



# **Recruitment Policy and Procedure**

## **The Competition Service**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the recruitment and selection policy is to establish the principle of fair and open competition within the Competition Service (the Service) and to ensure consistency and transparency in all aspects of the recruitment and selection process.

All members of staff are required to follow the rules set out within this policy document when filling posts via internal appointment or external recruitment. This will allow the Service to achieve its strategic aim of attracting and retaining the right people for the job. If any aspect of the recruitment process is unclear then advice should be sought from HR before progressing.

### General Considerations

An organisation can only operate effectively if it has the right people in the right place at the right time. Whilst this can usually only be achieved if an employer has an appropriate package of pay and benefits which will attract a suitable workforce, the attainment of this ultimate aim is as much about retaining people as attracting them. Therefore, when considering and effecting recruitment, every effort must be made to match the most suitable person(s) to the most appropriate vacancies. Any mismatch of requirements may result in disagreement, the application of the disciplinary process and ultimately, in some cases, even termination of employment either during or after the probationary period.

### Structuring the Process

The recruitment process incurs considerable potential liabilities to an employer and it is important that this is as structured as is appropriate to the Service.

### Two-Way Honesty

At every stage of recruitment the utmost honesty regarding requirements, benefits and expectations should be observed. There should therefore be no false illusions or misconceptions that can later give rise to resentment and dispute. Equally the employer has a right to expect (but needs to check) that the applicant is being entirely honest concerning their skills, details, and experience. During the recruitment and selection process it is therefore essential that you do not oversell the Service, or make false promises, specifically at interview, as this will only frustrate the job-holder later when the Service cannot deliver. Equally it is also extremely important that you do not under-sell the Service, but instead provide factual and relevant information in relation to the role and the Service.

### Equable Treatment

It is essential that recruitment is made only on the basis of skill, experience and appropriateness for the vacancy. You must therefore ensure that your questions, assessments and judgement are in no way affected by any discriminatory attitudes, whether on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age.

At the beginning of the recruitment process, it is important for everyone involved to ensure that potential discrimination is challenged. It should be noted that discrimination is often unintentional, such as assuming that a woman is incapable of doing a job traditionally done by a man. However, the law makes no distinction between intentional or unintentional discrimination - it is still illegal.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY

There are a number of important principles which underpin the recruitment and selection policy:

- Prospective candidates must be given a reasonable opportunity to become aware of the vacancies and the terms of appointment, and a reasonable time in which to apply;

- All eligible candidates must be considered equally on merit at the start of the recruitment process and at each subsequent stage that they reach;
- Selection procedures will contain safeguards against individual bias;
- The selection process will comply with the Service's equal opportunities policy and ensure that no bias, whether direct or indirect, will be allowed on the basis of gender, age, race, culture, marital status, Trade Union membership, disability or sexual orientation; and
- All selection criteria and techniques must be reliable, valid and relevant to the job concerned and must as far as possible reduce the potential for individual bias or discrimination.

Before any unconditional offer of appointment is made, checks must be made as to the candidate's eligibility from the point of view of character references, education, and professional attainment. A baseline standard security check must also be carried out on all appointees before they begin work at the Service. No one will be allowed access to the Service's key business systems without reaching this standard.

Accurate records will be kept for three years after each recruitment exercise showing the criteria in use, the advertisement, the role profile, the application forms and the performance of the candidates. If the recruitment exercise is carried out by a third party, such as an agency, then the Service will request any relevant documentation from them.

Any potential conflict of interest must be declared as soon as it comes to light. Examples of likely conflicts of interest would be if a person directly involved in any stage of the selection process has (or has had) a personal relationship with one of the applicants, or is related to one of the applicants, or has prior knowledge of one of the applicants outside of the work environment which could in any way affect the decision they make. Normally the assessor should stand down as they are unable to give a fair assessment of the applicant.

### **3. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

The following identifies the legislative framework, which relates to the field of employment. The list of discrimination laws is expanding due to new UK legislation, and is also affected by European legislation and rulings of the European Court of Justice.

