

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY ACADEMIES TRUST

POLICY ON APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Human Resources Department co-ordinates all recruitment. The Department manages the procedure, provides advice and administers the recruitment process. This involves arranging advertisements, collating applications, arranging interviews, progressing clearances, issuing job offers and contracts and responding to feedback requests. In certain situations, psychometric tests may be appropriate for senior level posts. The Human Resources Department will arrange this service.
- 1.2 These appointment procedures specify both the policies and the rules determining the procedures for the appointment of **all** staff in the Trust.
- 1.3 No procedures can deal with all eventualities. Therefore this procedure is written in general rather than specific terms. If, at any time, there is doubt as to the correct course of action to be followed you should seek advice from the Human Resources Department.
- 1.4 All those involved in appointing staff should pay specific attention to the equal opportunities policy statement. (See Item 4).

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Trust is responsible for all appointments. Academy Principals are responsible to the Trust Board for all operational matters associated with the appointment of staff.
- 2.2 The principal role of the Human Resources Department is to manage the appointment of staff by assisting Managers in making appointments and by monitoring Trust policies and procedures. Individual Managers are responsible to the Trust for the integrity of any appointments in which they participate.

3. General Principles

- 3.1. All staff serve under a contract of employment with the Trust. The terms and conditions of that contract are determined by the Board. The Board may delegate this responsibility to the Human Resources Department.

4. Equal Opportunities

- 4.1 The Trust's policy is to seek to appoint the best-qualified and experienced candidate to each post. The Trust is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in all aspects of employment regardless of sex, gender reassignment, race or ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation,

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religion or belief, age or any other personal characteristic. This policy applies to all employees and job applicants. All staff involved in appointments have a duty to ensure that decisions affecting individuals are not taken on discriminatory grounds.

- 4.2 The appointment procedures and selection criteria operated by the Trust are monitored by the Human Resources Department. This is to ensure that individuals are selected and treated solely on the basis of individual merit and ability. The way the appointment procedure is applied will be reviewed from time to time in the light of the information obtained from that monitoring.
- 4.3 Recruitment panel members should attend courses to raise their awareness of Equal Opportunities Legislation. This will enable them to demonstrate they are both aware of and employ “good practice” throughout the process of recruitment and selection. In order to reinforce the fair application of Trust principles of equal opportunities, Panel Chairs will ensure that at least two members of an appointment panel have received Trust recruitment and selection training.
- 4.4 Other documents with information about these procedures are:
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Ensuring Disability Equality in Employment
 - Documents specifying various terms and conditions of employment

5. Authority to Fill Vacancies

- 5.1 The Director of Human Resources is authorised on behalf of the Trust to fill all vacant posts except the following:
 - Senior posts as required by the Trust
- 5.2 The Director of Human Resources delegates to budget holders (Principals and Executive Dean of ELSS) the authority to fill posts. The delegated authority may be varied from time to time or revoked by the Board as deemed necessary.

6. Advertisements

- 6.1 All posts will normally be advertised externally. In exceptional circumstances the Director of Human Resources may decide that a post will be advertised internally or may approve an alternative selection process. In cases where budget holders wish to make a case to vary the normal appointments

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procedure, they are required to submit their request in advance and in writing to the Director of Human Resources.

- 6.2 The budget holder is responsible for the costs of advertisements and other costs of staff selection. This includes expenses incurred by candidates and external advisors. The Director of Human Resources can give advice on where and when a post is advertised and on the style of the advertisement
- 6.3 When budget holders require a post to be advertised they will send to the Recruitment Team, Human Resources: details of the advertisement; instructions on where and when the advertisement should be placed; the job description; and an authorisation indicating that the post may be filled. These forms are available from the Human Resources Department.
- 6.4 Human Resources process advertisements in accordance with the advertising schedule and advertisements are typically published on a fortnightly basis. There are however, a number of defined breaks in the advertising schedule that reflect Trust holiday periods. Advertisements outside of these dates are placed on an exceptional basis balancing operational needs and value for money. The formal approval of the Human Resources Department is required in these circumstances.
- 6.5 As a Sponsor under the Points Based System the Trust must comply with UK Border Agency regulations. There is now a **mandatory** requirement to advertise all skilled jobs (S/NVQ Level 3 and above) in Job Centre Plus in addition to any publication selected by the Trust or Academy. For Posts with salaries of less than £40,000 the closing date must be a minimum of 14 calendar days after the advert first appears, for jobs with salaries above £40,000 the closing date must be a minimum of 7 calendar days after the advert first appears. This is essential in order to satisfy the resident Labour Market Test. Human Resources will liaise with Jobcentre Plus to ensure that vacancies are advertised accordingly.

7. Details of the Post

- 7.1 The budget holder will determine details of the post. The details must include a job description and a person specification. In addition, the job description will state to whom the post holder will be responsible. It is also desirable that information is included about the Trust, the relevant Academy and the post. If the budget holder wishes to vary any aspect of the terms and conditions of service of the Trust they must seek the advice of the Director of Human Resources. Budget holders are not authorised to act unilaterally in this respect.

