

Plumpton College

Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

1. Scope & Purpose

- 1.1 This purpose of this policy is to set out the processes by which staff are recruited and selected for employment at Plumpton College. The policy is intended to be a source of reference for all staff, and especially those involved in the recruitment and selection of employees. It contains the legal aspects and best practice issues of recruiting and selecting as well as sound practical advice and procedures to promote good practice.
- 1.2 The policy applies to all appointments/employees and is designed to ensure consistent, effective and fair treatment for all. This policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect students or staff on the grounds of sex, transgender, marital or civil partnership status, racial group, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or belief disability or age.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with policies and procedures referred to in the staff handbook including the safeguarding policy and staff disciplinary policy.

2. Equality of Opportunity

- 2.1 The College is committed to the principle and practice of equal opportunities. We aim to ensure that all employees, applicants and service users are valued as individuals, and treated fairly and with respect, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion & belief, employment status, health, marital status, trade union membership, domestic circumstances, social & employment status.
- 2.2 Anyone undertaking recruitment or selection must ensure that they have been adequately trained in recruitment and selection techniques and that they are aware of the relevant legislation before participating in recruitment and selection decisions. Training will be provided by the College.
- 2.3 Senior Management are required to ensure that both they and anyone reporting to them who undertake recruitment and selection are competent to do so.

- 2.4 The College has an Equal Opportunities policy which includes a commitment to treat all employees and potential employees equally. This policy is available on the Q drive, College internet and in hard copy on request.
- 2.5 However, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 allow employers to decline to recruit applicants who are over the employer's normal retirement age where this is 65 or above (or, if the employer does not have a normal retirement age, the age of 65). Employers can also decline to recruit applicants who are within six months of this age on the date of their application. The College therefore reserves the right to reject applicants who are aged 64½ or over.
- 2.6 The College undertakes that all applicants for a vacant post will be given the opportunity to ask to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme if they have a disability and meet the minimum criteria as specified in the person specification.
- 2.7 The College will monitor each vacancy in accordance with its procedure.

3. Job Description and Person Specification

- 3.1 Before embarking on the process of recruitment, the Line Manager/Head of Department in conjunction with the HR Officer must ensure that there is an up-to-date job description for the post and a clearly drafted person specification.
- 3.2 The job description will describe the main duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, whilst the person specification will describe the type of qualification(s), training, knowledge, experience, skills and competencies required for effective performance of the job.
- 3.3 Where the job is to be advertised, the proposed job description and person specification will be checked by the HR Officer to ensure that it complies with the College's Equal Opportunity policy and employment law legislation and then the Principal for final approval, prior to advertising the post.

4. Approval to fill a vacancy

4.1 A Line Manager/Head of Department who wishes to recruit someone must first obtain approval from the Principal.

4.2 The Line Manager/Head of Department must discuss with the Principal:

- Whether it is necessary to fill the vacancy.
- Whether changing work patterns, organisation or technologies have produced a different job, or the work can be distributed in a different way.
- The nature of the replacement, e.g. full time, part time, permanent, temporary, etc.
- Whether the post could be considered for job share, part time working, etc.

4.3 If the Line Manager/Head of Department wishes to upgrade a post, create a new post or substantially change an existing post, justification for this must be presented to the Principal.

5. Advertising

5.1 The aim of advertising a post is to attract a field of candidates who meet the person specification and job criteria from which a successful appointment can be made. The people may be either internal or external to the College. Restricting competition to internal staff only may be valuable in certain circumstances, particularly in times of organisational change where there may be staff seeking redeployment.

5.2 However, a policy of only selecting from within might stunt organisational growth and development and if it is not linked into some form of overall workforce plan it could leave the College open to allegations of indirect discrimination. Therefore, while the College does not have a policy of always advertising externally, the implications of not doing so will be considered carefully.

5.3 Job advertisements are designed with two aims in mind:

- To target a specific audience and encourage appropriately qualified and experienced applicants for the post, and
- To promote a corporate image of the College with which people from outside the organisation recognise and associate.

5.4 Care must be taken in writing the advertisement not to discriminate either directly or indirectly.

5.5 The choice of media will be determined by the post, the location and the person specification and may take into account previous experience of successful advertising. The final decision of where to advertise lies with the Principal.