#### **The Sex Discrimination Act 1975**

The main provisions of this Act are:

- The legislation outlaws discrimination in employment on the grounds of sex and marital status. This means any less favourable treatment of one sex by reason of the difference in sex. The legislation protects men, women and individuals who undergo gender reassignment surgery or treatment.
- The protection is afforded not only to employees, but also to prospective employees - individuals in the recruitment process - as well as contract and self-employed workers.
- Discrimination is only permitted where there is a genuine occupational qualification necessary for the particular post. This however, is an increasingly limited defence by an employer.
- An employer can be vicariously liable for the discriminatory acts of its employees - this is providing the employee was acting in the course of their employment at the time of the discrimination.

#### **The Race Relations Act 1976**

The main provisions of this Act are:

- It is unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds. This equates to discrimination on grounds of colour, race, and nationality, ethnic or national origins. The Act makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate during recruitment (including any arrangements made for recruitment), promotion, training or transfer, terms and conditions of employment and also dismissal.
- Employers may also be liable for the unlawful discriminatory acts carried out by employees in the course of their employment.

### **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

It is illegal to imply that a person might not get a job because they have a disability or that an employer would be unwilling to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities.

For the purpose of this Act, a disability is defined as:

A physical or mental impairment, which has substantial and long term adverse effects on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This includes disfigurement, progressive conditions and people who have had a disability in the past.

The areas of Recruitment and Selection where discrimination can occur are:

- advertisements - stating candidates must be 'energetic'
- failing to provide an interviewee with adequate access to the building
- making assumptions about their disability - 'You must take a lot of days off sick'

Examples of reasonable adjustments are:

- adjustments of premises, e.g. widening of doors, providing ramps
- re-allocation of duties
- altering the hours of work
- allowing time off for treatment, assessment and rehabilitation
- acquiring or modifying equipment
- modifying instructions and reference manuals

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1975**

This Act makes it unlawful for employers, or prospective employers, to take into account offences which are deemed under the legislation as being 'spent'. After a certain period of time, which depends on the seriousness of their offence, the person concerned should be treated as if the conviction had never taken place. Candidates may legitimately omit to give details to employers and such sentences must not be considered in the selection process.

### **The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996**

Employment must only be offered in accordance with legal requirements, i.e. only to those entitled to work in the UK. Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, it is illegal for employers (subject to a fine of up to £5,000) to recruit a person who has no such right.

Employers are entitled to ask applicants for evidence of the right to work by requesting:

- a National Insurance number;
- a UK passport of naturalisation certificate;
- a passport of identification from a member country of the European Economic Area (i.e. the EU Member States plus Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland); and/or
- a passport vetted by an immigration officer (which will usually mean the passport is stamped with wording limiting the scope/length of employment allowed).

### **Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002**

The regulations aim to ensure that employers and employees can still conclude fixed term contracts to ensure flexibility where work is of a limited duration or where the employer or employee does not wish to commit to a longer working relationship. At the same time, they aim to protect fixed term employees and encourage fixed term work, by applying the principle of equal treatment to fixed term employees.

The regulations limit the use of successive fixed term contracts to four years but allow for the use of fixed term contracts beyond this point where this is objectively justified. There will be no limit on the length of a first fixed term contract. Further, the regulations allow the statutory mechanism to be varied by means of collective or workplace agreements. Employers and employees can agree any mechanism that specifies one or more of the following criteria:

- A limit on the number of successive fixed term contracts
- A limit on the duration of successive fixed term contracts, and/or
- Objective reasons justifying renewals of fixed term contracts.

This will prevent the abuse of successive fixed term contracts without adversely affecting the use of fixed term contracts in sectors where the use of such contracts is the norm.

The regulations will give fixed term employees the right to receive a written statement either giving reasons why their contract continues to have effect as a fixed term contract beyond the statutory limitation or confirming that their contracts are to be regarded as open-ended.

The draft regulations state that “the treatment in question shall be taken to be justified on objective grounds for the purpose of regulation 3(3)(b) if the terms of the fixed term employee’s contract of employment, taken as a whole, are at least as favourable as the terms of the comparable permanent employee’s contract of employment”.

Further details on fixed term contracts are available from HR.

