

LEEDS BLACK ELDERS ASSOCIATION



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Summary Policy Statement

Leeds Black Elders is committed to a systematic and consistent approach to recruitment and selection in order to attract, select, and retain the most capable staff through open competition.

Goal and Objectives is committed to organisational efficiency and effectiveness achieved and maintained by an appropriately skilled, experienced and motivated staff.

This policy aims to:

- Maintain the principle of open competition on the basis of merit.
- Provide equal opportunity for all candidates.
- Encourage members of under re-presented groups to consider employment with Leeds Black Elders Association.
- Enable Leeds Black Elders to more representative of the community it serves.
- Ensure that selection procedures are efficient and effective.
- Maintain applicant confidentiality.

Recruitment Preparation

- New post created.
- Vacancy notification or changes to be completed and vacancy advertised.
- Job advertisement form to be completed and vacancy advertised.
- Job packs to be compiled and photocopied.
- Job packs to be sent out when requested by applicants
- Application forms received by closing date.
- Short-listing criteria to be advertised by interview panel. Each applicant assessed against the short-listing criteria.
- Successful candidates invited for interview. Advertising them of the Interview Panel, any assessment they may have to complete.
- Interview all candidates, score candidates and reach a decision.
- Inform the successful candidate by telephone of offer of position subject to references and medical questionnaire.
- Process successful applicant documentation and pursue references and medical questionnaire.
- Arrange start date.
- Inform unsuccessful candidates and offer feedback.

INTERVIEWING

The interview is the main selection technique employed by recruiters. It can be used on its own or in conjunction with other selection tests.

The main aims of the interview are to:

- a) Determine the candidate's suitability for the post.
- b) Give the candidate a picture of the organisation and the post.
- c) Maintain and improve the image of the organisation as an employer.

A panel to ensure consistency and fairness throughout the interview process should conduct all interviews. One person alone must not interview candidates. Ideally the interview panel should consist of not more than three interviews. This is considered to be the optimum number to ensure that the interviews are structured well and flows easily.

EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO KEEP THE INTERVIEW PANEL AS SMALL IN NUMBERS AS POSSIBLE.

Planning the Interview

The key to fair and effective interviewing is good planning and a systematic approach.

When making arrangements for interview a meeting of the interview panel should be called and an interview plan should be drawn up to determine:

- a) The role of the respective interviews.
- b) The interviewing setting.
- c) Format of interviews.
- d) Timing of interviews.
- e) Areas in which to probe and question candidates.
- f) Questioning techniques.

Meeting could do this early before the interviews are due to start thus avoiding the complications of organising an extra meeting of the interview panel.

Role of the Interviewers

In order to make the interview as systematic and Co-ordinated as possible each member of the interview panel should be briefed on their role and a decision should be taken as to who's going to Chair the interview.

The role of the Chairperson is very important, as it is his/her role to Co-ordinate and ensures that the interview is conducted fairly without and discrimination.

This involves:

- a) Making necessary introductions to the candidates at interview and explaining the format of the interview and explaining the format of the interview process.
- b) Ensuring that the candidate feels sufficiently at ease to be able to communicate effectively during the course of the interview.
- c) Ensuring that the interview panel has probed the candidate sufficiently well to enable a valid suitability assessment to be made regarding the Candidate's ability to do the job.
- d) To conclude the interview and inform the candidate of "what happens next".
- e) To Co-ordinate the interview panel in the assessment of short-listed candidates.

The decision as to which candidate to select should be based on the majority decision of the panel. Members of the panel should try to reach a census - the Chairperson has the ultimate responsibility for the final decision.

Format of Interview

In order to ensure uniformity and fairness throughout the interview process, the format of the interview should be the same for each candidate.

This ensures that:

- a) The interviews flow well.
- b) All the candidates are questioned in similar way.
- c) All the candidates have been given the same information about the job.

Interviews deciding on the format of the interviews may like to use the following model as an aid to planning.

WASP

W - Welcome

- Establish rapport
- Confirm purpose of interview
- Explain procedure

A - Acquire Information

- Explore personal details e.g. qualification, organisation, organisations worked for
- Ascertain experiences, attitude, motivation

S - Supply Information

- Enlarge upon job description
- Answer personal queries relating to the candidate

P - Plan and Part

- Tell candidates when a decision will be made and how he/she will be notified.
- Thank candidate for attending the interview.

