



University of Essex



# **RESOURCING FOR THE FUTURE:** GUIDANCE AND FRAMEWORK

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HOW WE RECRUIT AND SELECT EXCELLENT STAFF AT ESSEX

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# OVERVIEW

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## 1. OVERVIEW

### 1.1

The University's mission is to contribute to society through excellence in education and excellence in research, and this mission is delivered by all members of the University community at all levels. To achieve and continue our mission it is critical that we have the right people in place to be our collective voice both internally and externally, reflecting our core values.

### 1.2

The University is committed to building a core staff with the skills, attitudes and knowledge we need for the future. Recruitment is a critically important way of building our capacity and capability to achieve the aims of our Strategic Plan which includes an ambitious growth agenda. Undertaking the recruitment and selection process in the most effective way will ensure that we are selecting the right individuals to join our University putting us in the best possible position to meet both operational and strategic level objectives.

### 1.3

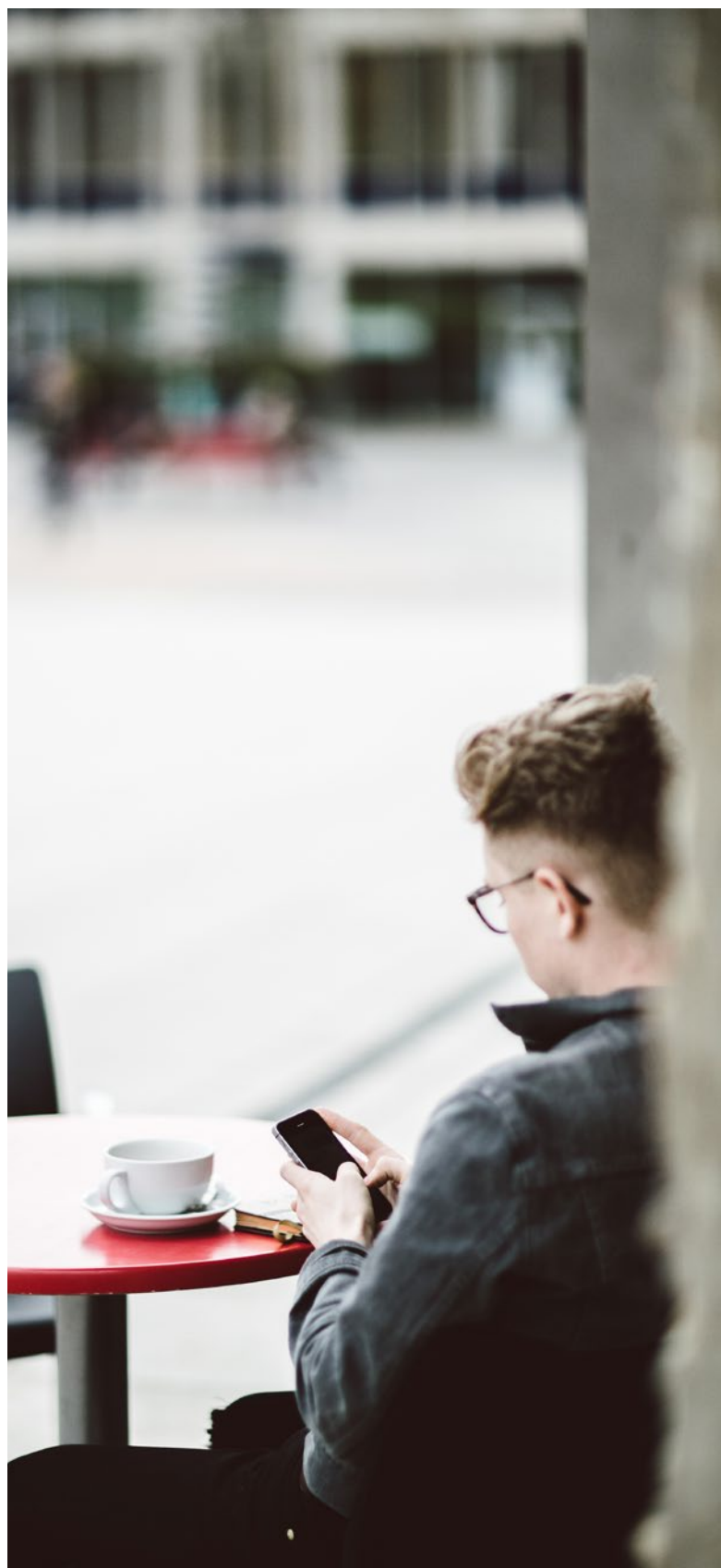
The recruitment process is also an ideal opportunity to set out the core values of the University to which members of the University community subscribe when joining us. The recruitment and selection process works in two ways: it is an opportunity for us to be clear about our expectations and for the individual applicant to understand what life as a member of our community is like.