### **Employment (Age) Regulations 2006**

It is illegal to imply that a person might not get a job because of their age.

- It is unlawful to discriminate on age grounds. The Regulations makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate during recruitment (including any arrangements made for recruitment), promotion, training or transfer, terms and conditions of employment and also dismissal.

Employers may also be liable for the unlawful discriminatory acts carried out by employees in the course of their employment.

## **4. FAIR AND OPEN COMPETITION AND SELECTION ON MERIT**

The Service needs members of staff who are best suited to the job and the selection process should be perceived to be sound and subject to high standards of integrity. The fundamental principle is that

appointments should be made on merit and vacancies will therefore normally be subject to fair and open competition.

The Service's selection process must meet the following criteria:

- It must be driven by the need to find the best person for the job based on merit;
- All appointments must be above the suspicion of patronage. If friends, relations or business contacts comprise most of the applicants for the job, clearly it will be impossible to defend our selection procedure, even if the person selected is perfectly competent; and
- In the interests of fairness and transparency the Service has decided that no one in a relationship with another member of staff will be short listed for a post that would put them in a direct or one removed line management position with that other person. The Service expects anyone in a relationship with another member of staff to declare this on their application form. However, if you are considering applying for a post that would create the issue referred to above, or may appear to do so, please note that you must make a prior declaration. Failure to do so would be a disciplinary offence.

Individuals who do not believe that the principles set out in this recruitment and selection policy have been correctly applied during a recruitment process may appeal directly to the HR Manager who will investigate and respond in writing within 21 days. In cases where the HR Manager has been directly involved in the recruitment exercise, the appeal will be considered by the Director of Operations.

HR members of staff have responsibility for ensuring that the principles of this recruitment and selection policy are applied throughout the Service.

All managers who are involved in recruitment exercises are required to familiarize themselves with this policy document and the procedural guidelines and must ensure that the principles are applied in every case.

## **5. ADVERTISING**

Advertisements and supporting literature must together contain whatever the applicants need to know to give them a clear picture of the job, what it entails, where it is based, with whom they will be working, what is required to do it and what the terms and conditions which apply are (for example a role profile). This should include brief details of qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience and competencies required to do the job. If possible details of the selection process should also be included.

The advertisement should make it clear whether or not the job is permanent, fixed term, loan or secondment. It should also make clear whether or not the post would be open to job share and whether it is full time or part time. Job sharing will be encouraged where this is practicable and subject to business need. If the post may have an option of permanency at the end of the fixed-term period this should be made clear at the outset, if possible.

The closing date for applications should be made clear in the advertisement and should give candidates a reasonable time to apply, usually at least ten working days.

It is also important to consider whether the labour market for the job is local, area-wide or national or a combination of these, as this may heavily influence the recruitment strategy. Finally it is important to consider if any internal candidates exist or could be developed into the role.

The rules and regulations on discrimination apply equally to advertising. Responsibility for advertising extends not just to the employer who places the advert, but also those publishing the advertisements.

Briefing an agency to discriminate on the employer's behalf is also illegal and creates risks for the business.

## **6. SHORTLISTING**

When candidates have all applied there is generally a requirement to reduce the overall number of applicants down to a manageable number who can then be interviewed, this is known as 'sifting' or 'short-listing'. This may be performed by Service's staff or sometimes by an agency conforming to criteria set by the Service.

The shortlisting process is an essential part of any effective recruitment and selection exercise and must be fair and equitable, assessing applicants on merit, usually using a scoring matrix.

Shortlisting should be carried out by a board (normally the same as the interview board) and should follow these principles:

- Shortlisting must be done using an objective method (measuring the application against the requirements set out in the role profile). Decisions not to see a candidate for interview should be clearly defensible and not based on subjective assessments such as a dislike of the applicant's name or handwriting (unless the handwriting is illegible).
- Equal opportunities records must be kept for all recruitment exercises, but not divulged to the board. If an agency is acting on behalf of the Service, then they should provide the Service with the relevant documentation.
- Managers sitting on a shortlisting board must be able to feed back to applicants not selected for interview why this was the case, and all applicants must be given the opportunity to receive feedback if they wish. Again an agency may fulfil this requirement if they are engaged by the Service.

