies to external candidates, or to agency workers who have been able to apply for an internal vacancy. This must be provided before they start work. Candidates who are already employees will not have to provide proof of identity when they move jobs internally.

The preferred candidate should be asked to provide a proof of identity that contains their name, photograph and signature. Examples of suitable documents are a passport or photo driving licence.

This must be provided before a formal offer of appointment is made. A copy should be taken and uploaded to the eRecruitment system so it can be placed on the appointed candidate's personal file.

13.5 Evidence of the right to work in the UK

The preferred candidate must provide evidence of the right to work in the UK before they may start work. Although agency workers are able to apply as an internal applicant, they are technically not an employee, so evidence of the right to work in the UK is required.

This check is not required for internal candidates except where the employee has a restricted entitlement to work in the UK (which they will have to declare on the online application form).

The law on preventing illegal working is set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Employers have a duty to prevent illegal working by carrying out document checks to confirm that a person has the right to work in the UK.

To employ someone without that right is a criminal offence and can lead to a civil penalty of up to £20,000 for each illegal worker.

By applying routine checks to all preferred candidates when recruiting, by undertaking repeat checks where someone has a time limit on their stay,

and by **abiding by any restrictions placed upon the employee regarding type of work or hours worked**, the organisation can ensure compliance with the legal framework.

i) Citizens from within the European Economic Area (EEA)

Nationals from the following countries have the right to enter and work freely in the UK, without restrictions: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom (including Channel Islands and Isle of Man).

ii) Sponsoring workers from outside the EEA

If a recruiting manager wants to employ workers from outside the EEA the organisation must be their sponsor during their stay in the UK (unless they are coming here for 6 months or less in certain circumstances).

Sponsorship is a flexible point based system that adapts to the changing economic circumstances of the UK.

Both Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire County Council (utilised by NFRS) are registered as licensed sponsors to recruit applicants meeting the requirements under Tier 2 –Skilled Worker status. Under the points based system, they will issue a Certificate of Sponsorship, where a candidate meets the requirements under Tier 2. Tier 2 replaces the old work permit system. There are specific requirements about the type of job which meets the criteria for the Tier 2 sponsorship scheme, and specific requirements about advertising, including the requirement to advertise the job in a Job Centre Plus.

If a recruiting manager wants to recruit a migrant from outside the EEA for a skilled job they can only do this if they complete a resident labour market test and can show that there is no suitable EEA worker who can do the job. There are certain limited exceptions to this:

Recruiting managers need not complete a resident labour market test:

- If the individual will be doing a job on the **shortage occupation list**. Please see the UK Visas and Immigration website for the current list (as the list changes) www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration
- If the individual currently has permission to stay in the UK under:
 - Tier 1 (Post study work)
 - The International Graduates Scheme
 - The Fresh Talent Working in Scotland Scheme
 - The Science and Engineering Graduate Scheme; or
 - If the migrant currently has permission to stay in the UK as a Tier 4 migrant or as a student and they have received final results confirming that they have passed and will be (or have been) awarded a UK recognised bachelor or postgraduate degree or a UK postgraduate

If a recruiting manager does employ a worker from outside the EEA, they must ensure they comply with the reporting duties required by UK Visas and Immigration. These statutory obligations are set out in the recruitment toolkit.

iii) Employing asylum seekers, refugees and those granted humanitarian protection

Please contact the HR Advisory Team in these circumstances.

iv) Employing students from outside the EEA

Students from outside the EEA may be allowed to take limited employment in the UK, providing their conditions of entry to the UK allow this.

v) Employing members of the armed forces applying for settlement

The statutory obligations in these circumstances are set out in the recruitment toolkit.

13.6 Checking eligibility for work

All job applicants are asked to state on the online application form whether or not they are currently eligible to work in the UK. They are asked whether they have a restriction on their eligibility to work in the UK. If the applicant indicates this on the application form you must seek advice from the HR Advisory Team. See the previous section on '[Sponsoring workers from outside the EEA](#)', for the relevant criteria.

All preferred candidates must be treated in a consistent manner. On appointment, the recruiting manager needs to photocopy one of the following documents including all pages which give personal details such as: the front cover; the photograph, signature pages, UK Government endorsement allowing the person to do the work offered.

Recruiting managers write on the copy of the document, the date that they took the copy and upload it to the eRecruitment system so it can be placed on the appointed candidate's personal file.

