

# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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## **1. Job Evaluation (JE)**

Pendle Council rolled out the current Job Evaluation Scheme in 2004. It is based on the standard format for the job description and person specification (JD/PS) so it is important that they match the job as closely as possible and that there aren't any gaps.

If there are no major changes to the JD/PS then there is no need for it to be Job Evaluated. If there are significant changes or you are unsure please speak to your Senior Manager or HR.

## **2. Applicants with a Disability**

Please read Appendix 7 'Recruiting disabled employees' before commencing with your advertisement.

## **3. Trade Union members**

It is against the law to treat somebody unfavourably based on whether they are, or are not a trade union member.

## **4. Advertising**

The first step in this process is to complete the Authorisation to Recruit (ATR) form and send to HR for authorisation. This can be found on intranet.

Consideration should be given to advertise vacancies internally before being advertised externally to offer opportunities to existing employees. There may be exceptions to this rule; subject to the approval of the HR manager.

If a vacancy is agreed to be advertised externally; the position will generally be advertised via the following methods:

- Websites: Pendle Council at [www.pendle.gov.uk](http://www.pendle.gov.uk) and via the Applicant Tracking System (ATS): Jobs go Public at [www.jgp.co.uk](http://www.jgp.co.uk)
- Social Media Facebook and Twitter
- Job centres via Find a Job
- On noticeboards and via partner organisations, such as other North West and Yorkshire Councils, Housing Pendle, Pendle Leisure Trust, Community Centres, local mosques, local colleges, etc.

Jobs may also be advertised in other relevant places such as specialist websites and journals.

With guidance from HR, make sure that you use the most effective advertising channels and that you are following equalities best practice (further information below)

Positive action measures to encourage applications from under-represented groups will be included on all job advertisements e.g 'We welcome and encourage job applications from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability, sex, marriage or civil partnership, race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity'.

When planning to advertise your vacancy through various media channels, you may need to be aware of advertising deadlines.

**The wording of the advert should:**

- State the most essential selection criteria and a short description of the job.
- Encourage suitable applicants and discourage unsuitable applicants (those who won't fulfil the criteria).
- Avoid using any gender wording, stereotypes including when using pictures.
- Avoid using Council jargon.
- Always include a closing date.
- Include an interview date in the advert (if possible).
- For all posts where a Disclosure is required (DBS) include the following sentence:

*"This post is exempt under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and the successful applicant(s) will be subject to a police and/or other record check, known as a Disclosure, to confirm suitability for the post."*

An Equality & Diversity Statement is also included as part of the pack for all applicants.

## **5. The Interview panel.**

Wherever possible, there should be 2 panel members. At least one panel member should be trained in Pendle's recruitment and selection procedure (please contact HR for training). Ideally they will both shortlist and interview but there may be cases where one person is substituted between shortlisting and interviews.

**For the appointment of Chief Executive, Corporate Director or Service Manager;** Councillors will be involved. The officers involved in the interview panel would normally be the Chief Executive or Corporate Director and the HR Manager - they would act as advisors to the committee with no vote. If a Councillor has not had recruitment and selection training, a member of HR should be a panel member to advise and guide.

An offer of employment to such a post shall only be made where no well-founded objection from any member of the appropriate authorising committee has been received.

### **Appointment of Staff Graded SO1 and above**

The Service Manager has the formal authority to make these appointments. The interview panel should include the Service Manager, a Line Manager and a member of HR although the recruitment can go ahead without HR if necessary.

### **Appointment of Staff Graded Scale 6 and below**

The Service Manager has the formal authority to make these appointments. The other panel members would usually be other senior officers of the Service and occasionally a member of HR.

### **Diversity within the Interview Process**

Employees involved in any part of the process should be chosen for their skills and abilities. Depending on their role in the process, they should be knowledgeable, experienced and confident in that area.

It would be advisable, where possible to choose a range of people who represent the community in terms of sex, ethnic minority and age.

## 6. Shortlisting

A panel member should stand down from the process if a friend or family member applies for the post. This should be declared as soon as possible.

The person specification is the selection criteria for the job and is written before the job is advertised. Shortlisting should be straightforward because you have a clear and detailed set of standards to help you assess each applicant.

If it has been agreed that your advertisement will accept CV applications, please speak to HR for further guidance.

Once the vacancy has been advertised you will receive your log-in details for the JGP system from HR so that you can view the applications received. Guidance notes for the system are accessible on the system when you have logged in – just click on the ? Icon. All decisions must be logged on this system.

Wherever possible, all members of the panel should shortlist and this should be done individually. Panel members should then meet to agree the final shortlist. No-one else should take part in or try to influence the shortlisting process.

By reading through the full application on JGP, panel members will determine if applicants meet each essential and desirable criteria assessed at application by giving a yes/no answer. Only applicants who meet all essential criteria should be invited for interview. Whilst scrutinising the application form, use the opportunity to make a note of any queries, for example any gaps in employment history. This can be done directly on the system when shortlisting and can be checked at the interview stage.