5.6 Wherever the job is to be advertised internally or externally, the proposed advertisement must be submitted to the HR Officer who will check that it complies with the College's Equal Opportunity policy and employment law legislation and then the Principal for final approval. Line Managers/Heads of Departments should also consider and discuss with the Principal whether it is appropriate to post the vacancy in a jobcentre or place it with an approved employment agency.

5.7 All vacancies will be posted on the notice board in the staff room and on the College's website (unless a post is being advertised 'internally only' as stated above). External media will also be used where appropriate. Existing employees will be encouraged to apply for vacant posts if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

5.8 All information will be available in an appropriate accessible format on request.

5.9 If an advertised vacancy is not filled by an EU citizen, it will be advertised on the JobCentre Plus website and the College website for a further four weeks. If no suitable applications are received the vacancy may be advertised internationally.

6. Placing Advertisements and Sending Application Information

6.1 The HR Officer will place all advertisements in the relevant media after receiving the final approval from the Principal. Most weekly publications have very tight deadlines;

therefore if the paperwork is not received on time then this will delay the publication of the advert and, consequently, the overall length of time to appoint.

6.2 The HR Officer can advise Line Managers/Heads of Departments of the appropriate deadlines.

6.3 Potential applicants will need information about the post and the College before applying. Recruitment information packs are sent out by the HR Officer and will contain:

- An application form
- A Job Description and Person Specification
- Department Information
- A College Prospectus

6.4 Any other information relevant to the department that the Line Manager/Head of Department would like sent out is the responsibility of them to supply. This information must have the approval of the Principal before it can be sent out.

7. Short Listing and Selection

7.1 Once the deadline for applications has closed, the HR Officer will collate all the application forms received and send them to the recruiting Line Manager/Head of Department and the Principal for short listing.

7.2 At least one member (but preferably all members) of the short listing panel should be trained in recruitment and selection and equal opportunities.

7.3 Short listing will be based on the requirements of the job description and person specification.

7.4 The Principal will then send the application forms and final short-list back to the HR Officer who will then telephone and write to the candidates inviting them to an interview.

7.5 All short-listed candidates will be asked if they have any special interview requirements and all interview materials should be available in an appropriate accessible format on request.

8. Interviewing

8.1 The interview will normally be conducted by a panel of at least two people. All questions will be related to job requirements/performance and similar questions will be asked to all candidates interviewed for that post. Line Managers/Head of Departments/SMT conducting recruitment interviews will ensure that the questions they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive.

8.2 The interview panel will focus on the needs of the job and skills needed to perform it effectively. A record and score of every recruitment interview must be made (which is recorded on the interview/appointment form) and passed to the HR Officer where it will be retained for a suitable period of time. The candidate should be told at the end of the interview when they may expect to be informed of the outcome. Job offers should not be made during or at the end of an interview.

8.3 The panel should ensure that the candidate is familiar with the full terms and conditions of the post.

8.4 Depending on the vacant post tests may be required, for example a presentation or administrative task(s). However, any test used must have been validated in relation to the job, be free of bias, and be administered and validated by a suitably trained person.

9. Safeguarding and Pre Employment Checks

9.1 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

9.2 There are a number of pre employment checks that are required to be carried out prior to offer. Some of these are statutory and some are best practice but all are mandatory within the College.

9.3 **Pre Employment Health Statements** are an important part of the recruitment and selection process. However, if potential employees are to provide the accurate and detailed information needed to make this possible they must believe that it will be treated with the utmost confidence by properly qualified staff. The following points are intended to assist in achieving that confidence.

1) Employment statements should be sent to each candidate short listed for interview, by the HR Officer, together with a pre-addressed envelope. Candidates will then complete the questionnaire and return it to the HR Officer. In some cases the applicant may bring it to the interview with them. If this is the case it should be returned, unopened, to the HR Officer along with the rest of the paperwork following the interview.

2) If the candidate suffers or have suffered from any of the health conditions listed on the pre employment health statement questionnaire, or require any reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act 1998 they will be required to complete a full confidential Health Questionnaire and seal it in a confidential envelope which is then forwarded to the College's Occupational Health Advisor at East Sussex County Council's Occupational Health Department.

3) The Occupational Health Department may, in certain circumstances, seek to interview the applicant regarding any of the information supplied in the questionnaire. This may involve a telephone or face to face interview or the applicant's consent to obtain a report from their GP as part of the health screening process. Occupational health will keep the HR Officer informed if they are carrying out any additional checks.