### 1.4

Staff undertaking recruitment have a high level of responsibility. Decisions taken by selection panels will shape the future of our workforce and determine the success of our mission for years to come. We have a mutuality of obligation through the People Supporting Strategy to deliver this process in the most effective way for the University, within the remit of this policy and its accompanying framework. Recruitment activity must be conducted in a fair and objective way, with all involved behaving ethically in accordance with University values. We want to be agile in identifying and fulfilling our staffing needs, avoiding bureaucracy whilst ensuring transparency and fairness.

### 1.5

This guidance document is one of the building blocks in a package of support for those involved in recruitment activity. It is underpinned by the supporting framework which sets out how the recruitment process is operationalised and supported by online resources.



## 2. KEY PRINCIPLES

Our underlying principles for recruitment and selection at the University of Essex are:

- Inclusivity – we treat everyone with equal respect and dignity at all times, sustaining an inclusive and diverse community and ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Values based – we act and are seen to act with integrity at all times. Values and behaviours are of equal importance to skills and experience.
- Rigor – we use rigorous methods of assessment to ensure that the right candidates are chosen to join our community.
- Fairness and consistency – we make our judgements on transparent and evenly applied criteria, in a fair and objective way.

## 3. SCOPE

This guidance applies to the recruitment of all University of Essex employees and the principles of this guidance also apply the University's Subsidiary Companies: University of Essex Campus Services (UECS) and Wivenhoe House Hotel (WHH). Separate guidance applies to engaging on demand workers. The contribution on demand workers make to the success of the University is highly valued, our commitment to our on demand workforce is set out here.

## 4. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A number of terms referenced throughout the document are defined below:

- Resourcing Manager, Resourcing Adviser and Resourcing Assistant: These are all job titles of members of staff in the Human Resources (HR) Resourcing Team.
- Hiring Manager: The Manager or member of staff who is responsible for undertaking the recruitment to a vacant post. The Hiring Manager is also known as a Recruiting Manager in the e-recruitment (iTrent) system.
- Chair: The member of staff responsible for chairing the selection panel.
- Selection Panel: The members of staff who act as decision makers as part of the shortlisting/interview process.

**EXAMPLE:** The Department of History is recruiting for a Lecturer. The Head of Department is the Hiring Manager as the new Lecturer position will report to them. The Chair of the selection panel will be the Faculty Executive Dean. The rest of the Selection Panel will comprise staff/external experts according to the Ordinances.

- Head of Department: In the context here, this means both Heads of Academic Departments and Heads of Professional Services Sections.
- Department: Means both Academic Departments and Professional Services Sections.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of every employee in the University, UECS and WHH involved in recruitment and selection to follow this guidance.

### 5.1 The Human Resources Section is responsible for:

- Providing professional advice and guidance on strategies and advertising approaches that will attract the best talent;
- Providing professional advice on any other aspect of the recruitment and selection process including selection methods;
- Providing professional advice on recruitment-related employment law and equality and diversity issues, in order to protect the University from risk and uphold our values;
- The University's compliance with its Tier 2 sponsor license and related immigration matters;
- Recruitment related administration including managing candidate applications and enquiries, inviting candidates to interview, referencing and other pre-employment checks, and producing contractual documentation;
- Organising appropriate training and development for staff undertaking recruitment and selection;
- Monitoring and reviewing the guidance and support available;
- Monitoring and continuously improving the recruitment process and associated IT systems;
- Monitoring and analysing the diversity of applicants and successful candidates to ensure we maintain a balanced workforce and put in place plans to deal with any imbalances should they occur;
- Managing the University recruitment budget.