As a silver member of the armed forces covenant, Pendle Council agrees to shortlist any applicant who meets this criterion whilst meeting all essential criteria for the job.

If a large number meet all the essential criteria and you have an unreasonable amount of candidates to interview, please speak to HR for further guidance.

If an applicant requests feedback on their application, it must be clear exactly what criteria was used and why some applicants were not short listed.

If no one meets the essential criteria you should re-advertise the post and you may need to revisit the job description and person specification and re-assess if the post requirements are adequately reflected.

## 7. Testing

Tests can be very useful in selecting the right person. The council has access to a suite of online tests that can be chosen as part of the selection process – please contact HR for more information.

The test(s) need to link to a corresponding selection criterion. Please ensure you are aware of the below points before deciding on a test:

- Agree on exactly what needs to be tested before finalising the JD/PS otherwise this could cause problems down the line when scoring candidates.
- Have you told candidates that they will be tested? This should be on the person specification (in the end column) and must also be included in the letter inviting them to interview.
- The online tests are measured by a percentage. Agree what result will give 15 points, 10 points (essential criteria) and 5 points (desirable criteria) beforehand.
- Have you made sure you have correctly weighted tests and interview questions, if you are using both for one criterion? (Make sure that the person cannot get double points for this – one set for the test and one set for the interview questions).
- Consider if the test would be harder for candidates with disabilities of any kind, and if so, is this aspect of it relevant to the job? If you are not sure, contact HR for advice.

There are other types of tests so please ask HR if you would like to look into this; for example Psychometrics testing for senior positions.

## 8. Presentations

Presentations should only be included if it is an important part of the job.

When deciding on whether to use a presentation, look at the job role. If you need someone who has an immediate recall of technical knowledge then give the presentation topic on the day, as part of the test. If the post would allow time to research a topic before giving a response then give the presentation topic in advance.

Remember applicants may have had help with a pre-prepared presentation so, if you want to test their knowledge, ask relevant questions after the presentation.

## 9. Social Media

Avoid looking on someone's social media profile to make a judgement on them before an interview.

You might be breaking the law, particularly if you looked at some applicants' social media profiles, but not others.

## 10. Interviews

Try to make every candidate feel welcome and relaxed in the interviews so that you get the best out of everyone.

You can download each application form from the ATS to have ready for the interview. It will also be worthwhile having any notes that you made on candidates from the shortlisting.

Below are some tips that will help panel members get the best person for the job.

## Records

The Record of Interview Questions (RS2) (Appendix 6) should be used by all panel members to record in short note form the candidate's responses to questions. Remember that these notes should be comprehensive enough to be able to give feedback to unsuccessful candidates after the interviews. They may also be needed at a later stage to justify selection decisions if these are challenged.

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) applicants have the right to see the original interview notes. Please bear this in mind when writing comments down.

A scoring system should be agreed by all panel members ahead of the interview. Before you start scoring, make sure all of the panel are clear on what would get someone full marks, half or only a couple of marks.

A minimum acceptable score should also be agreed by panel members below which an appointment should not be made. This would probably be in the region of scores less than 60-65% of the maximum possible (at least 10 out of 15 or 6 out of 10).

One panel member, either the HR member, or the most senior officer, should take a full note of the interview proceedings.

Only score the candidate on what they tell you, not what you may know about them. If you need to ask further probing questions, make a note of this in your interview notes and if needed, do the same for other candidates so that it is a fair process.

**You must not ask general questions at the interview about an applicant's health. It is however acceptable to ask a question about their ability to undertake a physical or mental task related to the post where this is part of the selection criteria and where it is a fundamental requirement of the job.**

## QUESTIONS

Your aim at interview is to gather as much useful information as possible to make the best decision. The best way to do this is to ask competency based questions (based on the essential criteria) which prompt answers with real examples. Asking hypothetical questions, for example "what would you do if..." won't give you the evidence that the candidate has the experience they claim to have.

See below table for examples of what to ask and what not to ask:

Do Ask	Type of question	Example
	Equality and Diversity question	Make sure it is one of your first questions. See Appendix 5 for example questions.
	Open Questions	These can begin with: How / When / Why / Describe to me / Tell me about / Give an example
	Probing	Follow-up questions after the main questions. To gain details of each candidate's different experience and skills. Meaning you CAN ask different questions to different people, around the same topic. If this is a candidate you know eg internal, ensure you are not prompting unreasonably to give an answer that they have not come up with themselves.
Don't Ask	Type of question	Example
	Closed Questions	Are you good at taking minutes?

	Leading Questions	If there was a problem at work would you tell your manager?
	Loaded Questions	You like your job, don't you?
	Multiple Questions	Tell me about your experience of using software packages, including spreadsheets, databases, word processing and email packages.
	Self-Assessment Questions	What makes you think that you are the best candidate for this job?
	Potentially Discriminatory Questions	Asking a woman about her marriage plans, or plans to have children. Asking Asian candidates whether they could cope with an all-white office.
	Make assumptions	If you think, for example, that a visually impaired candidate might have trouble carrying out some duties, ask them. You might be pleasantly surprised.

