

RESOURCING/ GUIDANCE FOR RECRUITMENT PANEL CHAIRS:

Contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Formation of interview panels](#)
3. [Shortlisting](#)
4. [Leading the interviews](#)
5. [Notetaking](#)
6. [Setting the starting salary and making the job offer \(Grades 1-10\)](#)
7. [Setting the starting salary and making the job offer \(Professorial/Senior Professional Services pay scales\)](#)
8. [Providing feedback](#)

1. Introduction

The Chair of a recruitment panel is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the selection process is conducted in line with our policies and procedures. These guidelines are designed to give the Chair information required to conduct a fair and robust recruitment process, compliant with legislation and best practice.

As recruitment panel Chair, you should ensure you have recently undertaken the University of Kent training in [Recruitment and Selection](#). We also encourage you to recommend that other panel members attend this and complete the online [Unconscious Bias](#) training module.

2. Formation of interview panels

- 2.1 Members of the interview panel should be confirmed as soon as possible to ensure involvement in shortlisting and time to prepare for the interviews. It is the role of the Chair to approve the panel membership.
- 2.2 Panels should be diverse, with a mixed gender profile whenever possible. The panel must consist of at least two people and there should be at least one panel member who has undertaken the University's *'Recruitment and Selection'* training.
- 2.3 The interview panel must remain the same throughout the process to ensure consistency.
- 2.4 There are recommended panel compositions for certain posts (in particular, Academic posts) and the panel size should not be exceeded. For more detail, please refer to the [Recruitment Procedures](#).

3. Shortlisting

- 3.1 The purpose of shortlisting is to select for interview those applicants who best meet the selection criteria for the post and therefore are most likely to be capable of carrying out the duties of the role.
- 3.2 The scoring of applications should be undertaken using the e-recruitment system. The Chair is responsible for submitting the final shortlist decisions, following the shortlisting meeting. Panel members should look for evidence and examples, which support the

applicant's assertions that they meet each criterion. If evidence of experience or examples of skills/abilities are not provided, the criterion can be deemed as 'not met'.

Shortlisting decisions must be based upon the job-related criteria published in the Person Specification and applied consistently and fairly to all. Notes should be added to justify shortlisting decisions where relevant, and the order of any reserve candidates.

- 3.3 **Redeployees** – The University has a legal duty to ensure staff who are on the redeployment register are given every opportunity to be redeployed into alternative suitable roles. If a redeployee applies for a vacancy, the Resourcing Adviser will help clarify if the post is deemed as 'suitable alternative employment' or 'alternative employment' and will advise on the correct procedure.
- 3.4 **Immigration** –The University is a licensed sponsor which allows us to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship for successful non-EEA candidates, where needed, for certain roles when relevant criteria are met. For more detailed information, please refer to: [Staff Immigration](#).

When shortlisting an applicant who would require sponsorship under Tier 2, the Chair must ensure that the applicant provides evidence and examples demonstrating that they meet all the essential criteria to be assessed at application stage, as set out in the Person Specification. Where an applicant does not meet advertised essential criteria, sponsorship cannot be offered.

- 3.5 **Disability Confident Scheme** - The University is committed to guaranteeing an interview to disabled applicants who demonstrate with examples, that they meet the minimum essential criteria to be assessed at application stage, as set out in the Person Specification. When an applicant who wishes to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme has met all the essential shortlisting criteria, you will be notified on submission of the final shortlist and the system will automatically ensure this candidate is shortlisted for interview.
- 3.6 **Right to work checks** - [Right to work checks](#) should be made at interview stage. The Chair will need to ensure that an authorised signatory will carry out these checks.