## **7. INTERVIEWING**

### **Interview boards**

Candidates should be interviewed by a board which consists of at least two people and in normal circumstances three of which at least one is a direct employee. The board should:

- Be diverse to reflect the Service's age, gender and ethnicity profile;
- Consist of staff who have been trained in interviewing techniques, normally by the Service, and be aware of issues of equality;
- Be chaired where possible by a member of staff at least one grade above the post being filled;
- Not contain anyone who has a link with a candidate which could cause a potential conflict of interest, without that conflict being declared in advance; and
- Never prejudge the outcome of an interview.
- Decide which candidates are appointable, and which are not.
- Of the appointable candidates, decide which is the most suitable for the job.
- If there are two or more other appointable candidates after the first choice, decide on an order of merit. (If the first choice person declines the job offer, the job must then be offered to the next one in the order of merit etc).

### **Preparation**

Face-to-face interviewing is still the most practical method of vetting applicants, in order to assess how appropriate their skills and experience might be to the requirements of vacancies in the Service. Few people prepare adequately for the situation or realise that essentially it is a two-way process, with the applicant needing to know as much about the Service as it needs to know about him or her.



## **Uninterrupted discussion**

Interviewers must be prepared to set aside sufficient time for a proper two-way discussion, and above all, to protect the session from interruption. Interruptions caused by telephone calls or visitors are not only basic poor manners but also stop the natural flow of the interview. In addition, interruptions can convey messages such as: 'You are not as important as this other matter which I must deal with now'. Whilst this may in fact be the case, it is hardly a satisfactory impression to give to a potential employee. Such a practice also reflects poorly on the interviewer (and the Service), which may be particularly damaging when attempting to recruit more personnel.

## **8. SELECTION TECHNIQUE**

For Band B posts and above, additional selection techniques (i.e. psychometrics) should be considered where appropriate. Advice can be sought from HR on the most appropriate tests to be used.

Selection techniques must be reliable, valid and good indicators of future performance, as well as meeting the requirements set out in the Service policy on equal opportunities. Psychometric tests must only be administered and interpreted by individuals with the relevant qualifications from the British Psychological Society (BPS); HR can assist. Applicants completing such instruments must always be given the option of having feedback, separate from their interview. If an agency/head-hunter is doing the recruitment on behalf of the Service they must ensure that these guidelines are adhered to.

Candidates must always be impartially assessed.

## **9. OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **Nature of the Contract**

The relationship between employee and employer is governed by a contract. A contract (even if not in writing) is a binding agreement granting obligations to and imposing obligations on both parties. Not only can a contract come into being without its being evidenced in writing; it may even be held to be operative simply on the basis of the actions of the two parties.

To ensure that the correct, and only the correct, terms of the relationship are understood by both parties, these should be set out in writing, and issued only through the normal Service procedures.

In interviewing applicants it must be clearly stated that selection for appointment will only be on the basis of a written offer and no verbal indication of commitment is to be taken as binding on either party.

### **Offer authorisation**

When requesting an offer of employment for a particular candidate you must first complete an 'Employment Authorisation Form', which must be signed by the Registrar or in his absence the Director, Operations. This should then be forwarded to HR for action.

This process has been agreed to not only ensure that the process receives the level of attention and care it demands; but also to avoid the possibility of the unknowingly creating contractual commitment. It will also ensure that all items, which need checking, are indeed checked and dealt with properly.

Finally, it must be reiterated that terms offered at interview/or over the telephone can, if communicated incorrectly, override the Principal Statement of Employment. It is therefore vital those only agreed Service terms and conditions are communicated, since even this process cannot necessarily overturn such errors at this stage.

## **10. TRAVEL COSTS**

The Service may reimburse candidates for travel costs to and from interviews. The Service will only cover the cost of standard travel and candidates will need to present their tickets to HR and complete an expenses claim form.

## **11. CANDIDATES WITH A DISABILITY**

All applicants who have a disability and meet the minimum criteria for the post will be offered an interview in line with the Service's commitment to providing opportunities for people with a disability.