For further examples and help with competency questions please speak to HR.

### Other Questions/Checks

- **Pre-employment driver questionnaire (Appendix 8)**- Where the post holder will be required to drive a council owned or leased vehicle as part of their duties then they will need to bring a completed pre-employment driver questionnaire to the interview and their licence. This should be checked at the end of the interview process and any necessary follow up questions asked in relation to the information given.
- **Qualifications/certificates/licences** - If any essential criteria relate to qualification/certificates/licences etc then these should be checked as part of the interview process.
- **Unspent convictions** - If the applicant has declared that they had unspent convictions on their application form you should ask about this. Ask HR for advice on what would be relevant to the job.
- **Gaps in Employment History** - These may be due to unemployment, study, travel or being in prison. Again, check with HR if you are unsure.
- **Reason for leaving previous job** – If it isn't stated on the application form you may want to enquire about this.

## 11. Internal applicants

To help you get the best person for the job you must make sure that all applicants are treated fairly.

Encourage suitable employees to apply. Make it clear that they will need to show on both the application form and in the interview that they are the best person for the job; no one will be shown favouritism. Only shortlist on the information that you have, don't assume that they can do more if they have not specified this on their application.

If an applicant is from the same service area, try to include somebody from outside that service on the panel for fairness.



If internal applicants have applied for an external vacancy; they must not be favoured. Make sure that internal applicants know they need to apply and interview as if you don't know them.

If internal applicants have worked with you before they might find it harder to give details of what they have done. An example of this misunderstanding is when a temporary employee filled the main section out as 'I am already doing the job' but they did not demonstrate that they could meet any essential criteria.

When you score the application form – if they have only given some details and you know they can do more, do not make assumptions and favour them. Only score on what has been written down. If you do need to probe further, make a note that you have done this and score accordingly. Make sure you remain consistent with other candidates if you do need to probe.

## **12. The Decision**

This section is about making a final decision after the tests and interview.

### **Scoring**

After each interview, each panel member should score the candidates separately (without discussing with other panel members). Clarification of an answer should be obtained from the main note taker.

Appendix 9 can be used to record the final candidate scores.

The scores should be linked to each criterion, e.g. if you ask a question which relates to 2 criteria you should give a score for each criteria. If anyone fails to score on an essential criterion then you cannot appoint them, no matter how well they score on other criteria.

For people who did score on each criterion, each panel member should check if they have achieved the minimum score (using the ideal answers agreed before the start of the interviews). They should include test scores and then add up the scores for each person.

If each panel member has the same person as the highest scoring candidate, then this is the person who should be offered the job.

If this is not the case then the panel should discuss the scores for each criterion. It may help to re-read the detailed notes. This may lead to a lower or higher score being agreed and may help the panel agree overall.

If two applicants are tied then the panel should look at who scores highest on the most- essential criteria. They could also restrict the scoring to the essential criteria to see if this separates the two people. If this still does not separate the two people it may be necessary to go to second interview. Ask HR for more guidance if needed.

### **If You Have Any Doubts...**

If you have any doubts about someone, do not appoint them. Although recruitment and selection can be a long process this should not put you off re-advertising. Performance managing someone who is not good at their job is much harder than re-advertising. It is also not good for the individual if they are appointed to a job where they will struggle to do it.

If the unsuccessful candidates reapply; their results may be better or they may have gained more experience since you first met them.

### **Keeping Notes and Records**

All 'Record of Interview Question (RS2)' forms should be returned to HR, including Councillors, if present. These records will be kept for at least twelve months and then shredded.

These documents will provide the information necessary to defend any discrimination claims against the Council.

### 13. Making a Conditional Job Offer

Once the decision is made, a **conditional** job offer can be given. The manager should make this verbally to the applicant but make it very clear that it is subject to pre-employment checks by HR (who will be in touch with the candidate). The manager should then complete a new starter form and send to HR. **A start date cannot be agreed until all checks have been completed by HR**

### 14. Pre-employment Checks

Pre-employment checks include:

1. Medical clearance
2. References (including internal applicants)
3. Criminal Records check (if relevant to the job).
4. Evidence of legal right to work in the UK (soon to be on line)
5. Reasonable adjustments – HR to check if the employee requires any reasonable adjustments as the result of a disability.

#### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Once a conditional job offer is made, if applicable HR will ask the applicant to complete a disclosure application. The DBS will send a copy of the Disclosure information to the applicant who must then show this to HR if requested.

If the disclosure reveals spent or unspent convictions this will not automatically rule out an applicant; the type of offence, the amount of time since the conviction and the type of job they are applying for all need to be carefully considered before an appointment decision is made.

### 15. Final Offer

Once all pre-employment checks have been returned satisfactorily, HR will be in touch to arrange a start date.

