



Your Homes
Newcastle

Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

March 2015

Version control table	
Original version published:	
Current version number:	Version 7
Date current version published:	March 2015
Due date for next review:	March 2017
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Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Your Homes Newcastle is committed to making sure its workforce represents the varied communities we serve. We aim to recruit the best person for the job, regardless of their sex, race/ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, disability, gender reassignment status, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, status in relation to pregnancy or maternity, or trade union membership.
- 1.2 YHN is committed to its core values of accountability, integrity, passion, respect and forward thinking, and that these principles must be applied in line with YHN policy and employment law when undertaking the recruitment and selection of new employees.
- 1.3 YHN strives to continually assess our recruitment procedures and practices to remove barriers to employment for under-represented groups. We will ensure we continue to comply with current employment legislation, and recruit staff according to best practice.
- 1.4 Where appropriate, we aim to have a flexible recruitment process to meet the needs of the service, with a clear and consistent corporate procedure to make sure all requirements are met.
- 1.5 This policy and the supporting procedure have been developed to ensure we achieve these aims.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the majority of vacancies that arise within YHN, whether permanent, fixed term or casual in nature (pool staff). The policy also applies to internal secondment and acting up opportunities, unless the Director approves the temporary acting up provision as outlined in the Single Status 'Green Book' agreement, paragraph 4.1.
- 2.2 The content of this document is to provide managers with a guide to YHN's policy and the legal background to recruitment and selection, as well providing a procedure to be used as a working document.
- 2.3 Line managers are responsible for recruitment. A line manager who wishes to recruit must first obtain approval as outlined in the recruitment procedure.
- 2.4 Recruitment to vacancies under YHN's 'Your Homes Your Jobs'(six month trainee placements) and Apprenticeship (one year) schemes are not covered by this policy. Recruitment to these posts is managed by the Employability Team. The following link to take you to the relevant web page
http://www.yhn.org.uk/jobs/extra_help_to_get_into_work.aspx

3. Legal Context

- 3.1 YHN is committed to meeting legislative requirements to promote equality of opportunity and to promote diversity within its workforce. The Dignity and Respect at Work Policy will apply at all stages of recruitment and selection.
- 3.2 This policy has been written in accordance to and complies with current employment legislation, including The Equality Act (2010); The Children's Act (2004); The Data Protection Act (1998); and the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006).

4. Politically Restricted Posts

- 4.1 Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, certain staff are politically restricted (not able to take part in political activities or take up a political office, for example, as a member of parliament). These include staff who (with some exceptions):
- regularly advise the organisation or a committee, or speak on our behalf to journalists or broadcasters; and
 - hold certain posts, for example, political assistants.
- 4.2 Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, companies must appoint staff based on their skills and experience.
- 4.3 It must be stated within the job advertisement and contract of employment if a post is politically restricted. Please contact HR for advice if necessary.

5. Related Policies and Procedures

- 5.1 The following policies and procedures may also need to be referred to. (Please note the list below is not exhaustive).
- [Single status implementation agreement](#)
 - [Temporary promotion manager guide](#)
 - [Redeployment Scheme \(NCC document\)](#)
 - [Secondment policy](#)
 - [Fixed Term Working policy](#)
 - [Recruitment of Ex-Offenders policy](#)
 - [Disclosure and Barring Service \(CRB\) policy](#)
 - [Dignity & Respect at Work policy](#)

6. Role of the Recruiting Manager

- 6.1 The recruiting manager will normally play the role of 'panel chair' during the recruitment process.
- 6.2 Recruiting managers are expected to comply with this policy and procedure, and recruit in a fair and consistent manner at all times. Disciplinary action will be considered if any member of the recruitment panel is found to be contravening this policy and procedure.
- 6.3 Recruitment and selection panels must adhere to the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for applicants who declare they are disabled. Please refer to paragraph 7.12 for further details.
- 6.4 The interview panel will ensure the questions they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. The interview will focus on the needs of the job and skills/knowledge required to perform it effectively. A record of every recruitment interview must be made and passed to the Employee Services Team (at the Civic Centre) where it will be retained for 12 months.
- 6.5 The panel must ensure appropriate and accurate records are maintained during the recruitment and selection process. Under the Data Protection Act, applicants (whether successful or not) can request sight of any documentation about themselves relating to the shortlisting or interview scoring decisions/notes that were made. If an applicant requests this information, it must be provided to them in writing within 40 calendar days by the Recruiting Manager.

7. The Recruitment and Selection Process

7.1 Competency based recruitment and selection

- 7.1.1 All posts will be appointed to following competency based applications for shortlisting, and at interviews candidates will be asked questions which aim to demonstrate how they meet the required competencies for the role.