Issues such as the need for special equipment will not be allowed to reduce a candidate's opportunities in the Service if this can be avoided, and equipment and training will be provided where necessary.

## **12. BASELINE SECURITY**

Although it is not a selection criterion, all staff must be able to pass the baseline personnel security standard.

For each applicant we must be able to verify three years' worth of employment or academic history and if there are any noticeable gaps that need to be verified too. The candidate's permission will be sought before referees are contacted.

HR must sight originals and copy evidence of all qualifications and eligibility to work in the UK.

## **13. OTHER**

The Service often recruits agency temps who turn out to be excellent. In these circumstances, they may be offered a permanent contract.

Occasionally the Service only advertises vacancies internally. This is especially true if a department has undergone restructuring and it allows those already employed by the Service to find suitable alternative employment.

Recruitment records are retained for at least 2 years.

**APPENDIX 1 - RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST**

1. When application packs are requested take name and contact details. Save them into an excel spreadsheet (this gives them their applicant number) Form\_Applicant\_Submission\_Tracking\_[Job Title]  
\*see diagram below
2. Send each applicant 3 forms (preferably by email)
  - Equal Opportunities
  - Job Description
  - Submission Process
3. When the forms have been sent off put a date by the applicant name in the excel spreadsheet for future reference.
4. When applications are submitted make sure all personal details are taken off them and write their applicant number clearly on their CV and covering letter.
5. To keep a record, highlight the applicants that have sent in their applications by highlighting them in the excel spreadsheet.
6. Record ethnicity details on Ethnicity work sheet.
7. Keep the Personal details forms in a separate folder with the application numbers written on them.  
(Keep the personal details forms in applicant number order)
8. Make sure that you don't accept any application forms after the closing date which will be written on the job advert.
9. When all the applications are in make sure that the applicant numbers are written clearly  
Put them in applicant number in order and give them to the assessor.

\*Example of the excel spreadsheet.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Applicant number	Applicant name	Email address	Postal Address	Date info requested	Telephone number	Date application received
1							
2	'001	Mr Smith	Mrsmith@hotmail.com	1 Jones Road	15/08/2009	'02085559876	
3	'002						
4	'003						
5	'004						
6	'005						
7	'006						
8	'007						
9	'008						
10	'009						
11	'010						
12	'011						
13	'012						

10. The assessor will sift the applications and chose the candidates that will be invited to interview.
11. Contact the candidates to arrange their interview. Send them a letter confirming the date and time of their interview include the Drivers Questionnaire and a map.
12. The interview panel select interview questions from the Question Pool document.
13. Compile an Interview\_Guide & Questions document for each candidate incorporate the questions selected by the panel. Photocopy a set for each interview panellist and the note taker.
14. The day before the interview telephone all the candidates to confirm that they are still coming and to remind them to bring their passport/driving license and Drivers Questionnaire along with them.

15. Give VH Reception the candidate list so that name badges can be prepared in advance.
16. On the day of the interviews meet the candidate prior to the interview check their passport/driving license to authenticate their identity. Collect their Drivers Questionnaire and give it to the note taker.

### APPENDIX 2 - APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Request for application packs will come in either via email or by phone. When a requests comes in via email put whatever contact details they give you into an excel spreadsheet (below) and they will be assigned a number.

When a request comes in by phone take their email address if they have one and their phone number only send them to a postal address if they do not have an email address. Then email them these three forms.

- Form\_Equal\_Opportunities\_Monitoring
- Form\_Applicant\_Personal\_Employment\_Educational\_Refs\_Declar\_Details
- Summary\_of\_Application\_Submission\_Process (for the job advertised)

And a copy of the Job description (for the job advertised)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Applicant number	Applicant name	Email address	Postal Address	Date info requested	Telephone number	Date application received
2	'001	Mr Smith	Mrsmith@hotmail.com	1 Jones Road	15/08/2009	02085559876	
3	'002						
4	'003						
5	'004						
6	'005						
7	'006						
8	'007						
9	'008						
10	'009						
11	'010						
12	'011						
13	'012						