4. **Leading the interviews**

- 4.1 As Chair, you are required to lead the interviews, ensuring all candidates are treated equitably and fairly, allowing for the best selection decisions to be made.
- 4.2 You must agree the interview questions with the other panel members prior to the interviews. This will ensure every panel member has an agreed aspect to focus on and that all relevant job criteria are tested at interview. All candidates should be asked the same initial questions although additional follow-up questions, either specific to the individual or to clarify key relevant points, are permitted.
- 4.3 You should ensure all candidates are made to feel welcome and given a good introduction to the University. Appropriate arrangements should be made for the day including a suitable venue, refreshments, presentation facilities, Right to work checks and if necessary, people to escort the candidates on campus, facilitate tests and any other aspects of the process.
- 4.4 Following the interviews, you should lead the discussion on the suitability of each candidate. Their key strengths and limitations need to be captured and you will assist the panel to evaluate each candidate against both the Person Specification and the requirements of the role. If the panel cannot decide which candidate to appoint, you could introduce various scoring or ranking mechanisms to help reach a decision. Point

5.2 outlines the notes that will need to be taken and forms that can be used at this stage. The panel will also need to agree the feedback to be given to any unsuccessful candidates and who will provide it.

- 4.5 The Chair is responsible for making the final decision about who to appoint. A majority decision is required; a unanimous decision is desirable but not essential.

5. Note-taking

- 5.1 Prior to interview, the Chair should agree with the panel who will be responsible for taking the notes, as a clear record will need to be kept for each candidate and HR will require a summary of information evidencing the decision making process. These records may be used if candidates request feedback and as the Chair, you need to review the comments made. Please also note that, if requested, these notes are disclosable to candidates.

- 5.2 A panel pack will be sent to all panel members prior to interviews that will contain a schedule and forms to record the interview outcome and notes:

Panel Interview Assessment Form – this template is sent to all panel members and will pull through those criteria listed on the Person Specification section of the Job Description that are to be assessed at interview stage. This can be used to record notes and/or to aid with the formation of interview questions and can be edited to suit your needs. The panel can score answers/criteria and use this to assist with reaching a hiring decision.

Chair Summary Form – this template should be used to provide a summary on each candidate, giving feedback on strengths and limitations, and whether they are appointable (reserve number 1, 2, 3 etc.) or deemed not appointable.

- 5.3 As Chair, you are responsible for ensuring a robust justification is recorded on one of the above forms and that this is uploaded on the University's e-recruitment system, Stonefish. If the appointed candidate requires Tier 2 sponsorship to work in the UK, you need to pay particular attention to the following:

- For PhD level roles or above* you need to provide evidence/justification that the preferred candidate was the most suitable for the role.
- For non-PhD roles you must also demonstrate that there were no appointable candidates from the settled workforce.

*Please note that PhD level roles do not necessarily require a PhD qualification see: [Immigration Recruiters Guidance](#). If you have any specific queries, please contact your Resourcing Adviser.

6. Setting the starting salary and making the job offer (Grades 1-10)

- 6.1 We ensure we pay people fairly by using a factor based job evaluation scheme and having transparent pay scales. Appointing managers have a vital role in making sure that salaries offered to new appointees take account of internal peer relativities within this overall framework.

A lack of rigour in setting appropriate starting salaries which take account of internal relativities also puts the University at risk of adding to its gender pay gap and potentially providing the basis for an equal pay claim. Such claims, where they are successful, can have a very high cost indeed.