RECRUITMENT SELECTION

Introduction

1. This section describes how to select candidates to fill a vacant post. The three stages in the selection process are: short-listing, assessment testing and interviewing. Each of these stages is covered in turn, this section also gives guidance on how to inform candidates of the decision.
2. Who needs to be familiar with the procedures in the selection?

The Manager and all Management Committee Members who might be required to form part of a selection (short-listing and interview) panel.

3. The contents of this are:

Procedures:

- Introduction
- Short-listing
- Selection exercise/assessment centres
- Interviewing candidates

Master copies of forms:

- Short-listing records
- Interview record
- Interview expenses form

Short-listing - general

4. The short-listing and interviewing is carried out by a selection panel. All members of the selection panel are involved in both the short-listing and interviewing.
5. Applications received after the closing date can be included as long as they are received before short-listing and as long as all such applications are considered.
6. On receipt of completed application forms, the Manager or Administrator assigns a number to each applicant form.
7. The short-listing record form provides a systematic way of recording how the short-listing decision was reached and assists in eliminating subjectivity. A master copy of the form is included at the end of this section.

8. The selection panel meets to agree short-listing decision was reached and assists in eliminating subjectivity. A master copy of the form is included at the end of this section.
 - a weighting of 3 means that the criterion is "required"
 - a weighting of 4 means that the criterion is "essential"
 - a weighting of 5 means that the criterion is "critical"
9. Each criteria and weightings are entered on the short-listing form together with the post title and location and the names of the members of the selection panel.
10. The minimum mark would be 0 (if the application form gives no evidence that the applicant meets that criterion). The maximum mark would be determined by the weighting the panel has assigned to that criterion. If, for example, a weighting of 5 has been assigned to a particular criterion the maximum mark an applicant can receive would be 5. If the weighting assigned were 3, the maximum mark would be 3.
11. The candidate's marks for each criterion are then added together to obtain a total mark for that candidate.
12. Short-listing must only be based on information provided by candidates in their applicant form all candidates, whether external or internal must complete one. Any assumptions or personal knowledge, particularly of internal candidates, must not be taken into account.

Agreeing a short-list of candidates

13. Each member of the panel should go through all the application forms separately and complete their own complete their own short-listing form. The panel should then meet to go through their lists, candidate by candidate and reconcile any differences to reach to a consensus.
14. The panel should decide on the minimum and the maximum number of candidate that should be seen for the vacancy/s. Ideally, the panel should produce a short-list of at least two candidates. The Chairperson on the panel should be mindful of the need to ensure that there is a representative mix of applicants to be called for an interview wherever this is possible.
15. Having scored all applications, if the panel is then faced with the position where a number of candidates have scored either an equal or similar number of points, their applications must be scrutinised again to ensure that consistency has been achieved.
16. If it is still not possible to reduce/increase the number of candidates to the preferred number for interview, the panel should look again at the essential criteria and select the candidates that best meet the criteria felt to be the most critical to the appointment (i.e. the most highly weighted criteria). If all options to reduce the number of candidates fail, consideration should be given to increasing the number of candidates to be short-listed.

17. Candidates who do not meet all essential criteria must not be short-listed. Applicants with disabilities who meet the essential criteria, must be included on the short-list.
18. Monitoring should be undertaken by Executive Committee to establish whether people with disabilities and women are being short-listed in proportion.
19. At the conclusion of the short-listing, the roles of the panel members at the interview should be discussed.
20. The Manager should arrange for interview letters to be sent to candidates. Short-listed candidates will be sent the following as applicable:
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Form
 - Request for proof of eligibility

These documents must be collected at the interview

Unsuccessful candidates and feedback

21. Unsuccessful candidates must be informed in writing within three working days. The quantity/scale of feedback to external candidates will depend on available resources. Internal candidates who have not been short-listed must be given the opportunity to discuss in detail the reasons for this as soon as possible. The feedback to candidates should centre on essential criteria identified for the post and the information provided by the individual on their application form.

References

22. References for all short-listed candidates will normally be taken up after interviews.

General

23. If testing is to be used, the post must be thoroughly analysed to identify the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for acceptable performance. Care should be taken to ensure that the test(s) used are genuinely relevant to the assessment of these skills, knowledge or experience.
24. Particular care should be taken to ensure that the use of a test does not unfairly exclude or disadvantage people with disabilities. If after analysing the job, it is believed that it could be performed by a person with a disability it is essential to ensure that any such candidates are not disadvantaged by test used in the selection process.