When the applicant has applied highlight the applicant in yellow within the excel spreadsheet and copy the applicant name and number into a separate sheet within the excel document. In this second sheet you can add columns of information that would have been gained from the contact details and monitoring form if you wish (e.g. where they saw the job advertised or age)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Applicant number	Applicant name	Email address	Postal Address	Date info requested	Telephone number	Date application received
2	'001	Mr Smith	Mrsmith@hotmail.com	1 Jones Road	15/08/2009	02085559876	25/08/2009
3	'002	Mr Jones	htky@yahoo.co.uk	1 Gold Street	16/08/2009		01/09/2009
4	'003	Ms Lemel	guest@bolblue.com		20/08/2009		02/09/2006
5	'004	Vicki Andrew	example@msn.co.uk		20/08/2009		02/09/2006
6	'005	Mr Roberts	example@msn.com		20/08/2009		03/09/2009
7	'006	Mr Minear	test@aol.com		22/08/2009		03/09/2009
8	'007						
9	'008						
10	'009						
11	'010						
12	'011						
13	'012						

	A	B	C	D
1	Applicant number	Applicant name	Where they saw job advert	Age
2	'002	Mr Jones	Times	25-35
3	'004	Ms Lemel	Lawyer website	46-60
4	'008	Vicki Andrew	guardian	16-24
5	'011	Mr Minear	guardian	16-24

Make a note of the closing date for application which will be on the job advert and any application that you receive after midnight of the closing date cannot be accepted.

When completed application forms come in make sure that before they are printed off or photocopied that all personal details have been removed e.g. name age gender as we requested that they be removed in accordance with the new legislation.

When the completed Equal opportunities form, covering letter and CV has been printed then write their application number clearly on the front of all the papers.

Staple the covering letter to the CV

Put the Contact details and monitoring form in a separate folder so that the people who will be looking at the CV do not know any personal details about the applicant.

If someone does leave their name or age or any other personal details on their CV or covering letter these must be removed.

Draw a \* to show that they did not read all the forms correctly and points may be deducted in the application process.

## **APPENDIX 3 – INTERVIEW PROCESS**

### **Interview Guide**

The purpose of a selection interview is to determine the suitability of the candidate for employment and the suitability of the Service to be an employer. It is an opportunity for both parties to collect information in order for them to determine how successful the candidate would perform in the job and how the Service would suit the candidate. Both parties are on fact-finding missions. To make interaction satisfactory to both parties it should be clear that the interview is not an interrogation/grilling! It should be positive and constructive - not negative and destructive!

### **Preparation**

Interviewers should ideally spend at least 20 minutes preparing for each Recruitment Interview. During that period they should:

1. Learn the following:
  - The requirements of the vacancy (using a job description, as well as any personal knowledge).
  - Any back-up information subsequently gleaned in discussing the recruitment with the director/senior manager responsible for the role.
  - Details of any interpersonal skills required.
  - The minimum experience, training and expertise needed, and personal characteristics preferred, of the ideal candidate.
  - Learn as much information on the candidate as the CV and/or letter of application (or covering letter) have provided.

Note: The advantage of this 'instant recall' knowledge is to avoid the need to refer to the paperwork during the interview to check facts, so breaking the flow of the interview. In addition, knowing what is required and what is on offer from a particular candidate should automatically throw up apparent gaps in knowledge which can be the subject of probing questions during the interview.

2. Make notes of items contained in the application that require amplification and/or explanation, particularly of reasons for leaving previous positions (especially if the employment length tended to be short).
3. Check the exact description of qualifications claimed in order that during the interview the question of verification can be raised.
4. Prepare and phrase questions that will check the depth and range of knowledge on subjects that are essential for the job on offer. This may entail research on the part of the interviewer so that he/she can talk knowledgeably on the subject.

### **Running the Interview**

1. Set time should be allowed for the interview and, assuming the interviewee is present, the interview should start promptly. If due to unavoidable circumstances this is impossible, every effort should be made to minimise the delay, an apology should be made and the situation updated.
2. A room without a telephone, and with a facility for stopping visitors from interrupting should be used. Interruptions to the interview should always be avoided. If this is not possible, the situation should be explained to the interviewee, an apology should be given and the interruption minimised.