7.2 What to do when a vacancy arises

- 7.2.1 When an existing post becomes vacant, the recruiting manager must review the role and consider whether the post is still required. Before submitting a vacancy for approval, the following points should be taken into consideration:
- What is the purpose of the post; is it still needed?
 - Could the position be filled on a temporary basis, or with reduced hours?
 - Does the job description need to be reviewed – is it still fit for purpose? (Do the technical competencies reflect what is required for the post holder to perform the role effectively?)
 - Can the duties be carried out in another way, e.g. have there been any changes in technology or working practices, which may necessitate a review of the job description?
 - Can the duties be absorbed amongst the remaining posts in the team?

- Are there any proposed changes in the near future which could impact on the post, e.g. a requirement for additional skills or a different skill set, i.e. do the competencies need reviewing?
- 7.2.2 When a job description needs to be revised, the recruiting manager should contact operational HR for support and advice, and to determine whether to put the job description through a Job Evaluation panel.
- 7.2.3 Once the draft revised job description has been created, if there are other staff employed on this job description, it must go through consultation with those staff and the trade unions.
- 7.2.4 Any proposed changes to the job description should be within the scope of the role and existing job description, and this should not be used as an opportunity to simply re-evaluate the role unless there is a specific business need for this.

7.3 Creating and advertising the vacancy

- 7.3.1 When filling a newly created post, at the same time as completing the vacancy request on the North East Jobs website, the recruiting manager must complete an online OU02 form, as this will prompt the creation of a post number on SAP which is required by Finance in order to advertise a vacancy.
- 7.3.2 All vacancies must be approved by the Head of Service prior to advertising.
- 7.3.3 Operational HR will check the redeployment list prior to approval being given to fill any vacancy, to see if there are any staff currently 'at risk' that would be suitable candidates. If this is the case, the advertisement will not proceed.

7.4 'Pool' staff

- 7.4.1 Managers can, where applicable, recruit for 'pool' staff who will be employed on a zero hours contract to be used on an as and when necessary basis. These positions are currently for Customer Service Advisors in the Enquiry Centre, administrative staff (the 'Central Admin Pool'), garden care staff, and Relief Project Workers at the YHN Hostel.
- 7.4.2 The fundamental meaning of a zero hours contract is that YHN has no obligation to offer work, and the 'employee' does not have to accept any work offered to them.
- 7.4.3 Employing people on a zero hours contract allows flexibility for the service (enabling it to cope better in times of demand), and reduces costly agency fees.
- 7.4.4 It is appropriate to advertise for such vacancies for a given timescale to allow applicants to have an idea of when they will be advised if their application was successful. The timescale for this is to be determined by the recruiting manager, but it would be advisable to be no longer than four weeks.
- 7.4.5 Pool staff are subject to the same recruitment and selection process as all other employees of YHN, including pre-employment checks.

7.5 Internal only 'Ring-fenced' positions – Expressions of Interest

- 7.5.1 At times YHN will 'ring-fence' vacancies to certain groups of employees or teams, under certain circumstances.
- 7.5.2 Ring-fenced positions should only advertised in exceptional circumstances, which include:
- A temporary promotion (acting up) opportunity within a team/service (such as maternity leave or long term sickness cover), where a member of the team has the necessary skills and knowledge to immediately step into the role due to time constraints
 - Where there is an organisational restructure, which leaves one or more staff 'at risk' of redundancy
- 7.5.3 Where it is believed there is a need for ring-fenced recruitment outside of these circumstances a business case must be put together which is signed off by the Director, HR Operational Lead Specialist, and Finance.
- 7.5.4 In these situations, the recruiting manager may seek 'expressions of interest' from staff via email/in writing, rather than go through the formal vacancy advertising process.

7.6 All other positions

- 7.6.1 Prior to advertising, a recruiting manager may refer back to a previous recruitment campaign and shortlist one (or more) of the previously unsuccessful - but appointable - interviewees, as long as this is done within 6 months of the previous vacancy being advertised. This only applies when the vacancy is an identical position (i.e. same job title and grade), and it has been checked with operational HR that no 'at risk' staff would be potentially appointable to the position. This can be done either with or without re-interviewing those previously unsuccessful applicants.
- 7.6.2 All requests to fill a vacancy (except for those to be recruited to by Expressions of Interest) must be created on the Jobs North East recruitment portal. A North East Jobs guide for recruiting managers and HR is available in [Appendix 1](#).
- 7.6.3 All vacancies, either to be advertised internally or externally, will be placed on the North East Jobs website, in addition to the intranet and YHN internet pages. Other websites/publications may be used, but only if there are sound business reasons for doing so, and the budget is available.
- 7.6.4 All vacancies will be advertised internally only first, where possible. Existing employees are encouraged to apply for vacant posts if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills. Managers may select on the Jobs North East portal website if they first wish to advertise the vacancy on an internally only basis; this will then allow only current YHN staff to view the vacancy. In order to view and apply for internal only positions, YHN staff must first have a North East Jobs account set up.

