

Recruitment Policy			
Prepared By: JH	Approved By: Head of HR	Version: 2	Effective Date: 28/04/2010
			Review Date: 27/04/2012
Version 1 Introduced: 1st October 2006			
Responsible Unit: Human Resource Unit			

RECRUITMENT POLICY

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1. Scope

This policy covers the principles and procedures applied by the Health & Safety Authority in Recruitment and Selection processes.

2. Definitions

The terms contained in this policy are defined as:

- **Recruitment** – the process of filling a vacancy from the initial definition of job content up to the appointee's start date
- **Best practice** – the generally accepted “best way of doing a thing” based on the study of specific business/organisational experience and as disseminated through academic studies, popular business management books and through "comparison of notes" between organisations
- **Short-listing** – selecting the most suitable applicants for interview
- **External business partners** – external individuals or organisations who assist the Authority with its recruitment processes, whether for financial gain or otherwise
- **Job Description** – summary of information regarding a position within the Authority, including details of duties, reporting relationships, skills, experience and competencies required
- **Interview** – the process by which a candidate verbally provides information to the Authority for assessment as to his/her suitability for the position sought (this may include formal presentations and simulated work exercises)
- **Test** – the process by which a candidate provides information to the Authority for assessment as to his/her suitability for the position sought (this may include written material, formal examinations and simulated work exercises)
- **Advertising** – the means of making candidates aware of the vacancy being filled
- **Screening** – corroborating facts and conclusions regarding an applicant's suitability for a position with external individuals/bodies.

3. Responsibilities

The person with overall responsibility for recruitment and selection is the Head of Human Resources. No post is advertised internally or externally unless approved by the Head of HR who ensures that the recruitment process is carried out in accordance with any agreements with staff unions and that all processes are carried out in accordance with Authority policy and legislative requirements.

The specific responsibilities are as follows:

Human Resources

- Assists line management with the identification of the responsibilities of the job and the qualifications, competencies and experience required
- Ensures that requirements are not discriminatory
- Manages the recruitment process, placing advertisements in print and on the web, sourcing and managing suitable employment agencies, administering the application response process, ensuring that short-listing is carried out in line with Authority policy

- Convenes an appropriately constituted interview board, representing functional and human resource expertise and independent (external) involvement, as required
- Briefs the interview board, advising on appropriate procedures and marking schemes
- Communicates interview outcomes to candidates and manages the Panel where appropriate
- Carries out reference checking, arranging medical examinations and processing request for Garda Clearance
- Manages the offer process, agreeing start dates and contractual terms with candidates in line with Department of Finance Guidelines and industrial relations agreements
- Communicates start date details (Line Manager, Training & Development, Facilities, Payroll, IT etc)
- For each competition a member of the staff of the HR unit is designated as the chief contact. The role of the chief contact is to:
 - Receive, log and acknowledge applications
 - Respond to candidate/potential candidate queries
 - Provide copies to those short-listing (usually line manager)
 - Maintain records of outcome of the short-listing process
 - Arrange the interview schedule
 - Provide administrative support to the interview board
 - Record the outcome of the interview process
 - Contact candidates to inform them of the outcome.

Line Management

- Identifies the responsibilities of the job and the qualifications, competencies and experience required to perform it
- Assists with the identification of suitable sources of candidates (e.g. specialist media)
- Shortlists applications
- Participates in interview boards.

CEO

- Approves the outcome of the Interview process and issuing of contract of employment to the successful candidate(s).

4. Principles

The fundamental principles governing Recruitment Policy and Procedure are:

A. Legislative requirements

All of our recruitment processes will conform to legislative requirements

B. Best Practice

Authority Recruitment practices will incorporate best practice principles and will specifically honour any commitments made with staff unions or through national/central agreements. We subscribe to the principals set out by the Commission for Public Service Appointments. These key principles are:

- Probity – integrity, impartiality, fairness, reliability and ethical conduct throughout our selection processes
- Merit – the appointment of the best person for any given post through a transparent competitive recruitment process where the criteria for judging

suitability of candidates can be related directly to the qualifications, attributes and skills required to undertake the duties and responsibilities to the required standard.