25. Having selected an appropriate test, careful consideration should also be given to the following:
- a) Administration of the test

Particular care must be taken with the administration, scoring and interpretation of the test.
 - b) Training of Manager and Management Committee Members

Manager and Management Committee members must not be involved in the administration, scoring and interpretation of tests unless they have received appropriate training.
 - c) Confidentiality issues

Access to results of the tests must only be available to the interviewing panel, the Administrator and the candidate.
 - d) Briefing of candidates and use of practice questions.

Candidates may be nervous about taking tests and this may affect their performance.
Care must be taken that candidates fully understand the requirements of the test and in the case of occupational tests they must have been given the opportunity to answer some practice questions before the beginning of the test.
 - e) The physical environment where the test is to be held.

The administrator should ensure that the seating arrangements are satisfactory, that the lighting is adequate and there is unlikely to be any interruption.
 - f) Timing of the test

The candidates should be advised beforehand how long the testing process is likely to take, so they can make any practical arrangements.
26. All candidates, whether internal or external should be offered by Manager /Chairperson of the selection panel. The feedback must be handled with due regard to the needs of the candidates.

27. Tests will be reviewed regularly by Management Committee and Manager to ensure that they remain relevant and free from any unjustifiable sex or race bias, either in content or scoring structure.

Interviewing

Using the interview record form

28. The interview record form provides a systematic way of recording how the selection decision was reached and assists in eliminating subjectivity. A master copy of the form is included.
29. Interview criteria (as with short-listing criteria) must be developed from the person specification and entered on the form in the column headed "skills/knowledge required". The panel may use the same criteria for interview that they did for short-listing. When devising criteria for both short-listing and interviewing, the panel will need to bear in mind that some of the requirements for a job (e.g. oral communication skills) can be better tested at interview stage than they can at short-listing stage. It may therefore, be appropriate to exclude such criteria at short-listing stage, but include it at interview stage.
30. The interview panel must weight the interview criteria. The criteria should be weighted to reflect their relative importance to the job with a weighting of 3-5 given to each criterion. The definitions of the weightings are the same as at short-listing stage, i.e.:
- a weighting of 3 means that the criteria is "required"
 - a weighting of 4 means that the criteria is "essential"
 - a weighting of 5 means that the criteria is "critical"

The weightings are entered onto the interview record form.

31. The emphasis at interview must be on probing and identifying evidence of the skills and achievements claimed in the application form and relevant to the person specification. The purpose of the form is to record details of evidence relevant to each interview criteria gathered from the interview. The following rating key is recommended:
- 0 No evidence presented at interview about meeting the requirements of the job.
 - 1 Some evidence of meeting the requirements of the job.
 - 2 Meets the requirements of the job - some improvements are necessary.
 - 3 Meet the requirements of the job.

32. For each particular criterion (Column 1), the weighting (Column 2) should be multiplied by the panel's agreed rating of evidence (Column 4). This will provide the candidate's mark for that criterion to be entered in column 5. The total overall score is obtained by adding all scores in column 5.

Criterion weighting \times candidate score = total mark for criterion.

General notes on interviewing

33. Interview panels should convene at least half an hour prior to the first interview to confirm.
- a) The preparation for the interviews.
 - b) The procedures and framework of interviews including establishing a model line of questioning.
34. The following should be taken into account when scheduling interviews:
- a) Timing of interviews should be realistic (20-60 minutes depending on the type and seniority of the job) with a further 5-15 minutes to assess each candidate after each interview.
 - b) Avoiding long day/evening sessions. If necessary interviews should be spread over two or more days.
 - c) When practicable interviews should be arranged at a time and venue. Those may face which takes into account the difficulties that who have children or other dependants and people with disabilities.
35. The following should be taken into account in preparing for interviews:
- a) Arrangements must be made to ensure that the interview room is suitable and free from interruption.
 - b) Candidates must be told clearly where the interview is (a map can be useful) and staff briefed accordingly.
 - c) People with disabilities should ask in the interview letter whether they have particular requirements e.g. wheelchair access, interpreters etc.
 - d) Waiting Room must be comfortable and convenient.
 - e) Every effort must be made to ensure that candidates are not kept waiting beyond the interview time - if there is a delay the candidate must be informed and given an explanation.

- f) Candidates should be told when and how they would be notified.
- g) Candidates should be invited to complete an express form on the day of their interview.

Interview Expenses

- 36. It is the Association's policy to reimburse a candidate with reasonable expenses incurred in attending the interview. The candidate interview expense form is attached.
- 37. When a candidate uses his/her car to travel to the interview, expenses should only be reimbursed by 14 pence per mile.
- 38. For journeys by public transport, the actual cost of the journey may be recovered at the standard class rate.