### 5.2 Heads of Departments are responsible for:

- The proper delivery of the recruitment and selection process for all posts within their department in accordance with this guidance, the accompanying underpinning framework and best practice advice from the Resourcing Team;
- Ensuring all staff involved in recruitment are made aware of this guidance and undertake the training provided to develop the skills necessary to recruit and select;
- Following the HERA job evaluation process where applicable.

### 5.3 Hiring managers are responsible for managing and overseeing the recruitment and selection process, and will be responsible for:

- Undertaking appropriate training on recruitment and selection;
- Working within this guidance and the accompanying underpinning framework, ensuring that the recruitment process is conducted in a fair and transparent way;
- Obtaining the appropriate permission to recruit through Unit 4 Business World (formerly Agresso);
- Writing a job description and person specification for the vacancy using the University's templates where applicable and ensuring that there is a focus on behaviour and values as well as duties;
- Writing a clear and concise job advertisement that clearly reflects the job description and person specification in accordance with University policies and guidance;
- Providing HR with full and complete documentation for advertising, which matches the approval that has been granted, and the HERA job evaluation reference if applicable;
- Identifying selection panel members (including the Chair if different to the hiring manager) and seeking necessary approval of the panel composition;
- Selecting candidates for interview (with other panel members) according to whether they possess the requirements identified in the person specification for the vacant post;
- Arranging an interview date, booking interview rooms and putting in place any other logistical arrangements;
- Agreeing (in conjunction with the Chair) the format for the interviews and selection methods to be used;
- Providing the Resourcing Team with the shortlisting grid, interview decision grid, and appointment form (HRAP1 form);
- Managing the induction of the new employee, which starts with recruitment;
- Treating all information gained through the selection process as confidential and notifying HR of any potential conflicts of interest.

### 5.4 Chairs of selection panels are responsible for ensuring that:

- They have received the appropriate information and training in recruitment and selection and unconscious bias, including knowledge of relevant University policies;
- Interviews are conducted in a fair and equitable way and in accordance with University policies and guidance;
- The panel has an agreed list of appropriate questions and the arrangements for asking them are well understood by panel members;
- All panel members treat all information gained through the selection process as confidential;
- A member of the panel is designated to prepare or give feedback to candidates upon request;
- HR are notified of any potential conflicts of interest of the panel members;
- The selection decision is demonstrably free from bias and discrimination;
- For professional services posts, discussing the offer with the Resourcing Team before proceeding;
- For academic posts gaining relevant approvals for the offer before proceeding;
- Making the formal offer to the successful candidate, or delegating this responsibility to the Hiring Manager;
- Providing all interview notes to the Resourcing Team after the process has concluded.<sup>1</sup>

### 5.5 The selection panel members are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are familiar with this guidance;
- Undertaking appropriate training;
- Questioning interview candidates in a fair and legislatively-compliant manner;
- Note taking during each interview;
- Ensuring all their paperwork is given to the Chair at the end of the interview process;
- Treating all information gained through the selection process as confidential;
- Notifying HR or the Chair of any potential conflicts of interest.

<sup>1</sup> It is a requirement under immigration rules that we keep the interview notes on file. It is also required for employment law purposes in order that we are able to provide a robust defence should we receive any legal challenges.

## 6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality and diversity is at the forefront of what we do. The University of Essex celebrates diversity, challenges inequality and is committed to sustaining an inclusive and diverse community that is open to all who have the potential to benefit from membership of it and which ensures equality of opportunity for all its members.

The University is proud to be a Mindful Employer, a Stonewall Diversity Champion, a Disability Confident Employer and holder of an Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award.

The Training and Development Policy sets out the essential training all employees are required to complete as part of the formal University induction process. This includes Equality and Diversity Essentials training. It also sets out the essential training reporting managers are required to complete. This includes Managing Diversity and Recruitment and Selection training. Unconscious bias training is offered to all staff and those involved in recruitment and selection activities are strongly encouraged to complete this training. This training is essential for Chairs of interview panels. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring employees complete the required essential training for their role.