- Best Practice – All recruitment processes and practices should be efficient, cost effective and in line with best practice. Best practice extends to all aspects of the recruitment process including defining job and person specifications, advertising the vacancy, and selecting appropriate assessment mechanisms. It also includes the supporting management arrangements and training provided.
- Fairness and Consistency – The Authority wholly opposes any form of direct or indirect discrimination, whether active or passive. The selection process adopted and the manner in which it is applied must be undertaken fairly and with real commitment to equality of opportunity. We commit to treat candidates fairly, to a consistent standard and in a consistent manner.
- Openness, Accountability and Transparent Manner – Transparency in the processes and the openness with which candidates are dealt with enhances candidate confidence. We are committed to open and active communication on the process and the basis for assessment. We offer meaningful feedback to candidates who seek it.

C. Equality & Diversity

It is our intention to have recruitment processes and procedures which are open to all, irrespective of their background, personal beliefs or circumstances. We will therefore provide appropriate assistance and accommodation wherever possible unless to do so would be to unlawfully disadvantage another candidate. This may include providing easily accessible interview facilities; agreeing an appropriately timed interview; arranging an alternative medical examination location/time; supplying/arranging appropriate equipment (e.g. suitable height presentation equipment) etc.

5. External Business Partners

Where resource constraints, the need for specialist expertise or the need for independent involvement require, external business partners may be selected to assist in the recruitment process. External business partners who will interface directly with candidates/potential candidates (test administrators, employment agencies etc) are provided with information on the standards expected of them when working on behalf of the Authority.

6. Documentation

We value the function of appropriate documentation in assisting candidates to self-select for suitable vacancies, to inform them of the process and procedures and of the standards which apply. For each advertised vacancy we will therefore make available:

Job Description – to assist candidates in understanding the position and the required skills, qualifications and experience deemed necessary.

General Information – to inform candidates of the process and procedures to be followed.

Equal Opportunities Policy – to ensure that it is clear to potential applicants that the Authority welcomes and strives to achieve a diverse workforce. External documentation (job advertisement, web-site, general recruitment information, etc will also include a short equal opportunities statement and prospective candidates are advised of the possibilities for appropriate arrangements to facilitate applicants with a disability through the use of statements in advertisement and general recruitment documentation. The letter asking candidates to attend for interview includes an invitation to contact HR to discuss any specific arrangements/facilities where required.

The Equality Officer reviews all recruitment documentation regularly to specifically ensure that no direct/indirect discrimination is created by the requirements.

7. Records

Records of the recruitment process (advertisement texts, applications, marking schemes and results, interview notes, feedback etc) will be retained for a period of 12 months from the date of interview or 6 months from the date of expiry of the resulting panel, whichever is the later.

8. Confidentiality

The fact of, and the information contained in, a candidate's application, his/her performance at interview and the subsequent marking process are highly confidential. Those involved in recruitment processes are made aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

9. Job Description

Each vacancy will be filled based on a job description agreed between the line manager and HR. Once a vacancy/potential vacancy has been identified, the line manager and Human Resources will collaborate to develop an appropriate job description with line management advising on the core job content and requisite knowledge and experience; and HR advising on the appropriate structuring of the job, relevant competencies etc. Where an existing job description is in place it is reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and not discriminatory.

10. Advertising

Advertisements are drawn up based on the job description which has been prepared or revised as above.

To encourage diversity of applicants, vacancies are advertised using at least two of the following (based on discussion between HR and the line manager). The final decision on the form of the advertisement and the media to be used rests with the Head of Human Resources as budget holder.

- Authority Website
- National Press
- Local Press
- Specialist Journals
- Recruitment Websites
- Employment Agencies

- University/3rd level institution careers services
- Professional Bodies
- Representative Organisations
- Other appropriate sources

11. Applications

Applications will be accepted in a variety of formats, including web-links, once they are accessible using standard office applications and are received in the manner nominated (usually by post and/or email) up to the advertised closing date/time. Applications will not be accepted beyond that time - it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application reaches the Authority by the time specified.

Receipt of applications will be acknowledged in writing (by post or email).

12. Speculative Applications

Speculative applications will be acknowledged and held on file for a period of 6 months. If during that period, a position arises which appears to match the skills outlined in the application, HR will contact the applicant and ascertain his/her interest in being included in the competition.

13. Short-listing

Short-listing is the process of selecting those applicants who are most suitable for a position so that they can be invited to interview. This procedure is governed by the same principles as any other part of the recruitment process.

14. Tests

Where it is decided that tests are appropriate to the recruitment for a certain position, these tests will be selected and administered in line with principles of best practice: only tests which are relevant to the skills/knowledge or aptitudes required will be carried out; results will be available to candidates; where tests relate to personality or general aptitude they will be evaluated by an accredited professional and an appropriately trained person will communicate the results to the candidate.