- 6.2 When making a job offer, the Chair should understand that once the candidate has accepted the offer, a contract is formed and this can include terms that have been verbally agreed. Therefore, the Chair should ensure that the terms and conditions being offered are clear. Please ensure that any relevant immigration legislation is met before making an offer to a candidate. The Chair of the panel should also make it clear that all offers are subject to employment clearances such as the right to work in the UK, satisfactory references, qualification checks and a salary clarification if needed.
- 6.3 All salary offers must be made within the standard incremental points of the grade at which the post was advertised.
- 6.4 Appointment to a salary beyond the first point must be justified. For example, in circumstances where the prospective employee is currently in receipt of a salary and benefits package in excess of the value of the package on offer and/or has significant evidence of performance and contribution relevant to the new role, the objective would be to make an offer at the minimum point required to secure the appointment given that an understanding of the University context will nearly always be lacking – thus justifying some differential in pay with existing staff. Before any decision is made to offer an alternative pay spine point, consideration should be given to any potential anomalies/inequalities that may arise as a result and whether these can be justified (e.g. on grounds of experience/performance).
- 6.5 Where justification for the starting salary relates to the appointee's current/previous salary, any agreement made will be subject to verification, through confirmation from the appropriate referee, a recent pay-slip or other relevant evidence.
- 6.6 If there is any uncertainty around what starting salary to offer, please discuss and clarify with your Resourcing Adviser before making any offer. Offers do not need to be made on the day of the interview.
- 6.7 If the post is to be offered to a candidate already employed at the University who is already on that grade then the Chair must be aware of the candidate's current salary point and the normal incremental progression. If the candidate is due to receive an increment in the next few months it may be appropriate to award that increment on appointment to the new role but not more than this. Employees on the same grade should transfer on their current salary as annual increments will not be affected, irrespective of their transfer date.
- The points at the top of each grade should not be used for a starting salary unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases, a discussion with the Resourcing Adviser must take place before confirming a salary offer with a prospective employee.
- 6.8 Existing employees on Grades 1/2 – 10 moving to a higher grade would normally move up to the minimum point of the relevant new pay grade, unless their current spine point is higher than the minimum, in which case they will move up to the next spine point in the new pay grade.
- 6.9 If it is felt at the start of the recruitment process that current market rates for a particular role will make it difficult to recruit, then evidence must be obtained and discussed with the HR Rewards Manager. In exceptional circumstances, a request can be made to the HR Reward Team for a new 'market supplement'¹ to be put in place, which will need to be approved by the relevant EG member. Generally, this would only be done if a previous attempt to recruit had been unsuccessful. This will take time to arrange,

¹ New market supplements are on hold for the duration of the pay freeze until 1 August 2021

so if it is likely that this will be required, Chairs of recruitment panels should refer to the Market Supplement policy and have an early conversation with the HR Reward team.

- 6.10 The principles outlined here relate to both internally and externally funded posts. Please note, the level of funding available in a grant will not be viewed as justification for placing an employee at a higher incremental point on the designated grade.
- 6.11 It is not possible to issue a contract of employment without all the relevant offer information, as the details given provide the basis of the contractual job offer.
- 6.12 Once the verbal offer has been made and accepted, the Chair (or Chair's assistant) must submit the offer details, using the e-recruitment system. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure the online form is completed accurately and submitted/authorised, as soon after acceptance of the verbal offer as possible.

7. Setting the starting salary and making the job offer (Professorial/Senior Professional Services pay scales)

- 7.1 Appointments on either the Professorial or Senior Professional Services pay scales run a particular risk that starting salaries may create anomalies with existing staff because it is designed to be able to reward high levels of performance/academic credentials.
- 7.3 Appointments made to post holders already on either the Professorial or Senior Professional Services salary scales will normally be awarded two additional increments. Post holders who are not already on either of the senior salary scales will be appointed at the bottom of this scale if they are two or more points below this scale. If the post holder is within two pay points they will be appointed to the appropriate senior salary scale and awarded two additional increments.
- 7.4 For salaries that are offered on the Professorial or Senior Professional Services salary scales there are also specific guidelines in place that will need to be followed in order to ensure that salaries offered are appropriate and placed into the correct section and segments of the pay scales. A description of the sections and segments that make up the senior pay scales and full guidelines for setting the salary can be found in the Setting the Salary and Making the Job Offer document.
- 7.5 Both senior scales are constructed with reference to UCEA market data and therefore it is anticipated that starting salaries can be accommodated within the appropriate segment on the scale. For equal pay purposes, a clear and transparent rationale should be provided to justify all salary decisions on appointment, particularly if an appointment is to be made off scale in the spot salary range. Off scale, spot salaries are normally only for use where there is a specific justification (see *Offer Details Form*).

Any salary offers in excess of £100k will require authorisation from two members of Executive Group.

8. Providing feedback

- 8.1 The University offers feedback to all interviewed candidates on request and aims to respond as soon as possible.
- 8.2 At the end of the interview process, the Chair will agree who will respond to requests for feedback using the summary agreed by the panel members (see 5.2 above).
- 8.3 Feedback should be constructive, balanced and related specifically to the requirements of the role and Person Specification and the performance of the

candidate during interview/test/presentation. Feedback should NOT include any personal details and should be solely role related. Candidate usually request feedback so they can do better next time, so a balance of positive points and improvement opportunities should be provided.