[List A](#) – documents which establish that a person has an ongoing entitlement to work in the UK

Any of the documents or document combinations from [List A](#) are acceptable to establish permanent entitlement to work in the UK – the originals must be supplied, and will be checked and copied as evidence. If a document or a document combination from [List A](#) is provided then a document from [List B](#) is not necessary

[List B](#) – documents which show a right to work for up to 12 months

Alternatively applicants can provide a document or a combination of documents from [List B](#) to establish a restricted entitlement to work in the UK – the originals must be supplied, and will be checked and copied as evidence before commencing employment and then you should check **at least every 12 months thereafter**.

Where a person's leave to remain and right to work in the UK is due to expire within 12 months of the date of the last repeat check managers **must** carry out a repeat check at the point of expiry to check whether the person still continues to have the right to work in the job lawfully.

If a manager continues to employ a person who no longer has the right to work then they will be committing the criminal offence of knowingly employing an illegal worker.

If the preferred candidate is unable to supply any of the required documentation recruiting managers should seek advice from the HR Advisory Team. If they are unable to provide adequate documentation it is likely that the conditional offer of employment will have to be withdrawn.

13.7 DBS disclosure, where appropriate

Some posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, or require additional types of checks (e.g. convictions for offences against children). The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that this has been accurately recorded in the details set up on the eRecruitment system. Recruiting managers should refer to the policy on DBS disclosures. The requirement for a DBS check should be notified through the e-mail template to the preferred candidate.

14 AFTER THE SELECTION DECISION

If the successful candidate is disabled, the recruiting manager needs to explore in detail reasonable adjustments to be made in order for them to carry out their duties.

Selection of the preferred candidate will need to be confirmed through the eRecruitment system once satisfactory pre-employment checks have been received. At that point a start date can be agreed with the preferred candidate. The individual will be issued with a written statement of particulars through Payroll and Recruitment Services.

15 COMPLAINTS ABOUT RECRUITMENT

External applicants, who are dissatisfied with the recruitment process, can send a written complaint to the recruiting manager, who will formally respond in writing. Internal applicants who are dissatisfied with the recruitment process should address their written complaint to the recruiting manager who will formally respond in writing. Internal applicants who remain dissatisfied with the outcome should write to the recruiting manager's manager. The employee will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss their complaint. The manager will consider this complaint and give their response, which will be confirmed in writing.

16 RECRUITMENT INFORMATION AND MONITORING

Application forms for all shortlisted candidates, shortlisting records, interview records, and assessment results should be kept by the recruiting manager for at least 6 months from when the recruitment decision is made.

Recruitment monitoring is central to the effective implementation of this policy and the organisation's equality policy and action plans. The collection and analysis of monitoring statistics provides information to gauge the extent to which policies and processes are succeeding, and helps to identify where any further investigation or action is required. Monitoring should include the specific requirements under the Equality Act 2010. Given the high level of internal appointments, it is important to monitor recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that discriminatory practices are not occurring.

This policy and its application will be subject to monitoring and review by the HR Director.

APPENDIX A

LIST A

A passport showing the holder (or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder) is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
A passport or national identity card showing that the holder (or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder) is a national of a EEA country or Switzerland.
A residence permit, registration certificate or document certifying or indicating permanent residence issued by the Home Office, to a national of a EEA country or Switzerland.
A permanent residence card or document issued by the Home Office, to the family member of a national of a EEA country or Switzerland.
A Biometric Residence Permit issued by the Home Office to the holder which indicates that the person named in it is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
An Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office, to the holder endorsed to indicate that the person named in it is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, together with an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.
A full birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK which includes the name(s) of at least one of the holder's parents, together with an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.
A birth or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, together with an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.
A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.
A letter issued by the Home Office, to the holder which indicates that the person named in it is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK together with an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.

LIST B

APPENDIX B

A passport or travel document endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is allowed to do the type of work in question.

A Biometric Residence Permit issued by the Home Office to the holder which indicates that the person named in it can stay in the UK and is allowed to do the type of work you are offering.

A residence card or document issued by the Home Office, to a family member of a national of a EEA country or Switzerland.

A work permit or other approval to take employment issued by the Home Office, together **with** either a passport or other travel document endorsed to show the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work you are offering, **or** a letter issued by the Home Office, to the holder or to you confirming the same.

A Certificate of Application which is less than 6 months old issued by the Home Office, to or for a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland stating that the holder is allowed to take employment together **with** a positive verification letter from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.

An Application Registration Card (ARC) issued by the Home Office, stating that the holder is 'Allowed to Work' or 'Employment Permitted' together **with** a positive verification letter from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.

An Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office, to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the person named in it can stay in the UK, and is allowed to do the type of work you are offering, together **with** an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.

A letter issued by the Home Office, to the holder or to you the employer or prospective employer, which indicates that the person named in it can stay in the UK and is allowed to do the type of work you are offering, together **with** an official document issued by a previous employer or Government agency with the person's name and National Insurance number.