15. Interviewing

Interviewing is carried out in line with the Authority's Interview Management Guidelines and all interviewers are appropriately trained.

16. Outcome Notification and Panel Management

All candidates will receive notification of the outcome of their interview as soon as possible. If they have been placed on the panel they are informed of their position on the panel (unless the panel is mixed re e.g. location), and given a specific name to contact to check on the progress of the panel if they wish.

Where a panel has been formed, vacancies which arise are filled from the panel in order of merit – i.e. the person placed first on the panel is offered the first vacancy to arise. Where someone declines an offer they may continue to be considered for future vacancies for the rest of the life of the panel. On occasion the interview board may indicate that a particular candidate has very specific experience, suitable only for a particular type of role/more suited to that type of role. In such circumstances where a role of this type arises, it is permissible to offer such a position to that candidate, ahead of candidates who are placed further up the panel but do not have the appropriate background. (e.g. where in a Grade III Inspector competition a candidate with specific occupational health experience was placed 6th but those placed 1-5 had no occupational health background).

17. Screening (References, Medical Examination & Garda Clearance)

When a selected candidate has indicated their interest in the position which is being filled, the next stage is to carry out reference checks, medical examinations and for Inspector grades, Garda clearance.

References are sought in writing from the individuals named on the reference sheet which the candidate will have brought to interview. Where the candidate has indicated that these individuals should not be contacted this will be discussed with them and either clearance to contact or alternative referees obtained.

Medical examinations will be carried out to ensure that candidates are fit to fulfil the requirements of the role for which they have been selected, and, where necessary, to identify special arrangements which should be put in place to assist them in fulfilling the requirements of the position.

Garda clearance must be sought for all staff who will be appointed to an Inspector grade as they will be issued with a warrant card on appointment. Potential candidates are made aware of this requirement in the general recruitment literature.

18. Offer & Acceptance Process

The offer and acceptance process is managed by the Head of Human Resources who may delegate to staff within the HR unit as required. Terms and conditions of employment will conform to statutory requirements and will be within the guidelines/requirements communicated to the Authority by the Departments of Finance and Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

19. Handover To Pre-Induction

The HR staff member responsible for the vacancy (usually at HEO level) will inform Line management, Training & Development Officer, Payroll, Facilities, IT etc of the new staff member's start date.

20. Feedback

In an external competition, feedback is provided by each interview board for those not placed on the panel. This feedback is provided to candidates on request to HR. Candidates may also receive copies of the notes taken during their interview and the marks they received under each heading. Candidates may not receive information, marks or notes regarding any of the other candidates.

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Files\Content.Outlook\NIT3ZYRO\updatedRecruitment_Policynewcaptionbox pdr 18ug2010 gm (3).doc

The Authority's recruitment process is governed by the Freedom of Information Act and candidates may request information in line with the requirements of that Act. It is Authority policy however to provide such information without the necessity for an FOI request.

21. Promotions

Promotions take place in line with the Promotion Policy agreed between the Authority and the staff unions.

22. Review Process

The review process enables candidates to seek review when they believe that an action or decision taken in relation to the selection process was unfair or unreasonable.

Candidates must address their concerns in relation to the process, in writing, to the Head of Human Resources in the first instance. A request for review must be received within 10 working days of the notification of the decision. Where the decision relates to an interim stage of the selection process (e.g. shortlisting for interview) a request for review must be received within 3 working days.

The case will be reviewed by a person other than the individual who made the decision in question.

23. Candidate Obligations

Candidates should note that canvassing will disqualify and will result in their exclusion from the competition.

Candidates must not:

- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information
- Canvass either directly or indirectly any person involved in the recruitment process
- Interfere with or compromise the process in any way
- Personate another candidate at any stage of the process.

Candidates who fail to comply with these obligations may be disqualified from the process or, if already appointed they may have to forfeit the appointment.

Candidates who do not attend for interview or other test, when and where required, or who do not when requested, furnish such evidence as the Health & Safety Authority require in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature will have no further claim to consideration.

24. Monitoring of Procedures

In order to ensure that Recruitment Policy and Procedure conforms to HR best practice, Human Resources will regularly review this Recruitment Policy to ensure that the best possible standards are maintained and that business requirements are being fulfilled.