## Appendix 1 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHECKLIST

### PREPARATION

- ❑ Complete Authorisation to Recruit (ATR) form for vacancy approval
- ❑ Interview panel members identified and roles agreed. Recruitment process timetable agreed

### JOB DESCRIPTION (JD)

- ❑ Review the post – have the aims of the job changed? Talk to the person who currently does the job, other relevant individuals.
- ❑ For new posts, draft a comprehensive JD, using the template at Appendix 3.
- ❑ Include all duties; rank in order of importance and frequency.
- ❑ Be precise: separate duties and avoid unnecessary jargon.
- ❑ Make sure JD is in correct format and include a relevant equality & diversity and health and safety statement.
- ❑ If a new job or many changes it needs to be evaluated by the JE panel so allow time for this.

### PERSON SPECIFICATION (PS)

- ❑ Update the PS if necessary. Use the standard section headed 'Selection Criteria' at the bottom of the job description.
- ❑ Identify the qualifications (if appropriate), experience, knowledge, skills and abilities (including physical or mental abilities), a person needs to carry out the tasks in the JD
- ❑ Criteria ranked in order of importance -most essential criteria at the top.
- ❑ Identify essential criteria – without which the job cannot be done. Include equalities/diversity.
- ❑ Identify desirable criteria – attributes that would be an advantage. Desirable criteria should be kept to a minimum
- ❑ Agree how criteria will be assessed (application form, test, certificates, interview, presentation, etc)
- ❑ Be precise and specific and identify level of skill required.
- ❑ Be objective – where possible, use criteria that can be measured.
- ❑ Agree JD/PS with selection panel. Don't add extra criteria later.

### ADVERTISING THE VACANCY

- ❑ Draft advert wording. Include all the essential criteria if possible.
- ❑ Compile the wording ensuring it is not discriminatory
- ❑ Include standard wording in the advert if a Criminal Records Check (DBS) is required.
- ❑ Send the advert and JD /PS to HR.
- ❑ Discuss how and where the job will be advertised - any specific publication requests.

### SHORTLISTING

- ❑ Shortlist individually on the ATS (this is JGP), then discuss and agree with the panel.
- ❑ An applicant who does not meet all of the essential criteria cannot be shortlisted.
- ❑ All applicants who meet the armed forces covenant criteria or with a disability who meet the essential criteria should be shortlisted.
- ❑ Notes can be made on JGP, be consistent. Do not introduce irrelevant criteria.
- ❑ Be prepared to offer appropriate and honest feedback when asked.
- ❑ Panel agrees on who will be invited to interview – inform HR along with agreed interview details.

## **TESTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- ❑ The test or presentation must be directly relevant to one or more of the selection criteria.
- ❑ Agree a scoring system so you can measure each person's success.
- ❑ Get rid of any unintentional bias – contact HR for advice if necessary.

## **INTERVIEWING – The panel shares responsibility for ensuring fair and equal treatment.**

- ❑ Consider the interview process: introductions, timing, questions, role of chair/panel, note taking, brief explanation of role, candidate questions and next steps.
- ❑ Environment – Virtual or face to face, no interruptions, noise, accessible etc.
- ❑ Liaise with HR for reasonable adjustments from disabled applicants and make necessary changes to interview process.
- ❑ Prepare questions and ideal answers. Link to JD and PS, same to all, probe as needed, ensure fair questions.
- ❑ Include question on equalities and diversity.
- ❑ Do not ask any questions about health before job offer unless linked to an essential criteria eg the ability to climb ladders to inspect loft spaces.
- ❑ If applicant has indicated that they have unspent convictions then ask about these. Question any gaps in career history.
- ❑ Check certificates for any qualifications, ID and driving licence where applicable. Make sure you understand the rules about hiring someone from outside the UK.
- ❑ Check and discuss the pre-employment driver questionnaire, where applicable
- ❑ Notes – use RS2 standard form (Appendix 6). All panel members take notes and one identified panel member records a fuller account. Score each candidate individually before the next interview and without discussion between panel members.
- ❑ Use appendix 7 to record and rank final candidate scores.

## **THE DECISION**

- ❑ Discuss with the panel each of your individual scores for each person (use your notes from the RS2 form).
- ❑ Try to reach agreement – note any disagreement.
- ❑ Where there is disagreement, consider how well the candidates meet each individual criterion, rather than averaging your scores.
- ❑ Make a record of your decisions and reasons – send this and all other relevant documentation to HR who will contact the candidates with the outcome and begin pre-employment checks.

## **REFERENCES AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

- ❑ An employee cannot receive a final offer until these have been completed.

## **FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS**

- ❑ All candidates are entitled to feedback after an interview.
- ❑ respond positively and openly – be specific, honest and fair, Use your record of decisions and reasons.
- ❑ See Appendix 2 for the Recruitment and Selection complaints procedure

## **APPENDIX 2 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **SCOPE**

This complaints procedure relates to recruitment and selection for employment for internal and external candidates for vacancies with Pendle Council.