9.4 **Previous Convictions/Criminal Records Bureau Checks**

All job offers are made subject to an enhanced CRB clearance. Line Managers/Heads of Departments should note that this can take up to three weeks to come through and in some cases longer. Candidates can, in certain circumstances, take up employment before the Disclosure is received. However, it is a requirement that those working alone with children (i.e. anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults do not work

unsupervised until satisfactory CRB clearance is received. (See also Annex A - Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders).

9.5 If an employee is provided with accommodation as part of their job, then all those residing in the accommodation, who are over the age of 18, will be required to have CRB clearance.

9.6 The College is committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated equally and with respect. Applicants may however wish to note that the CRB has a process in place for people who have changed their gender, which protects their confidentiality with employers while enabling the necessary checks against their previous name. After completing a disclosure form and passing this to the HR Officer, the person should write separately to a nominate person at the CRB, known as a sensitive caseworker manager, notifying them of their previous names. For further information contact the CRB.

9.7 **References**

It is the College policy to obtain two satisfactory references from at least two previous employers prior to a candidate starting employment and all job offers are subject to this. It is the HR Officer's responsibility to obtain these.

9.8 Taken on their own references are not valid methods of assessment because of the high element of subjectivity. Instead, references should be used to verify the information given by applicants and to ascertain the individual's suitability to work within a College environment in the role applied for.

9.9 A reference from the last employer is vital and all applicants should, ideally, have a 5 year checkable work history. Where this is not possible then a reference should be sought from their school or college or, as a last resort from a personal referee who can supply a character reference.

9.10 Whilst references should be sought as early as possible care must be taken not to compromise an applicant's current position by requesting a reference before they have informed their present employer that they are seeking alternative employment.

9.11 Candidates must indicate, via the application form, their permission to approach their current employer but in any case should be contacted to check that this situation has

not changed. In most cases, the HR Officer will formally request all references and will liaise with the Principal if there are any issues.

9.12 After the references have been received, the HR Officer will contact the referee, who wrote the reference, to ensure the validity of it.

9.13 **Qualifications**

A photocopy of the original certificates will be taken of all qualifications relevant to the job (as detailed on the person specification for the post) to verify that the postholder has the required skills for the position applied for. The photocopies must be signed and dated by the recipient to confirm that they have seen the originals.

9.134 **Previously worked with under 18's**

If an applicant indicates on their application that they have previously worked in an establishment where there are under 18's then a reference will automatically be taken up from this employer.

9.15 **Gaps in employment**

The application form will be scanned for gaps in the applicant's employment history. If gaps are found, these will be discussed with the applicant at interview.

10. Right to Work in the UK

10.1 All offers of employment are subject to the candidate providing us with satisfactory proof of their eligibility to work in the UK under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. The College therefore requires the candidate to produce documents specified in the Home Office Lists 1 and 2.

10.2 Copies of identification must be taken from all potential employees. Identification can be taken in the form of the following:

- Confirmation of a National Insurance no. – either a letter from the DSS, NI card, payslip or P45/60 and sight of an original UK or EU passport or foreign passport with the required entry visa entitlement.

- Photocopies of the original documents must be taken and signed to confirm sight of the original. These documents will remain on the employee's personnel file for the duration of their employment.

10.3 Checks for non-EU citizens

Where a non EU citizen is employed, the expiry date of their passport and Visa Letter will be included on a spreadsheet held in the Human Resources department. The employee will be reminded six months before the expiry date that they will need to take the appropriate action to renew their passport/Visa letter. The contract with a member of staff will terminate on the date their right to work in the UK ends.

10.4 Pre entry checks will be made on non EU citizens applying for a job vacancy at the College. This will include a requirement for the applicant to provide evidence of an English qualification at the level of B2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference, a requirement for the applicant to provide copies of evidence of qualifications, professional accreditations and copies of bank statements to demonstrate they will be self sufficient on entry in the UK. If a non EU candidate is successful in their application (including meeting these checks) a certificate of sponsorship will be assigned to the applicant within six months of the date the vacancy was first advertised with Jobcentre Plus. The original documentation will be requested on their first day of employment with the College. The College will notify the appropriate authority should a sponsored migrant not arrive for their first day of employment. The College will notify the appropriate authorities if they stop sponsoring a migrant for any reason or if there are any significant changes to the migrants circumstances, e.g. change in salary (other than annual increment of natural progression), change in location of employment.