The University is committed, through its People Supporting Strategy, to recruiting, developing and motivating an increasingly diverse workforce. In order to do that we integrate our institutional value of inclusivity and its underlying principles of equality and diversity into the selection process in a variety of ways, including:

- Using positive action statements to seek to address imbalances in our workforce;
- Using positive action at the point of offering employment;
- Encouraging particular groups of people to apply for particular positions;
- Being aware of unconscious bias and how it might affect decision-making;
- Ensuring recruitment literature is appealing to people with as wide a range of backgrounds, cultures, skills and experiences as possible;
- Targeting recruitment activities to under-represented groups;
- Ensuring selection panels are as diverse as possible in their composition;
- Identifying, through the assessment process, candidates whose individual values and behaviours align with those of the University.

In addition, the University is committed to encouraging flexible working practices where appropriate, whilst ensuring compatibility with the interests of the University and the delivery of the goals set out in the University's Strategic Plan. Research (Personnel Today, 2016) has shown that flexibility is top of the majority of prospective employee's wish-list of benefits yet very few job adverts explicitly offer it. Each position will be considered for its suitability for a part-time or job-share arrangement and whether it is suitable for flexible working. Where this arrangement is available it will be made clear in the job advertisement



## 7. THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

For ease of navigation through the process and the supporting online resources, the process has been organised into the four areas as outlined below:

### 7.1 Vacancy arises

The recruitment process starts when a vacancy arises, either when an existing job holder moves on or when a new post has been approved .

If a vacancy arises due to a staff member leaving, it is good practice to review the existing role, the needs of the service and other factors in the first instance. It is a good opportunity to make changes such as re-distribution of work or to review roles/team structures. The Senior Employee Relations Advisers can be contacted for further advice.

If the decision results in recruitment to the vacancy, at this point the Hiring Manager should re-visit the job description to make sure that it is fully up-to-date and a true reflection of the role. It may have changed overtime or need to be revised to fit business demand. If substantial changes are to be made to the post it will need to go through the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) process. The Resourcing Advisers can be contacted for advice on this.

The Hiring Manager is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate permission to recruit is in place using the online approval system through **Unit 4 Business World** (formerly Agresso).

Full details of the approval process are available on the **Staff Directory**.

The Hiring Manager should consider if there is a suitable candidate amongst existing employees seeking redeployment. Sometimes existing staff may become displaced from their roles, and the University seeks to redeploy anyone to a suitable role if they are eligible to be considered under this process. The Employee Relations team is notified of all new posts that are approved and will contact the Hiring Manager if there is anyone in the redeployment pool who should be considered for the vacancy. The Employee Relations team will also be able to provide advice and support through the redeployment process.

All new or re-structured Professional Services posts must be evaluated for the correct grade through the HERA process prior to the commencement of the recruitment process. The Hiring Manager should, with the approval of the Head of Department, complete the role outline form (copy to be found on our **HERA web pages**). Academic posts should be evaluated by reference to the national role profiles, so there is no requirement to undertake HERA evaluation for these posts.

HERA is a job evaluation process and is acknowledged to be a fair, objective and reasonable way to evaluate roles across the university sector. It is important that any new or re-structured posts go through this process in order to ensure that the University is paying the correct level of salary for the level of duties and responsibilities of a post and that individuals are paid fairly, consistently and equitably. Where a new or structured post is found to have been advertised without going through the HERA process, the recruitment process will be postponed and the job advertisement taken off line until the HERA process has been undertaken.

Consideration should be given to whether the post could be advertised on a flexible basis e.g. as part-time or as a job share. Advertising a vacancy on a flexible basis may increase and diversify the pool of applicants available from which to select. There may be excellent candidates available who are only able to work part-time hours. This approach also supports the principles of our commitment to equality and diversity. It may not be feasible for a post to be advertised on a flexible basis for business reasons, and this will be considered on a case by case basis. See the **flexible working policy** for more information about flexible working arrangements.

The Hiring Manager should also review the equality and diversity data for the department and consult the Resourcing Adviser about whether any relevant positive action statements are necessary. Including positive action statements demonstrates our commitment to equality and diversity to potential applicants and encourages applications from under-represented groups. The University is also committed to increasing the diversity of the staff population as part of work with Athena SWAN and the Gender Equality Charter Mark.

The Hiring Manager should at this point consider whether any exceptional circumstances apply and a market supplement might be necessary. See Section 8 'Other useful information' for the full policy.