### **INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS**

#### **1. STAGE ONE - INFORMAL COMPLAINTS**

- a) The procedure is not intended to supersede existing, informal channels for resolving complaints. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue informally where appropriate, and this may well result in a satisfactory resolution.
- b) At any stage in this procedure, the internal complainant has the right to representation by a companion who is their trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union or by a fellow employee of their choice, as has the individual(s) against whom the complaint is made. An external complainant does not have the right to a companion unless they are a member of a trade union recognised by the Council.
- c) Informal complaints may be made personally or by telephone to the HR Manager (Telephone 01282 878800), and steps can be taken to resolve the matter informally. HR will then discuss the complaint with the Line / Service Manager concerned, but only with the consent of the complainant. If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the procedure ends here. If not, Stage Two begins.

#### **2. STAGE TWO - FORMAL COMPLAINTS**

- a) Formal complaints should be made by email to [hradmin@liberata.com](mailto:hradmin@liberata.com) or in writing to the HR Manager, Pendle Council, Number One Market Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 7LJ, marked 'Private and Confidential' or HR will acknowledge its receipt in writing within two working days. The written complaint should include the following information:
  - Name, address and telephone number of complainant
  - Service Area and Job Title (internal candidates only)
  - Service Area and title of job applied for
  - Details of the complaint

### **Who will consider the complaint**

- b) Complaints will be considered by an experienced HR Officer.

### **3. HOW COMPLAINTS WILL BE INVESTIGATED**

- a) Written materials available within the appropriate Service Area will be examined. These materials may include any of the written materials referred to in Pendle Council's 'Recruitment and Selection Procedure, for example: the job description, person specification, application forms, shortlisting and interview record sheets.
- b) Interviews will be held with Officers concerned in order to discuss the complaint in full. Within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint, a written report of the investigation will be prepared. The report will contain the results of the investigation together with a recommendation for resolution of the issue, and will be sent to the complainant.
- c) If the complainant is satisfied with the recommendations of the report, the procedure stops here. If not, he or she should notify the HR Manager within ten working days of receipt of the report. The HR Manager will arrange a meeting of the Council's Appeals Panel within fifteen working days of receipt of the notification of Appeal.
- d) The decision of the Appeals Panel should be notified to all parties concerned at the meeting and shall be confirmed in writing within five working days of the date of the meeting. In very exceptional circumstances, where the Panel is unable to reach a decision on the day of the meeting, the Panel's decision should be given in writing within five working days of the date of the meeting. The Appeals Panel's decision will be final.

### **4. NOTES**

- a) The parties may on occasion and by mutual agreement modify the time limits referred to in the complaints procedure.
  - b) The HR Manager reserves the right to refuse to register a formal complaint in circumstances where details of the case are submitted more than three months after the time when the complainant might reasonably have come to suspect that he / she had been unfairly treated.
  - c) An external candidate making a complaint of discrimination in recruitment will not normally have the assistance of a Trade Union officer or other person with knowledge of Council procedures. It is therefore the duty of officers dealing with the complainant, whether orally or in writing, to ensure that he / she is aware of the existence of this procedure. .
  - e) Where a complaint is made prior to the successful candidate taking up the position in question, the status quo will be maintained until the outcome of the investigation is known.
5. The Council reserves the right to modify the procedure after consultation with the trade unions.

These arrangements will not detract from a complainant's right to take action under the Equality Act 2010, or to seek advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission

## APPENDIX 3 - BLANK JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION SERVICE AREA

### JOB DESCRIPTION

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Post Title:

Post hours:

Service Unit:

Grade:

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Responsible to:

Responsible for:

Main contacts associated  
with principal duties:

---

Job purpose:

Key tasks

Key results / objectives

---

Control of resources:

---

Accountability Statements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Date:

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**(Post Title)**

Selection Criteria	Essential Or Desirable	<b>Assessment Method</b> A = Application T = Test I = Interview P = Presentation C = Certification
<b>Qualifications</b>		
1.		
<b>Knowledge, skills, abilities and experience</b>		
1.		
<b>Special requirements</b>		
1.		
<b>Date:</b>		



## APPENDIX 4 – WRITING A JOB DESCRIPTION / PERSON SPECIFICATION (JD/PS)

### The Job Description

1. A good job description (JD) defines the duties and responsibilities. A good person specification lists the skills, qualifications, experience and knowledge needed to actually do the job. Accuracy is essential. A JD should be reviewed each year as part of the performance management process but this should always be checked prior to advertising and updated if necessary.
2. Having a well written JD has several benefits:
  - It helps potential candidates decide whether they are suitable for the job.
  - It helps you as the recruiter to identify who is the best person for the job
  - It is the basis for job evaluation and will help ensure that the person is paid fairly for the work that they do.
3. The best way of completing a job description is to speak to the current employee and discuss what they do in their job. If this is not possible, then try to find another employee who has some link with this area of work and discuss the job description with them. You will produce a better description of the job if you have two points of view. Use the standard template at Appendix 2.
  - **Post Title** - Does it accurately describe the job and its level? Is it free of jargon? Free of bias such as age? Is the title gender neutral? Will it attract applicants?
  - **Responsible For** - Is the post holder responsible for staff? If so, which posts? Do they have responsibility for all aspects of supervision / management?
  - **Main Contacts** - Is there contact with other service units, customers, Councillors or other external organisations? How often is the contact? Is it direct i.e. face to face; or indirect?
  - **Job Purpose** - A very brief summary of the aims and objectives of the job and how it fits into the Council's structure.
  - **Control of Resources** – Will the position be responsible for the security and maintenance of any equipment, plant, buildings, materials or money? E.g. fee collection, a refuse wagon, the security of a council building, etc.? Do not include budgets (they should be in the main duties).
4. **Duties and Responsibilities**

