1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 The Recruitment and Selection Policy is designed to support managers in providing a fair, consistent and effective approach to the recruitment of all employees and to help managers deal with recruitment and selection effectively and consistently.

2. PRINCIPLES

2.1 In accordance with the NHSBSA’s Equality & Diversity policy, this procedure will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, trade union membership, disability, offending background or any other personal characteristic.

2.2 The NHSBSA also recognises the need for equality and diversity within the workforce and promotes equality and diversity issues and awareness.

2.3 The NHSBSA endeavours to be an equal opportunities employer and has taken measures to ensure that any opportunity for discrimination during the recruitment process is minimised. Personal information is removed from application forms prior to short listing and is used for monitoring purposes only. We will also ensure that objective selection criteria are used, the decision making process is recorded and it can be demonstrated that appointments are made on merit.

2.4 Recruitment and selection is carried out in accordance with all relevant legislation.

2.5 The NHSBSA will ensure that all employees who are responsible for undertaking recruitment and selection are suitably trained and have the necessary knowledge and skills.

2.6 If applicable, the NHSBSA uses the Disclosure service provided by the Criminal Records Bureau to assess applicants’ suitability for positions of trust. The NHSBSA complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. The NHSBSA also undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received.

2.7 Recruitment within the Operations Division of the Prescription Pricing Division (PPD) will be dealt with on a local basis, but in line with this policy, therefore each Processing Division will be responsible for ensuring that all recruitment activities are carried out in line with the principles of equal opportunities and in conjunction with Corporate Human Resources when necessary.

2.8 Data is held and destroyed in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

2.9 The policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically by Corporate Human Resources and Trade Union(s) giving due consideration to legislative changes.
3. PROCEDURE

Identifying a Vacant Post

3.1 Before deciding to fill a vacancy and progressing to the next stage of the recruitment process there are a number of questions to be asked.

- Can the work itself be eliminated?
- Can the work be absorbed by re-organising existing resources?
- Is there still a job to be done?
- Is it the same job as was done previously?
- Will the job be permanent or temporary?
- Can the vacancy by covered with a temporary secondment?
- Is this one vacancy or can a single process be used to fill this and subsequent vacancies?
- Are you recruiting solely to fill this particular post or are you looking for somebody with promotion potential?

3.2 Once it is clear that there is a vacancy, either on a permanent basis or temporarily, an Authority to Recruit form must be completed and submitted to Corporate Human Resources.

Appointing to a vacant post without advertising

3.3 If a post becomes available on a temporary basis due to such reasons as maternity or long-term sickness cover, the recruitment and selection process must be followed when selecting an employee to cover the vacancy. In such circumstances, it may be appropriate to recruit to the vacancy from a specific group of staff, for example, where the post is of a specialist nature.

3.4 Should the post then become available on a permanent basis, it may be possible to waive the standard recruitment process.

3.5 This will only be the case where it can be demonstrated that the initial selection for the post was made fairly and equitably, i.e. other people were also given the opportunity.

3.6 Temporary appointments will be reviewed between 10 and 12 months in order to establish whether the temporary promotion can be ended and the employee confirmed into that position.

3.7 Any decision to waive the standard recruitment process will be made by Corporate Human Resources in consultation with Trade Union(s).

Ring Fencing

3.8 The ‘ring fencing’ of vacancies would normally only apply where certain jobs are at risk. Where managers are considering ‘ring fencing’ vacancies for any other reason they must consult with Corporate Human Resources and staff side prior to doing so.
Compiling a Person Specification

3.9 Having established that a vacancy exists a person specification must then be completed for the post. If it is an existing post then the current specification must be reviewed and any necessary changes made.

3.10 The person specification defines the qualifications, skills, experience, aptitudes etc. that are required by a person to fulfil the role. The criteria must be categorised as either essential (the minimum standards required to perform the job adequately) or desirable (the standards which will enable the person to perform the job more effectively). The criteria used should be competency based to enable candidates to demonstrate at interview how they have used particular skills previously.

3.11 The person specification should be prepared in line with the Agenda for Change Guidance.

3.12 It is important that the criteria used in the person specification is completely justifiable in order to demonstrate that decisions are made solely on merit.

Compiling a Job Description

3.13 Having established that a vacancy exists a job description must then be completed for the post. If it is an existing post then the current job description must be reviewed and any necessary changes made.

3.14 The job description must summarise the role and responsibilities of the post in a concise and accurate way.

3.15 The job description should be prepared and evaluated in line with the Agenda for Change Guidance.

Advertising a Vacancy

3.16 Where external advertising is appropriate, the recruiting manager should establish the most efficient and effective method of advertising e.g. newspapers and/or professional journals etc.