## 7.2 Preparing to recruit

### Creating a selection panel

It is good practice for the selection panel to be formed at the start of the recruitment process. Chairs of selection panels and all members of panels must have completed the online Recruitment and Selection training within [Moodle](#).

Those involved in recruitment and selection decisions should also complete the Unconscious Bias (essential for Chairs of interview panels) and Equality and Diversity training which are also available within [Moodle](#).

Selection panels for academic roles (ASE/ASER) are governed by the University Ordinances. Academic appointments made at Lecturer through to Professorial level are required to conform to the Ordinances. For appointments at Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor levels, external assessors' reports will be needed before interview. Please see the [guidance on the academic recruitment process](#) for more information.

Selection panels for research roles (ASR) are determined according to University [guidance on the academic recruitment process](#).

Selection panels for professional services roles are determined according to University [guidance on professional services selection panel composition](#).

The Chair of the panel should ensure that there is an appropriate diversity mix to minimise the impact of unconscious bias in selection decisions. Diversity does not simply mean having a mix of people with protected characteristics. It also means considering having people with a mix of backgrounds, knowledge and specialisms relevant to the role being advertised. The panel should always include a gender mix.

### Job description

Investing time and effort into a thorough review at the beginning of the process will mean that the finalised job description and person specification will fully meet organisational needs. The purpose of the job description is to give potential applicants an accurate account of the main responsibilities of the post, and of the skills and behaviours expected. It is an opportunity to set out the University's expectations of the employee and a tool for individuals to use to assess their ability to do the job on offer.

The job description should describe the job as concisely as possible by identifying the responsibilities of the post. Care should be taken to ensure that the job is reflected accurately, and that any responsibilities listed are up to date. Please see the [guidance on writing a job description](#) for more practical advice.

For academic posts, standardised job pack templates have been created for every level of post across the three academic career pathways (ASER, ASE, ASR) to ensure that they are reflective of the appropriate duties, expectations, remuneration and career pathway for later applications for permanency and promotion. These job packs can have discipline specific information added to them; however they cannot have pre-existing information removed from them. The academic job pack templates are available [online](#).

### Person specification

A person specification is a profile of the skills, experience and knowledge required of the post holder and is derived from the job description, but also illustrates the values and behaviours the University is seeking in the employee. It lists the criteria that will be used in shortlisting and selecting candidates.

Care must be taken to ensure that only those criteria that are essential to the effective performance of the job are listed as essential; inclusion of non-essential criteria in that section may result in fewer suitable applicants from which to choose, as well as the possible perception of discriminatory practices.

Those involved in shortlisting will need to use the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification as the basis for decisions for selecting or rejecting applicants. The shortlisting decisions need to be objectively justifiable and based solely on the information in the individual's application form and the criteria.

A well-constructed person specification is critical to making a robust selection decision. If there is an essential element to the role but it is not listed as part of the essential criteria, the selection panel will not be able to bring it into decision making. Please see the [guidance on writing a person specification](#) for more practical advice.

As part of our Stonewall accreditation, when a post that includes management and leadership responsibilities is to be advertised, one of the essential requirements in the person specification must be about diversity and inclusion, for example: "A demonstrable approach that ensures principles of equality and diversity are embedded in the service."

### Advertising

Any post which is for a period of 6 months or more in duration must be advertised externally. If the Hiring Manager knows from the outset that the post will be for longer than 6 months, they must follow the external recruitment process and get the proper financial approvals put in place. This practice is currently under review.

If there is a vacancy available for less than 6 months duration, the Hiring Manager should continue to follow a fair and equitable process in accordance with the principles of this document. The post should have a job description and person specification, and it should be advertised (for example internally in the department, as an 'advert only' on the University website or through CareerHub with the Employability and Careers Centre). All applications should be considered and candidates interviewed. Right to work checks before the first day should also be undertaken.

The advertisement, job description and person specification should all be consistent across the information provided. For example the essential and desirable skills requested in the job advertisement need to match the person specification and vice versa. This is to ensure that applicants are clear on the role requirements and that appropriate selection decisions can be taken. Please see the [guidance on writing a job advertisement](#) for advice on how to write the most impactful job advertisement.



The Resourcing Team operates rolling recruitment campaigns for posts where there is an urgent business need if a vacancy arises or where there is a high turnover of staff, for example cleaners, catering and day nursery staff. Contact the Resourcing Team for more information about how a rolling recruitment campaign can work, and the benefits.