This should be a list (no more than 10) of the posts objectives. These ensure that the key objectives of the role are easily identifiable and measurable. This should be written to focus more on 'what' is to be achieved rather than 'how', for example:

Action	Object	End Result
Develop and implement	The Council's Financial Strategy	To ensure compliance with statutory duties and that a balanced budget is delivered on time
Manage	The efficient use of resources	To ensure that services are delivered to the required standards
Prepare and	Management information	To monitor performance to enable corrective

provide	reports	action to be taken where necessary
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5. Duties and responsibilities should include the following:

- At least one equality and diversity related statement together with any specific accountabilities that are linked to the Equality Action Plan.
- A health and safety related statement
- Customer care statement
- A willingness to undertake new learning and development as required of the position.

Don't rely on "other duties commensurate with the grading" as a catch all; as far as possible, known accountabilities should be listed.

6. **Managers' Job Descriptions** must include: "To be aware of responsibilities eg equalities, health and safety, managing performance etc and ensure criteria covers these aspects.
7. Put the most important accountabilities first and the less important accountabilities towards the end.
8. If the JD does not include the above, seek advice from HR to refresh them. All updates to JD's and person specifications must be authorised by the Service Manager and a copy should be sent to HR.

## The Person Specification

1. A good person specification defines the qualifications (if appropriate), experience, knowledge, skills and abilities which make up the best person for the job. It is used as the selection criteria for a job – which makes it one of the most important parts of the recruitment process. There should ideally be no more than 10 criteria (excluding qualifications)
2. You will use these selection criteria to shortlist application forms, set up the tests and interview questions and decide on the ideal answers for both tests and questions. They increase the chance of the right person being appointed and reduce the possibility of unconscious discrimination. Once it is drawn up and agreed, no extra criteria should be added to the person specification or used in the selection procedure at a later date.
3. You must decide on the best assessment method (such as application form, test, certificate, interview, presentation) before the job is advertised. **Speak to HR before confirming test methods as this is now completed on-line.** The application form advises applicants that they will need to provide evidence/information on all of the criteria on the application form for the shortlisting process.
4. A person specification is a list of selection criteria. More details are given below but all criteria must be:
  - Job Related
  - Ability Based
  - Clearly Defined
  - Measurable / Observable

- Weighted
  - Agreed
  - Justifiable
  - Consistently Applied
5. Criteria should be job related, there should be a clear link between the criteria and the job description since you are only interested in the person's ability to do the job.
- **Don't use:** Must have good written skills or must have GCSE English at grade 4 – 9 (A-C) or equivalent.
  - **Do use:** Must have a good understanding of grammar and spelling to write clear and accurate letters to customers. Must have clear handwriting to transfer customers' details onto record cards.
6. The criteria should be ability based:
- **Don't use:** Must have experience of using a computer or must have an IT qualification, such as CLAIT or ECDL.
  - **Do use:** Must be able to use a computer to write letters, data input and get information from databases and be able to send and receive emails.
7. It is important that everyone involved in the selection process – whether they are a potential applicant or a recruiter – knows what the successful applicant will be able to do. The criteria should be clearly defined, not vague and it should have little scope for individual interpretation.
- **Don't use:** Must be numerate, must have GCSE maths or equivalent.
  - **Do use:** Must be able to accurately calculate percentages from equal opportunities monitoring forms and keep an accurate tally of money paid out of petty cash.
8. The criteria must be described in terms of measurable and observable facts that are not distorted by personal feeling or prejudices. For example: 'good communication skills', being 'numerate' or having 'good IT skills' should be avoided.

Wherever possible, use criteria that can be objectively measured either in a test or in the interview.

9. Use the most important accountabilities in the JD to decide the most important criteria. These should be put, in order of importance, at the top of each section on the Person Specification. For example, the first and most important criterion under "Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Experience" for a Building Control Officer would be "To have detailed and current knowledge of building regulations and how to apply these". Similarly, the first and most important selection criterion for a receptionist is "able to ask questions and to give clear information to members of the public, including anxious or irate customers". The order of these criteria will help the shortlisting panel to agree a weighted scoring system.

10. As well as using someone else to help you draw up the Job Description, panels are used for shortlisting and the interviews – this helps to get a more balanced view. Time must be set aside by all relevant parties involved in the processes to agree the criteria, ensuring disagreements are cleared up before the job is advertised.

11. Criteria should be justifiable so that if challenged, you could defend the use of each criterion. This helps to make sure that only the really important criteria are included and irrelevant things are cut out. Qualifications should only be used where experience could not be as good or better. It may be justifiable however if it is required to move on to a further qualification ie A-levels or equivalent to move onto a degree course.