3.17 All external adverts will automatically be advertised internally and placed on the NHS jobs website (applicants are required to apply on-line).

3.18 Where a vacancy is to be advertised internally only, details will be placed on internal notice boards and will be circulated to all departments electronically.

3.19 Once the completed job description, person specification and appointment requisition form have been received, adverts will be prepared by Corporate Human Resources, taking into account advertising best practice and the requirement to avoid any discriminatory statements within the advert. The advert will then be sent to the recruiting manager for final approval.

Recruitment Process Timetable

3.20 The closing date for applications will be agreed by the recruiting officer following final approval of the advert.
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3.21 A timetable must also be drawn up to include:
- shortlisting date
- interview date (allowing at least 5 days notice for candidates)
- testing arrangements and date (where applicable)

Application Process

3.22 The Recruitment Pack for any external vacancy will be available on the ‘nhsjobs’ website. It will contain as a minimum a job description, person specification and general information relating to terms and conditions. Some vacancies may warrant further information, depending on the nature of the post.

3.23 A record of website “hits” for each post will be maintained by Corporate Human Resources for monitoring purposes. All posts will also be monitored for equal opportunities purposes.

3.24 Corporate Human Resources will normally receive the applications for those divisions without a dedicated recruitment system. To minimise the opportunity for discrimination the remainder of candidates’ personal details will not be made available until after short listing has taken place.

3.25 In the case of recruitment within Operations Divisions within PPD, application forms will be processed locally.

Shortlisting

3.26 Shortlisting must be carried out in line with the pre-arranged timetable. A minimum of 2 people from the appropriate section/department must be involved in the short listing exercise, one of whom should be the recruiting manager.

3.27 Having assessed all candidates’ against the essential and desirable criteria given in the person specification the short listing matrix must be completed fully and signed and dated by all officers who are involved in the shortlisting decision.

3.28 The Authority is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people and is awarded to use the ‘two ticks’, shortlisting symbol. As a symbol user, an interview is guaranteed to any candidate with a disability whose application meets all of the essential criteria for the post.

3.29 The shortlisting decision will normally be verified by Corporate Human Resources before invite to interview and regret letters are sent out.

3.30 Recruiting Officers must be aware that in the event of a claim against the Authority alleging discrimination or unfairness and in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, all written comments can be disclosed.

Testing

3.31 Testing can be used to supplement the recruitment process and enable the panel to make a better informed selection decision. Testing can take a number of different formats and can include giving candidates essay type questions to be completed prior to interview, asking candidates to do a presentation at interview and typing tests/in tray exercises or a combination of all such as an assessment centre. Testing can
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also be carried out via more formal methods such as psychometric and personality testing. These tests can be conducted by HR Advisers who are accredited by the British Psychological Society for this purpose.

3.32 Recruiting Officers must discuss the use of any test with an HR Adviser prior to it being included in the recruitment process.

Interviews

3.33 Interviews should normally be undertaken by a minimum of three people, the Panel should include section/department representatives who were involved in the shortlisting process and a representative from the Corporate Human Resources Department (where appropriate). The officers who are involved in the recruitment process must be suitably trained.

3.34 The ‘lead’ Panel member will normally be the Recruiting Manager.

3.35 The questions to be asked by the Panel at the interview should be agreed beforehand and reflect the criteria in the person specification and also any technical aspects of the vacant post.

3.36 To avoid discrimination no reference should be made to the person’s individual circumstances throughout the interview and the same basic questions should be asked of each candidate (although it is recognised that further probing questions may need to be asked in order to follow up particular issues).

3.37 The interview may be formal/informal depending on the nature/level of the post and may also incorporate alternative methods of assessment i.e. presentations.

Interview Assessment

3.38 Those involved in the interview should make notes throughout, and assess the applicant’s suitability against the criteria on the person specification via their responses to the questions asked.

3.39 Once all candidates have been interviewed the panel members should discuss their individual assessments and come to a consensus over who is the best applicant.

3.40 The lead panel member will complete the interview assessment sheet which will be signed by all panel members.

3.41 The summary, shortlisting matrix and the application forms of all candidates will be retained by Corporate Human Resources for 12 months from the date of appointment as evidence of how the decision was made, and for feedback purposes.

3.42 In the case of internal candidates, the panel will nominate one of its members to contact all unsuccessful candidates and give feedback where requested.

3.43 The decision to appoint a candidate must only be made by the panel members. Where the panel is unable to agree which candidate should be appointed they should arrange a further assessment exercise (i.e. second interview, test, presentation etc.)