11. Appointment

- 11.1 Ideally, offers should not be made until the receipt of satisfactory references, a positive 'satisfactory' medical, and CRB and list 99 checks have been received.
- 11.2 An offer of employment will be made verbally in the first instance and this will be confirmed in writing from the Principal within two working days.

- 11.3 The recruitment literature should state clearly how references will be used, when they will be taken up and what references will be required.
- 11.4 A contract of employment will be issued by the HR Officer within two months of the employment commencing.
- 11.5 All staff, whether permanent or temporary, and volunteers will be provided with a copy of the College Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults on their appointment to the College which includes the name and contact details of the designated child protection officer.

12. Unsuccessful candidates

- 12.1 The HR Officer will write to all unsuccessful candidates within 3 working days of the interviews. All candidates will be given the opportunity to request feedback if they so wish. Feedback will be given to the candidate within 4 working days of the request and this is carried out by a member of the interview panel.
- 12.2 Any complaints should be dealt with promptly in accordance with the College's complaints procedure.

13. Induction

- 13.1 Information gained from the selection process is likely to form the basis for a development plan for the individual's first year.
- 13.2 Early induction should be drawn up for all new appointments, including introductions, tours and administrative details.
- 13.3 Any adaptation/equipment required for a disabled employee should be available from the commencement of duties.

13.4 A more extended induction programme should include an assessment of developmental needs, supportive supervision, mentoring and regular reviews of progress.

14. 'Temporary Staff Bank'

14.1 Applications to join the 'Temporary Staff Bank' will be considered as they are received. Although 'Bank' posts are advertised from time to time it will not be necessary for all applications to come directly from an advertisement. Therefore closing dates will not normally apply.

14.2 The 'Temporary Staff Bank' will be administered by the HR Officer. All of the above safeguarding and pre-employment checks will be undertaken for all staff employed to work on the 'Bank'.

15. Speculative Applications

15.1 Speculative applications that are received that do not necessarily relate to any current vacancies will be photocopied and sent by the HR Officer to the appropriate Line Managers/Head of Departments as necessary.

15.2 If the application is deemed appropriate but the College does not have a current suitable vacancy, then the HR Officer will keep the applicant's details on file for a period of six months, at which time the applicant will be contacted again to assess their level of interest.

16. Recruitment Agencies

a) Permanent posts

If the College has been unable to successfully recruit to a position after advertising both internally and externally the Principal may decide to use a recruitment agency to recruit to the post.

All candidates that meet the requirements of the post advertised will be interviewed by the College before appointment. All offers of employment through an employment agency will be subject to the pre-employment checks (as stated above) and a 6 month probationary period.

b) Temporary posts

If due to unexpected staff absence or a busy period within the College, the College may require temporary help, this decision will be made by the Principal.

The HR Officer will liaise with the recruitment agencies and will forward all CV's to the appropriate recruiting manager. The HR Officer will seek confirmation from recruitment agencies that the candidates put forward have been CRB checked.

17. Retaining recruitment information

17.1 All recruitment documentation will be retained for 6 months and after this period it will be destroyed.

17.2 For all appointments of non-EU members the recruitment documentation will be retained for the whole duration of their appointment. The retained information will include a screen shot of the Jobcentre Plus website on the 1st day the job was advertised (showing the Jobcentre Plus logo, advert content, vacancy ref number, closing date and website address), the detailed job description and specification and all applications received.

18. Policy Monitoring

18.1 The Finance & General Purposes Committee will receive an annual report on the recruitment and selection of staff.

Approved By: Finance & General Purposes Committee

Date of Approval: Tuesday 2 March 2010

Frequency of Review: Every Three Years

Date of Next Review: March 2013

The SMT is delegated to approve minor changes to the policy in response to legal changes and best practice.

Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

Introduction

It is a requirement of the Criminal Record Bureau's Code of Practice that all Registered Bodies must treat Disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges Registered Bodies to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; a copy of which can be given to Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Policy Statement

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Plumpton College complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Plumpton College is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the

individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within Plumpton College and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows Plumpton College to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We endeavour to ensure that anyone in Plumpton College who is directly responsible for the selection of personnel (this is normally the Principal) has been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences and are familiar with the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.