- **Don't use:** 'Must have xx years' experience'. This could indicate age discrimination and won't necessarily attract good quality experience.
- **Do use:** Experience of successfully managing a team of people/ extensive/considerable experience of... dealing with a range of staffing issues such as sickness, disciplinary, recruitment and motivation of staff" etc.

## 12. Consistently Applied

- Once the criteria are identified, they must remain unchanged throughout the selection process and be applied equally by everyone shortlisting and/or interviewing. If you are in the middle of the process and you find you need to change any of the criteria you should stop the process and restart it. For instance, you may need to re-advertise it.

## 13. Standard Criteria

- Make sure that there is a criteria that refers to equality and diversity. It must be essential and must be tested by Application and at least one other method, for instance by Interview. Some example statements and questions are given in Appendix 5.

## 14. Essential and Desirable

- **Essential Criteria** - These are the absolute minimum requirements without which the candidate will be unable to do the job. For example, driving licence for a driving job or ability to use Microsoft package for office based jobs.

Essential criteria have two types of scores (see later section). If they are the key essential criteria, they score 15. Other essential criteria score 10. This helps to separate people who will be good at the job and those who will be the best ones and why you need to put the criteria in order of importance (see Weighted, above).

REMEMBER, only applicants who meet all of the essential criteria can be shortlisted. Therefore, the more essential criteria you include on the job description the more difficult it might be for applicants to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills / abilities / qualifications.

- **Desirable Criteria** – Only use desirable criteria if it will make a real difference to the job. E.g. "CIPD membership" for an HR Officer's job or "ability to speak Urdu, Punjabi or Polish" for a job where you regularly meet people who speak these languages. A

candidate cannot be rejected for failing to meet any one of the desirable criterion if they meet all the essential criteria. However, it may help you shortlist if there are lots of people who meet the essential criteria.

#### 15. Physical Requirements

- Height, sex, and age are not always reliable indicators of strength or stamina. If there are physical requirements make sure that they are expressed specifically such as: must have the ability to carry weights of X Kilos for a certain length of time; must be capable of climbing into lofts and small roof spaces.

#### 16. How the Criteria Will be Assessed

- The person specification includes a section on how the criteria will be assessed. This can be using the application form, test, interview, certificate or via a presentation. There will be very few jobs that do not require testing of some sort. All criteria must be assessed by application form and usually one other method (sometimes two). Assessment methods must be agreed before the advert goes out so that it is clear to potential applicants.
- Do not use the application form to test literacy – the applicant may not have filled it out themselves – contact HR for testing methods.

#### 17. The Pitfalls

- Don't make qualifications a requirement unless absolutely necessary. Someone with a degree, for example, is not necessarily more intelligent than someone who started work earlier in life; if you want report-writing skills or analytical skills then use a test to see if people have these skills. And asking for GCSE Maths can rule out people who have great mathematical skills gained at work or at home.
- Do not use criteria which cannot be measured. Avoid personality traits, such as 'flexible outlook', and sweeping statements like 'a good standard of education'.
- Be careful to include no more than two or three Desirable criteria
- IF YOU HAVE TO use qualifications as one of the criteria, remember that qualifications completed overseas are usually as valuable as those gained in the UK (and add 'or equivalent' to the wording).

#### 18. Role of HR

Although the paperwork will be checked for the right format, a detailed check of the contents will not be completed, so please contact HR if you need any help with any aspect

*Remember: All updates to job descriptions and person specifications must be authorised by the Service Manager before they are used.*

## APPENDIX 5 - EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CRITERIA AND QUESTION EXAMPLES

Examples below, they are not linked to a particular job but you can make them more specific / clearly defined / measurable.

Criteria	Questions
Knowledge of equality & diversity best practice and how it applies to Learning & Development.	We have given you the list of Equality & Diversity training courses that have been delivered in the last 12 months. Can you think of any that should be added, taken away or changed?
Experience in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments.	Can you give me an example of an Equality Impact Assessment that you have undertaken/been involved in? How did you undertake the consultation process? With which groups? What barriers did you identify and how did you overcome/mitigate these?
Knowledge and understanding of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.  Awareness of how to and willingness to meet customer's needs, including any equality and diversity needs.	How many people of different races and/or religions use our services in different ways? How can we make sure we meet their needs?
Ability to produce statistics/monitoring information relating to those employees/customers with protected characteristics who use our services and who doesn't.	Test using equalities statistics – get them to compare them to the local population.  Please prioritise at least one group of people who do not use our services. Why have you prioritised them? What could you do to encourage them to use our services more?
Ability to encourage underrepresented groups of people to use our services.  Success in encouraging underrepresented groups of people to use similar types of services.	Can you think of an example of when you have encouraged underrepresented groups of people to use a similar service to ours? What level of success did you have?
Experience of successfully managing a team, dealing with any problems that may arise and treating everyone fairly.  Ability to successfully manage a diverse group of staff.	Can you tell me about your experience of managing teams? Tell me about any problems that came up and how you dealt with them? Which equality or diversity or fairness issues came up? And how did you deal with them?
Willingness to follow the Council's policies and procedures on equalities and diversity.	What would you do if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of parents wanted half-term off and a member of staff without children also wanted those dates off?</li> <li>• Lots of your staff wanted two days off over Eid?</li> <li>• A member of staff developed a disability where they could not do xxx as part of their job?</li> <li>• A member of staff told you they are in a gay relationship but asked you not to tell anyone. However, you found out it affects their pensions / benefits.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 6 - RECORD OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - PANEL MEMBER'S NOTES: RS2