As a standard process, the Resourcing Team will advertise the post on the following free outlets online where applicable for the role: The University website, Jobs.ac.uk, the Jobcentre Online, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Jobs.ac.uk do charge for an enhanced advert if the word count is over 450. Where a department submits a longer advert to be used on Jobs.ac.uk the costs may be passed to them.

It is recommended that the Hiring Manager engages with the social media advertising and retweets or shares the advertisement either through the department's social media networks, or their own personal networks. It is also recommended that the Hiring Manager leads a process to explore other professional networks and shares the vacancy through these media.

The cost of one advert will be met by the Resourcing budget, for any other additional online advertising, the costs will be met by the department. Where the cost of the chosen advert is particularly high, the department may be asked to make a contribution. The Resourcing Adviser will advise on the best places to advertise the post.

The University no longer pays for advertising in the printed media. Should a department wish to place a print advertisement the cost will need to be met directly by them, and first approved by the relevant Executive Dean or the Registrar.

For posts that are externally funded, for example through a grant, any advertising costs will need to be met by the grant or department. All free advertising outlets will be utilised in the usual way.

Exceptionally, it may be appropriate to consider using a headhunter or recruitment agency. Please speak to the Resourcing Team for advice before making any direct contact with outside agencies. The cost of using headhunters or recruitment agencies will be met by the department or the grant if the post is externally funded. The Faculty Executive Dean (for academic posts) and the Registrar (for professional services posts) must approve the use of outside agencies for recruitment. The Resourcing Team will manage the relationship, and work closely with any headhunters that are engaged.

Advertisements should include positive action statements where appropriate; equality data is available which will show whether any protected characteristic is under represented in the recruiting department. Please speak to the Resourcing Team for more information.

Some roles may be eligible for a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) which means the University will be able to employ an international candidate for the position. Roles to which this may typically apply are academic and research posts, and some senior or specialist professional services roles, however this may change from time to time in line with Home Office immigration rules. Guidance on this is available from the Resourcing Team. Posts that are eligible for a CoS and that are likely to attract international applicants must, under the Home Office rules, be advertised for a minimum of 28 days if the recruiting timeframes allow. We may not be able to sponsor an international candidate if the post is eligible for a CoS but has not been advertised for 28 days. The Resourcing Team will confirm with the Hiring Manager from the outset of the recruitment process whether a post is eligible for a CoS, and if there are any particular considerations of which to be aware as part of this process.

### **Publishing your post**

The Hiring Manager should complete the **job pack template** or the **academic recruitment templates** to provide the Resourcing Team with the information needed to advertise the vacancy - this includes the advertisement, job description and person specification in the University's agreed format.

Once the post is approved through Unit 4 Business World and the job pack is completed, the Hiring Manager will upload these documents onto the e-recruitment system (iTrent). The Resourcing Adviser will receive electronic notification of the vacancy as well as copies of the uploaded documents, and will contact the Hiring Manager to discuss the information and timeframes. The Resourcing Team will be reviewing the information received to ensure it is correct, and compliant with policy and employment legislation.

Please note that if incomplete or incorrect information is provided, this will lead to delays with making the advertisement live. In this situation the Resourcing Adviser will contact the Hiring Manager to advise if any revisions to the information provided are required.

The Resourcing Adviser will notify the manager by email once the advertisement is live on the University website. At this point they will also send out a relevant interview plan, either Professional Services or Academic, so the Hiring Manager can confirm the interview arrangements.

## 7.3 Assessing candidates

### Shortlisting

For all Professional Services vacancies, applicants are required to complete an application form. CVs and covering letters are not being requested for Professional Services roles as the first step towards a 'blind recruitment' approach which is designed to reduce any unconscious bias in decision making. The application form asks the candidates for all the information that would normally be contained within a CV. They are also asked to confirm why they are interested in the post and to demonstrate how they meet the essential and desirable criteria. The dangers of unconscious bias in the recruitment process and the move towards minimising this with blind recruitment practices have been widely reported in the media (BBC, 2015).

For academic vacancies, applicants are asked to provide a specific set of documentation depending on whether they have applied for an ASER/ASE/ASR role. The documents they are asked to provide will be set out in the job pack for the post.