3.44 Where the panel is still unable to agree on the successful candidate, the recruiting manager (normally the line manager for the vacant position) will be responsible for making the final decision.
Appointment Procedure

3.45 Once the appointment decision has been agreed by the Panel, Corporate Human Resources will normally write to the individual with an offer of employment (Operations Divisions within PPD will do this themselves). Offers of employment must be made on condition of receipt of the following:

- medical clearance (external candidates only)
- receipt of two satisfactory references (external candidates only) or receipt of one satisfactory reference (internal candidates only)
- proof of right to work in the UK (external candidates only)
- receipt of a satisfactory CRB check (where appropriate)
- proof of relevant qualifications

3.46 Where the successful candidate is a registered health professional (e.g. a Pharmacist), a member of Corporate Human Resources will confirm that no Alert Letter has been issued by the Regional Director of Public Health in relation to the candidate.

3.47 Successful candidates must be advised not to submit their resignation to their current employer (where appropriate) prior to all of the relevant checks being completed satisfactorily.

3.48 All new entrants and re-entrants to the Authority will be engaged on a probationary period as detailed in the Probationary Review Policy.

Starting Salary and Incremental Dates

3.49 All new employees should be appointed on a salary point in the relevant band that is no higher than the second Gateway point in that band.

3.50 When an internal candidate is offered a job that is at a higher pay band, pay should be set at the minimum of the new pay band. However, if this would result in no increase either because the individual is receiving a bonus or recruitment and retention premium or because they are at the top of the band, the individual would go to the first pay point in the band which would result in an increase in pay.

3.51 Only in exceptional circumstances will a starting salary which is higher than the second gateway point be agreed, this would normally be where posts is of such a specialist nature that the higher salary is necessary to secure the best candidate for the post. Such cases must be discussed with Corporate Human Resources prior to the salary offer being made.

3.52 When an internal candidate is offered a job that is at the same pay band as their current role, they would normally move across on the same pay point. Where an employee has been in receipt of a bonus payment in their current role, this may be consolidated and a higher pay point offered. However, this will be no higher than the top point of the relevant pay band and no protection will be payable.

3.53 In exceptional circumstances the Divisional Managing Director can authorise for a successful candidate to be appointed further up the pay scale. This decision should be discussed with Corporate Human Resources.
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3.54 The incremental date for new employees will normally be the anniversary of their start date.

3.55 When an internal candidate is appointed, and they move up only one pay point, their incremental date will remain the same. Where they move up two or more pay points, their incremental date will become the anniversary of the date of change.

Withdrawing an offer of employment

3.56 If, after careful consideration, it is decided to withdraw the provisional offer of employment the grounds for withdrawal must be very clear e.g. due to unsatisfactory references or other pre-employment checks and the offer of employment rescinded in writing. This decision must be made in conjunction with a Human Resources Adviser.

Making Reasonable Adjustments

3.57 If a disabled candidate is selected for appointment, the need for reasonable adjustments to the role will need to be discussed with the individual concerned. Where it is agreed that reasonable adjustments need to be made this should be discussed with Occupational Health and the HR Adviser involved in the recruitment process.

3.58 In order to establish what adjustments are required, and whether these adjustments are reasonable, the recruiting manager must complete the NHSBSA's disability pro forma with the candidate concerned.

Reserve Candidates

3.59 Where more than one candidate meets the selection criteria the Panel may decide to list second and third choice candidates. Where the first choice candidate is unable to take up employment, for any reason, the second candidate may be offered the position and so on. Reserves may be held for a period of 6 months and if there is the requirement to fill the same post during that period the reserve candidate may be offered the position without having to repeat the recruitment process.

Feedback

3.60 Verbal feedback should be made available to all applicants at all stages of the recruitment process. Feedback would normally be provided by one of the shortlisting officers (at the shortlisting stage) and one of the interview panel (at the interview stage).

Complaints

3.61 If an applicant is unhappy with the outcome of their feedback, or any stage of the recruitment and selection process they can address their concerns, in writing, to the Human Resources Manager. Where the Human Resources Manager is involved in the recruitment and selection process, concerns should addressed to the Director of Human Resources.

Expenses

3.62 For candidates currently working in the NHS, travel costs will be reimbursed at the rate appropriate to their current entitlement. These are outlined in the NHSBSA Travel and Subsistence Guidance.
3.63 For candidates not currently working in the NHS, travel by car will be reimbursed at the public transport rate as outlined in the NHSBSA Travel and Subsistence Guidance. Rail travel should be standard class.

3.64 Overnight stays before an interview will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and only with the pre-agreement of the recruiting manager. Rates will be in line with those in NHSBSA Travel and Subsistence Guidance.

3.65 For candidates who withdraw their application or who refuse an offer of employment for reasons which seem inappropriate to the recruiting manager, expenses will not normally be reimbursed unless the manager is satisfied that the candidate would suffer real hardship as a result.