7.6.5 If however there is a need for specific professional expertise which is not currently available within the workforce, managers may seek to advertise externally in the first instance.

7.6.6 A vacancy will normally be advertised for 14 calendar days, unless Employee Services are advised that a different time period is required.

7.6.7 Ideally the interview date should be stated on the advert, whenever possible.

7.7 Agency Workers

7.7.1 Managers should be using agency staff only when the position is to be filled for less than 13 weeks.

7.7.2 Recruitment of temporary agency workers is done through de Poel recruitment agency, the specified preferred supplier.

7.7.3 To arrange for an agency temp, please complete a vacancy request on North East Jobs. Employee Services will then contact the agency to arrange, once approval has been given to fill the vacancy.

7.8 Other forms of assessment

7.8.1 Please contact operational HR if you require any information surrounding the use of other recruitment and selection methods such as Assessment Centres or Psychometric testing.

7.9 The recruitment panel

7.9.1 The interview panel must consist of at least two members, one of whom will play the lead role in the recruitment process, and will be referred to as the panel 'chair'. This should normally be the recruiting manager.

7.9.2 The panel members should be determined prior to creating the vacancy request, and wherever possible there will be a gender balance in the composition of the panel.

7.9.3 Ideally, all panel members will have attended the mandatory YHN recruitment and selection training; however, at least two panel members must have attended this training. Where panels consist of more than two recruiting panel members, the additional panel members may not necessarily have attended the mandatory YHN recruitment and selection training, but must have recent experience of recruiting from a previous position they have held (either inside or outside YHN).

7.9.4 The panel chair is accountable for ensuring that the other panel members meet the necessary requirements to be a panel member. Where there is any doubt on the part of the chair, consultation must be undertaken with a senior manager and/or operational HR prior to confirming the panel.

7.9.5 Where a prospective 'panel member' has neither attended the YHN recruitment and selection training, nor had any previous experience of recruitment, they may only sit in the interviews as an observer, and cannot play an active role in the

decision making process – i.e. they cannot be considered to be a member of the panel.

7.9.6 The same panel members must shortlist and interview all applicants, unless an emergency prevents this. Should such a situation arise, please contact operational HR.

7.9.7 Prior knowledge of applicants must not be used during the selection process by the interview panel. While this may be difficult to put into practice when interviewing internal applicants, to ensure a fair and consistent approach all application forms must be considered on their own merit, and the same principle applies when interviewing. Previous knowledge should not be accounted for and only the performance at the interview on the day should be considered, otherwise it could be deemed that the panel has demonstrated an unfair bias towards internal applicants.

7.9.8 Prior to the recruitment panel being agreed, if a member of the panel believes that their role may be compromised as they know one of the applicants too well to be objective, an alternative panel member should be sought after discussion with the panel chair, senior manager and/or operational HR. This may be due, for example, to a personal relationship outside of work, or due to having previously been work colleagues (either within or outside of YHN). If a panel member knows a candidate on a personal basis they must complete [form F5 in the Code of Conduct for Employees](#).

7.10 Scoring

7.10.1 Scoring at both the shortlisting and interview stages is carried out on the following basis:

0	Does not meet requirements
1	Partially meets requirements
2	Meets most requirements
3	Fully meets requirements
4	Exceeds requirements

7.10.2 Please note that when completing the online scoring, the system will only allow scores of between 1 and 4 to be entered.

7.10.3 For a candidate to be deemed shortlistable or appointable at interview, they must demonstrate a score of at least 2 for each competency.

7.11 Shortlisting

7.11.1 Shortlisting must be carried out on the North East Jobs recruitment portal. All members of the recruitment and selection panel will be emailed a prompt to log in to the system to undertake their shortlisting at the appropriate time.

7.11.2 Shortlisting can be done individually or collectively as a panel in order to enter the allocated scores on to the NE Jobs website.

- 7.11.3 It has been agreed by the Management Team that in exceptional circumstances – i.e. where there are over 40 applicants for a position – a different approach to shortlisting may be adopted, but only following consultation with, and approval being given by, the HR Operational Lead Specialist.
- 7.11.4 It is recommended that the technical competence is always scored first, as this is the most crucial one. If an applicant does not score at least 2 for this competence the rest of their application should be disregarded. Feedback given to unsuccessful applicants will then be that they failed to demonstrate the required level of skills and knowledge for the technical competence.
- 7.11.5 If a manager wishes to apply weighting when shortlisting applicants, they should firstly discuss this with their Operational HR representative. The crucial parts of the role (i.e. the technical competencies) should be tested thoroughly at the interview stage.
- 7.11.5 Further to shortlisting, the recruiting manager must arrange a room in which to hold the interviews and/or technical tasks.
- 7.11.6 The recruiting manager must also email the [Interview Schedule form](#) (Appendix 8) to the Employee Services team. This should include details of any technical tasks or presentations that will take place during the selection process.