For academic vacancies, the shortlist must be approved by the Faculty Executive Dean, and may also be referred to the PVC-Education and PVC-Research in exceptional circumstances. It is the Head of Department (or their nominee's) responsibility to ensure that the appropriate approvals are in place before the shortlist is confirmed with the Resourcing Team.

Where the Vice-Chancellor is the Chair (usually for Professorial posts) the Vice-Chancellor should approve the final shortlist. The Resourcing Team will obtain the final approval from the Vice-Chancellor. See Academic recruitment guidance.

Shortlisting should be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the line manager for the post and those involved in shortlisting should also be on the selection/interview panel. For academic posts, it is recommended that the Head of Department, Director of Research and Director of Education are included in the shortlisting panel, together with at least one member of the interview panel. Shortlisting should be undertaken using the information contained in the applications and the panel should select candidates who best meet the essential and desirable criteria, as set out in the person specification.

A shortlisting grid which includes an optional scoring grid, together with an interview plan, will be sent to the Hiring Manager from the Resourcing Team once a post has closed. The completed shortlisting grid and interview plan should be uploaded into the e-recruitment system (iTrent) once shortlisting has been completed.

The Resourcing Team will use the information in the grid to contact all candidates to confirm the status of their application and send out the invitations to interview based on the information provided in the interview plan.

Candidates who have requested consideration under the **Disability Confident scheme** will be identified on the shortlisting grid. If they meet the essential criteria outlined in the person specification they must be invited for interview. Where disability confident candidates are not shortlisted, the essential criteria that they did not meet should be clearly indicated on the shortlisting grid.

For academic vacancies, where a department receives applications from permanent members of staff seeking promotion in the same department and same area of specialism, the individual should be encouraged to apply for promotion through the University's Annual Review Process and not through externally advertised vacancies. Please contact Human Resources for further guidance.

For academic vacancies, external assessor's reports will be taken up for all shortlisted applicants who are being considered for posts at Senior Lecturer level and above. The Hiring Manager should 1) obtain approval of the recommended external assessors from the Chair of the selection panel and 2) confirm with the assessors that they are able to assist. Once this confirmation has been received the name and contact details for the assessors should be passed to the Resourcing Team who will make contact. It is important that steps one and two above are carried out in advance to save delays in obtaining this information.

### Methods of assessment

Hiring Managers should consider the most appropriate method for assessing candidates. Please see **further guidance** on the use of different assessment tools. Selecting the best candidate on the basis of an interview alone can be difficult and managers are encouraged to use as many selection techniques as possible and appropriate to inform robust decision making.

### Interviewing

Chairs and all members of selection panels must have completed the online recruitment and selection training within **Moodle**. Chairs of interview panels should also complete the online unconscious bias training.

See **guidance on planning and conducting interviews**.

Please note that where you have a role that is eligible for a Certificate of Sponsorship and you are interviewing international candidates, if the role does not fall into a PhD level Shortage Occupation Code (SOC) code, you must appoint a suitable settled worker if there is one in the pool of applicants. The Resourcing Adviser will advise the Hiring Manager at the point of advertising if the role does not fall within a PhD level SOC code, and will explain in full the requirements under Home Office rules.

Candidates will have been asked to bring their Right to Work (RTW) documents with them to interview. Hiring Managers should copy and verify the RTW documents. The RTW documents for unsuccessful applicants should be confidentially shredded. The RTW documents for the successful candidate can be uploaded onto iTrent. The Hiring Manager can contact the Resourcing Team with any queries about this process. Please note that the individual will not be able to commence work until a full RTW check has been completed. This check cannot be completed on the first day of work.

During the interview, panel members should take notes and a template grid is available for this purpose. Panel members may also use a grid to score applicants, this is optional. As any notes may be viewed by the candidate at their request, and may be used as evidence in an allegation of discrimination or other unlawful practices in recruitment, it is important that all notes are worded appropriately.

Once the interview process is complete, the Chair must complete an interview decision grid providing a summary of the reasons for selecting and rejecting candidates. The Chair should also collect all interview notes.

The interview decision grid, scoring grids and any notes must be uploaded to the e-recruitment system (iTrent) immediately after the interviews. The grid should clearly indicate which candidates can be rejected and if they are any reserve candidates that should be kept on hold. All reasons for rejection should be factual and objective in nature, and made against the advertised criteria.