POST OF \_\_\_\_\_

PANEL MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_

CANDIDATE Name/number \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested Scoring System:

**Essential Criteria** 1 - 15 and/or 1 - 10

**Desirable Criteria** 1 - 5

Criteria	Evidence	Score

Write detailed, concise notes during interview, and finish scoring before you see the next candidate.

## APPENDIX 7 - RECRUITING DISABLED EMPLOYEES.

All disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for the job will be guaranteed an interview under the Council's Interview Guarantee Scheme. It is important, therefore, that you check on the ATS to find out which applicants have stated that they are disabled.

Applicants who have chosen to disclose that they are disabled will have a 'D' next to their applicant number.

You may need to ask the candidate questions to make reasonable adjustments to the selection process such as:

- Using a venue with good access and no obstacles such as furniture in the way
- If holding a virtual interview, check that Microsoft Teams is suitable beforehand and suggest a test call.
- If using a test, consideration given to access and or materials.
- Ensure written or printed material is easy to read, or offer alternative formats such as Braille versions.

The Equality Act 2010 Act does not stop an employer asking about a disability but it must not be used to discriminate against a disabled person. **You can only ask questions about an applicant's health or disability after they have been offered a job, either outright or on a conditional basis, or in the following circumstances:**

- Where the question relates to a person's ability to carry out a function that is absolutely fundamental to that job. You can ask a health or disability related question to establish if the applicant can carry out that function with reasonable adjustments in place. EG you are recruiting a Hand Sweeper and you need to know that applicants can walk long distances and push a heavy truck.
- You are asking the question because having a specific impairment is an occupational requirement for a particular job. EG to recruit a Deafblind project worker who has personal experience of Deafblindness.
- Where the questions relate to a requirement to vet applicants for the purposes of national security.

If a disabled job applicant voluntarily discloses information about their health or disability before a job offer you should not get drawn into a conversation other than in the circumstances as outlined above or to find out what reasonable adjustments are required to carry out a fundamental feature of a job.

### Interview

You can only ask a question about a disability at interview under very specific circumstances. The most important being where the question relates to the applicant's ability to carry out a function that is fundamental to that job. This question should be asked of all applicants. You would still need to consider reasonable adjustments for an applicant with a disability.. For example if you are interviewing for a Driver you could ask if the applicant was able to drive the various vehicles that would be required.



In addition to the selection process you will need to consider making reasonable adjustments to the post, for example if the location of the vacancy has poor access or access to certain computer software. The government scheme; Access to Work can help with grants for disabled new employees.

**It is illegal to discriminate against disabled applicants because you know that the workplace would cause access difficulties for a successful candidate.** Please speak to HR for further advice.

PERSONAL DETAILS			
Name:			
Address:			
Telephone No:		Date of Birth:	

DRIVING QUALIFICATIONS			
What class of driving licence(s) do you hold?			
How long have you held the licence(s)?		Please give expiry dates	
How many hours of CPC training completed in last 5 years?			

DRIVING EXPERIENCE	
Please state briefly details of your driving experience, e.g. types of vehicles, number of years etc	

DRIVING RECORD	
Do you have any current penalty points?	
If YES, please give details, e.g. number of penalty points and reason	
Have you ever been banned from driving?	
If YES, please give details, e.g. period of ban and reasons	
Have you had any Road Traffic Accidents in the last 3 years?	
If YES, please give details	
Were you prosecuted as a result of any of these accidents?	
If YES, please give details	
Are there any prosecutions pending?	
If YES, please give details	

TRAINING		
Please give details of any additional training you have undertaken in respect of driving, e.g. Defensive driving		
Course Title	Duration	Date

MEDICAL DETAILS	
Do you consider that your eyesight meets the legal standard for driving? (i.e. read a car number plate at 20.5m / 67 feet)?	
Do you wear spectacles / contact lenses for driving?	
When was the last time you had an eye sight test? Please state the date.	
Do you have any defect of hearing?  If YES, please give details	
Do you have medical condition which may affect your ability to drive?  If YES, please give details	

DECLARATION	
I declare that the information given on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any proven intentional falsification could lead to the termination of my contract.	
Signed:	
Date:	

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING THIS FORM AND YOUR DRIVING LICENCE TO THE INTERVIEW**

## APPENDIX 9 - RECORD OF INTERVIEW DECISIONS

**JOB TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggested Scoring System:** Essential criteria 1-15 and / or 1-10

Desirable criteria 1-5

Brief description of criteria																
Max Score																

Candidate number																	Total	RANKING