7.12 Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants

- 7.12.1 YHN has committed to guarantee interviews for disabled applicants in line with the government's 'Positive About Disabled People' scheme. Where a disabled applicant has declared they wish their application to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, this will be highlighted to recruitment panels on the Jobs North East recruitment website. For a candidate to be considered under the scheme they must have indicated they have a disability on their application form.
- 7.12.2 Where people indicate on their application form they consider themselves to be disabled it means they will be guaranteed an interview if they can demonstrate they meet the minimum requirements for the role. This means they if they achieve scores of a minimum of 2 points for every competency during the shortlisting process, they must be offered an interview, irrespective of the scores of all other applicants.
- 7.12.3 Reasonable adjustments will be afforded to disabled applicants at all stages of the recruitment and selection process.
- 7.12.4 Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded, unless it is clear to the Recruiting Manager that the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments.

7.13 The Interview Process

- 7.13.1 [Interview Guidance notes](#) are contained in Appendix 9.
- 7.13.2 In preparation for the interviews, the recruitment panel can obtain application forms from the Jobs North East website. Personal details of applicants (names, contact

details etc), along with other paperwork to be used at interviews will be emailed by Employee Services to the panel on [the Interview Schedule form](#) (Appendix 8).

- 7.13.3 One member of the interview panel should take responsibility for copying any documentation provided by candidates when they arrive for their interview. Details of the documents required to demonstrate eligibility to work in the UK can be found in YHN's [DBS Policy](#).
- 7.13.4 The panel chair must ensure that any discrepancies, including any unexplained gaps in employment history are fully explored during the interview.
- 7.13.5 The interview must focus on the needs of the job and skills required to perform it effectively. A record of every recruitment interview must be made and passed to Employee Services, where it will be retained for 12 months.
- 7.13.6 YHN operates a competency based recruitment and selection process. Candidates must provide examples of how they meet the competencies of the role (see guidance notes in [Appendix 5](#) for further advice).
- 7.13.7 In accordance with the Equality Act (2010), it is illegal to ask candidates any questions at interview relating to their health or sickness absence record. However, if a candidate has declared a disability on their application form, the recruiting manager can ask how this will affect their ability to undertake the role, or what reasonable adjustments will be needed to enable them to undertake the role.
- 7.13.8 Candidates must score at least 2 points for each question in order to be deemed successful, i.e. appointable, at interview.
- 7.13.9 On no account should any job offer be made either during or at the end of an interview.
- 7.13.10 Following the interviews, the recruiting manager should contact all candidates by telephone to advise them of the interview outcome. The interview panel is responsible for providing candidates with any feedback requested following the interviews.
- 7.13.11 Once candidates have been advised of the outcome, the recruiting manager should return the completed interview paperwork to Employee Services. Until Employee Services receives the interview pack from the recruiting manager, no conditional offer of employment can be made in writing.
- 7.13.12 If the recruiting manager believes that any of the unsuccessful interviewees are appointable for a position, they may request that Employee Services send a letter to advise that the candidate may be contacted should any further vacancies of the same job title and grade arise within the next six months.

7.14 Pre-employment Checks

- 7.14.1 The successful candidate will be offered conditionally a position, subject to the following pre-employment checks being satisfactory to YHN:

- Two written references, one of which should be the most recent employer (see [reference policy](#))
- Proof of their right to work in the UK
- Proof of National Insurance Number
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly CRB) check, if appropriate
- Proof of qualifications relevant to the role.
- Occupational Health clearance.

7.14.2 For internal applicants, positions will be offered subject to:

- One reference, from the current line manager if the position is in a different team. No reference is required for positions in the same team.
- DBS check, if appropriate
- Proof of qualifications relevant to the role, if not already held on file
- In exceptional circumstances, Occupational health clearance if the role is substantially different to their previous role, or if the employee is being redeployed for medical reasons
- Proof of right to work in the UK, if not already held on file.

7.14.3 No employee should start without confirmation from Employee Services that all checks have been received, and are satisfactory.

7.15 **New starters**

7.15.1 Once satisfactory pre-employment checks are received Employee Services will confirm with the manager that the new employee can start.

7.15.2 The manager must then complete online form [EAS10](#)

7.15.3 Recruiting managers will also at this point need to advise the ICT service desk, in order to request any equipment etc for the new employee.

8. **Complaints**

8.1 If anyone applying for a job feels that they have been discriminated against during any part of the recruitment and selection process, they have the right to complain in writing to the YHN Chief Executive within three months of the closing date of advert. The Strategic HR Manager will investigate the complaint and report back, with recommendations, to the YHN Chief Executive.

8.2 The YHN Chief Executive will decide what action, if any, to take and will tell the person who made the complaint what is going to happen.