The interview notes are retained to accompany the decision on the interview grid as they will provide the background to the decision recorded on the grid. The notes should be uploaded onto the e-Recruitment system (iTrent).

All notes and the grids can be viewed by interview candidates should they request them. The grid and accompanying notes are retained as the formal record and would be used as evidence in legal proceedings (by the Home Office or Employment Tribunal) if the University were challenged on the process undertaken.

Some departments may wish to invite candidates to socialise with members of the department either in the department itself or over dinner. This is not recommended practice and if it occurs it needs to be carefully managed in accordance with University **guidance on social occasions**. Please note that social occasions cannot form part of the selection process.

As part of the University's Stonewall accreditation, for both internal and external interviews for management vacancies, the panel must ensure that the candidate has evidenced their knowledge and achievements in diversity and inclusion. An example of a question that could be used during an interview is: "The University has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. Give an example from your practice that demonstrates your knowledge of and achievements in the area of diversity and inclusion."

In addition to the use of positive action statements to seek to address imbalances in our workforce, it is also possible to take positive action at the point of offering employment. This means that where the panel believe two candidates are 'as qualified as' each other, and one of the candidates is from an under-represented group, positive action can be used to appoint the candidate from the under-represented group. If the panel wish to use positive action at the point of offering employment this information must be included on the interview decision grid. No offer of employment must be made until the appropriate approval has been given. Please speak to your Resourcing Adviser for more information.



## 7.4 Offer of employment

For professional services posts, before any offer is made, the Hiring Manager should contact their Resourcing Adviser to talk through the terms of the offer and agree on the appropriate level of salary. Please see the **starting salary guidance**. Any verbal offers made will constitute a formal contractual obligation.

For academic posts, recommendations of salary offers and negotiations should be emailed to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor (if Chair) for approval prior to making an offer. Please see the **starting salary guidance**. Any verbal offers made will constitute a formal contractual obligation.

Any job offer is provisional, subject to receipt of satisfactory references, proof of the right to work in the UK, qualifications and where appropriate a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS check). There are additional checks in place for those with access to confidential information such as government contracts in ISER and UKDA. There are also some roles that are categorised as 'positions of trust' which involve extra referencing checks, such as Housekeepers. The Resourcing Team will undertake all checks.

The Head of Department must complete the appointment form with details of the offer. The Resourcing Team will then action a provisional offer email to the successful candidate.

All other candidates will be informed by the Resourcing Team that they have been unsuccessful. Please see the feedback section below for further guidance on providing feedback to internal applicants and Essex students.

HR is required to verify the original RTW documents of all new staff prior to the start date in order to demonstrate clear compliance with Home Office regulations. Failure to do so may result in the University losing its licenses to sponsor individuals to work/study here, hence the importance and seriousness of these checks being undertaken correctly and in advance.

Once all of the necessary checks have been completed successfully, the Resourcing Team will be able to add the individual to the HR database which will generate their Essex email address, and issue the statement of main terms and conditions of service to the successful candidate.

If an unsatisfactory reference is received, this will be discussed with the Hiring Manager, and the Resourcing Team will undertake further investigations.

## Feedback

Guidance is available on giving feedback to **unsuccessful job applicants**. Where there are applicants who already work at the University or who are Essex graduates, it is University practice for the Chair of the selection panel or the Head of Department to provide personal feedback as soon as possible after the selection process. For any other feedback requests, the Chair of the panel should indicate who will be the point of contact for feedback.

## Employing spouses and/or family members

The University operates guidance on employing spouses and/or family members. Please speak to the Resourcing Adviser for further advice on this.

## 8. OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

- **University removal and relocation policy**
- **Market supplements policy**
- **Conflict of interest and personal relationships**
- **Recruitment of ex-offenders**
- **Disclosure and Barring Service**
- **Fixed-term contracts**
- **Induction**

## References

Personnel Today, 2016. The rise of flexible working [online] Available at: <http://www.personneltoday.com/hr/the-rise-of-flexible-working/> [Accessed 14 March 2017].

BBC, 2015. Who, What, Why: What is name-blind recruitment? [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-34636464> [Accessed 26 October 2015].