8. Short-listing

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- 8.1 The budget holder may delegate the short-listing of candidates. If the short-listing is delegated, the budget holder remains responsible for the decision. The budget holder is required to inform the Human Resources Department of the name of the person undertaking the short-listing.
- 8.2 If an external advisor is being used it is desirable that their views are sought on the shortlist. External advisors will be used for posts of Head of Department grade or equivalent. External advisors may be used for other posts at the discretion of the budget holder. The budget holder has the responsibility for ensuring that the external advisor operates in accordance with Trust Policy.
- 8.3 The use of Social Media sites in determining whether a candidate should be included in a short-list or ultimately appointed/rejected for a role should be handled with care. It is appreciated that candidates may refer to links to social media sites in their application form to demonstrate relevant attributes for the role and the accessing of such sites for this purpose may support the recruitment process. However accessing social media sites that may provide information about personal characteristics, for example age, sexual orientation, and religion or belief etc., should not be accessed as they may provide information that is not relevant for the role to be undertaken which may unduly influence the outcome of an application. In the event that social media sites are accessed then a note of the site, the information considered and the influence, if any, that it had on the willingness or otherwise to either short-list or appoint should be recorded and retained with the application form and returned to Human Resources.
- 8.4 It is the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources to monitor the short-listing procedure and to confirm that reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of candidates have been given by the budget holder.
- 8.5 Late applications will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances where prior agreement has been sought from the Chair of the panel by the Human Resources Department and on the condition that Human Resources receive the application prior to the preparation of the short-list pack.

9. Pre-Interview, Informal Stage

- 9.1 It is good practice for short-listed candidates to have an opportunity to see the work of the Trust on an informal basis. The extent of this opportunity depends on the level of the post and the nature of the duties that are to be undertaken. If such an informal opportunity is given to candidates they must be told that this is for their benefit and that it is not part of the selection procedure. In any event

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during this process no candidate should be given any indication of their suitability for the role.

10. Formal Pre-Interview Stage

- 10.1 For many posts it is good practice to include in the selection process opportunities to assess the candidates other than through formal interviews. For lecturing posts this might include an opportunity for candidates to make a brief presentation to staff or to conduct a teaching session on a relevant topic. For some posts psychometric tests may be used and the procedures associated with these tests are described elsewhere. In all cases where formal pre-interview techniques are used candidates must be told in advance that this is part of the selection process.

11. Interview Panel

- 11.1 The budget holder is responsible for deciding the membership of the interview panel and which member is the Chair. However, for posts at Principal Level there is a requirement for a member of the Trust Board to be included in the Panel. There should always be at least two members on each panel and there should not be more than four, including external advisors.
- 11.2 It is Trust policy that the panel Chair, and at least one other panel member, has received appropriate training in recruitment and selection practices.
- 11.3 The Chair of the panel makes the appointment on behalf of the Trust. In discharging this responsibility the Chair is advised by other members of the panel. The Chair is responsible for determining the salary associated with the post within the established limits of the Trust's salary structures and after consultation with the Human Resources Department. The Chair is responsible for instructing the Human Resources Department to issue a contract to the successful candidate.
- 11.4 For senior level posts as defined by the Trust there will be a requirement to include appropriate psychometric tests in the selection process.
- 11.5 Confidential references are made available to the panel Chair to distribute to other panel members at his/her discretion. The Trust's policy is to call for references, including those from an existing employer, at the short-listing stage. References will be obtained for both external and internal candidates. No job offer will be made without references having been received and accepted as satisfactory by the Panel.

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- 11.6 It is the responsibility of the Chair to record the reasons why the panel reached a particular decision about each candidate. This record should be passed to Human Resources Department. It is important to note that the Trust is committed to responding to written requests for feedback. Human Resources will acknowledge all requests and liaise with panel members to ascertain the necessary details to respond to such requests.
- 11.7 The Trust normally advises the preferred candidate of the wish to further their application by telephone immediately after the panel has finished its deliberations. It is not desirable to keep candidates waiting on the premises unless there is good reason. The panel Chair will normally advise the successful candidate that the Trust wishes to further their application and will also inform the unsuccessful candidates of the panel's decision.
- 11.8 Human Resources will advise internal applicants if they have not been short-listed. This should be done before the shortlist is made public.

12. Search and Selection

- 12.1 On occasion either because it has not been possible to source suitable candidates through the advertisements of posts or for practical reasons it is deemed appropriate to approach selection companies to support recruitment of staff, the financial rules of the Trust in terms of bids and tendering must be complied with before such companies can be engaged to undertake this activity. The Human Resources Department will undertake this activity with the appropriate Managers.

13. Probity

- 13.1 The appointment procedure must be seen to be fair to all candidates. Occasionally members of a panel or budget holders may be related to an individual applicant; or be a close or even intimate friend. This could be perceived as calling into question the integrity and judgement of panel members. In any circumstances where panel members might be exposed to the allegation that they were biased, the advice of the Director of Human Resources must be sought.
- 13.2 Application forms and references of candidates must be regarded as strictly confidential. The Chair of the appointing panel is responsible for deciding whether or not any other member of staff of the Trust is shown these documents. The criterion on which the decision is taken is whether or not it is essential that the member of staff concerned needs to know information on the documents in order to properly undertake their management responsibilities.

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- 13.3 Sometimes, as part of the appointing procedure, the views of staff other than members of the appointing panel will be sought. The appropriate procedure for this would be for the Chair of the panel to prepare a brief synopsis of a candidate's qualifications and experience rather than make the relevant application form available.

14. Guiding Principle

- 14.1 The appointment of staff to the service of the Trust is one of the most important decisions that an individual Manager can take. There is often the pressure to appoint quickly in order to meet immediate needs. In such circumstances candidates may be offered the post when they are only just competent to discharge the duties. This is always a mistake that leads to an unsatisfactory situation for both the Trust and the candidate. Therefore, a guiding principle on all appointments is that, if there is doubt about the suitability of any candidate, they should not be offered the post and the post should be re-advertised.

1st July 2013