Questioning

- 39. The interview should be conducted with the object of identifying evidence of the skills required for the post as defined by the person specification. Details of evidence obtained and ratings there of must be recorded on the interview form. The interview panel should ask the same core questions to all candidates. The phrasing of questions and follow up questions are dependent on each candidate's personal circumstances (e.g. family commitments) which are unrelated to the person specification, or which are designed to test more vigorously certain candidates on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation or disability. The same range of topics must be raised with all candidates.
- 40. Questions, which are likely to discriminate or lead to a view about such matters, on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc. must not be asked prior to, at, or following interviews. Interviews must not imply discrimination by asking questions either about candidate's personal circumstances (e.g. family commitments), which are unrelated to the person specification, or which are designed to test more vigorously certain candidates on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation or disability. The same range of topics must be raised with all candidates.
- 41. Care must be taken not to treat internal candidates differently even though the interview panel members may very well know them.
- 42. If sensitive questions related to the person specification have to be asked, for example, practical considerations for people with disabilities, they must be asked of all candidates and they should proceed by an explanation of the reasons for asking them. Avoid sexist and racial language, which will put candidates off.

43. It is necessary for discussion to take place at the interview about the candidate's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities principles in general. This applies to all posts. Questions must be phased according to the demands of the post.

Decision Making

44. At the end of the interview the records of candidates should be compared. The temptation of making the final selection late at night should be avoided: if necessary the panel should reconvene at the earliest possible date.
45. The panel must take their decision solely by comparing the information supplied by each candidate in their application form and interview against the person specification.
46. The top two or three rated candidates should be considered when making a final choice since the make up of the ratings will need to be considered. It is too easy to say that the candidate with the top marks on the interview form should always be appointed. The reasons for the choice must be entered on the interviewing form. Other information obtained from the selection process (i.e. assessment) should be taken into account at this stage.
47. Only members of the panel who have been involved in the interview may play any part in the decision making process. A summary of the interview records and scores must be used for this purpose.
48. Where there is concern about a disabled candidate's ability to perform all the duties of the post because of the nature of the disability, further advice must be sought (from a Disability Organisation or Local Authority Equality Section) as to the availability of aids to employment.
49. Where possible the decision should be reached on a consensus basis. In the event of failure to reach a consensus decision, the following options might be considered prior to any decision to opt for a majority decision:
50. a) The panel should check again whether they are all interpreting the person specification in the same way. If they are not, a common interpretation must be agreed.
- b) To re-convene the panel at the earliest possible date.
- c) To re-interview the candidates either with the same, altered or a completely different panel. In this case, consideration can also be given to increase the short-list.
- d) To re-advertise. This option should only be used if the panel is satisfied that none of the candidates can do the job.

51. Once the appointment decision has been made, consideration should be given by the panel to:
- a) Whether there is a second (and third) choice candidate(s) who would be offered the job if the first choice candidate rejects the offer.
 - b) Training, not only induction training, but also for any other needs that have been identified at the interview.
 - c) Any special consideration for the three or six month's performance assessment review.

Informing candidates of the decision

52. The offer to the successful candidate is normally made verbally by telephone and is subject to references and, except for internal candidates, medical clearance and where applicable, work permit. No increase in salary or variation from normal terms and conditions should be agreed without consulting the full Management Committee.
53. A written offer of employment will then be sent and a copy to the Chairperson of management Committee.
54. Unsuccessful candidates should be informed in writing with a special letter to those who were interviewed but were unsuccessful. There is a particular need to handle internal candidates sensitively, both in the interest of morale and because they are a potential source for future promotion.
55. The Association needs to be sensitive to the increasing need to provide as full feedback as possible to unsuccessful candidates. Arrangements should be made for someone to speak to unsuccessful internal and external candidates as soon as possible and to provide them with the opportunity to discuss possible ways of developing and improving in relation to their performance against criteria. The feedback to candidates must centre on the essential criteria identified for the post and the way the candidate presented the information on the application form and at the interview.

Selection Records

56. The application form for the successful candidate(s) must be placed on the individual's personal file, although the short-listing and interview records must be kept on the job file.
57. The application forms (successful and unsuccessful), short-listing and interview record forms and any correspondence must be packaged and kept by the Manager for one year.
58. The Management Committee will receive and decide on the process to investigate any complaint regarding the selection process of non-appointment. Association employees may choose to use the Grievance procedure to register their complaints.