3. Photographic proof of identity (e.g. current passport or driving license) is required under the Baseline Personnel Security Standard. The applicant's identity must be verified prior to the interview commencement.
4. The interviewer should spend a few minutes on introductory matters seeking to place the applicant at their ease. It might be appropriate to take the initiative and outline some history of the Service, its products and place in the market place.
5. The bulk of the interview time should be spent obtaining information concerning the career and experience, etc. of the applicant and providing information regarding the position, requirements and prospects of the job. In this regard it is essential to use open questions ('tell me about', 'how did you cope with...?', 'what was best (and worst) about...?', and so on), rather than closed questions ('did you enjoy...?', 'you didn't stay there long did you?'). This should ensure that the interviewee has to answer with sentences and comments rather than simply saying 'yes' or 'no'. It is also essential that the interviewer is seen to 'listen'. Taking notes may be one way of indicating this, whereas thumbing through the papers whilst not looking at the interviewee is not - it indicates to the interviewee that you are not really interested in the answer being provided.
6. Where possible, check the technical expertise claimed by the interviewee. The impression should not be given that the interviewer is expert in the subject (unless, of course he/she is, and even then it might be better to conceal such knowledge and let the applicant speak). It may help the applicant to talk if the conversation is kept going with such comments as 'I don't know too much about this, but I thought that...'. Such gambits allow the applicant free rein to explain the point, or if the opportunity is declined, it may indicate that experience was not as wide or applicable as was previously thought.
7. Guide the conversation to the preferred route with the minimum of intervention, so that the applicant is encouraged to talk at length. During this, the applicant's knowledge can be better displayed and better tested. This part of the interview should take the form of a discussion about the vacancy and the applicant's suitability for it. It should be objective and attempt to avoid any judgmental overtones - talents and experience vary from person to person. An interview is not an assessment of whether the applicant is 'up to the job', but whether the requirements of the Service and the attributes and attitude, skills and experience of the applicant, represent a match with such requirements.
8. **For certain vacancies (e.g. recruiting assemblers, word-processing operators, etc.) where technical skills are essential, it may be appropriate to arrange a short 'hands on' test.**  
**WARNING: Advice should be sought regarding the appropriateness of using tests on disabled applicants to ensure that their format is not discriminatory.**
9. Every opportunity should be afforded to the interviewee for them to ask questions on any topic related to the Service, vacancy, prospects, etc.

### Concluding the Interview

1. The interview should conclude naturally - that is at the point that both parties feel that they have as much information about the other as they need at this stage. (For most positions this is unlikely to be less than 30 minutes after the start of the interview, and for supervisory and more senior positions, less than 60 minutes bearing in mind that in recruiting for such positions it will be normal to invite applicants for a second (and further) interview(s).)
2. You should also state the position regarding the recruitment. This should include:
  - When they can expect to hear the result of their interview. Be realistic in the assessment of when you will be in a position to let them - and keep to your word.
  - That the applicant may be required to return for a further interview possibly by another interviewer, and when they can expect to hear when this will be.



2. On no account should the interviewee be offered the position there and then. If a candidate is to be offered the position then you can contact them by telephone (as appropriate) to 'verbally' offer them the position, and also confirm to them that a formal offer will be forwarded to them shortly. When outlining the terms they are to be offered you must firstly ensure that they are in line with the Service's normal terms and conditions, and also confirm that the offer is on the basis of 'subject to confirmation in writing', receipt of satisfactory references and health check if applicable.

### Rejecting Candidates

1. Write a meaningful letter thanking the person for their interest in the Service, but confirming that they have not been successful on this occasion. Wish them well in the future. This should be done promptly, since whilst the candidate may not be suitable for this position they may still be suitable for other positions in the future. In any case it is always essential to provide a professional service to the candidates, and leave them with a positive feeling of the Service.
2. Be prepared to give internal candidates feedback on their interview and tips on how to improve.
3. Keep careful records including interview notes in case of employment tribunal claims.

### Interview Do's and Dont's

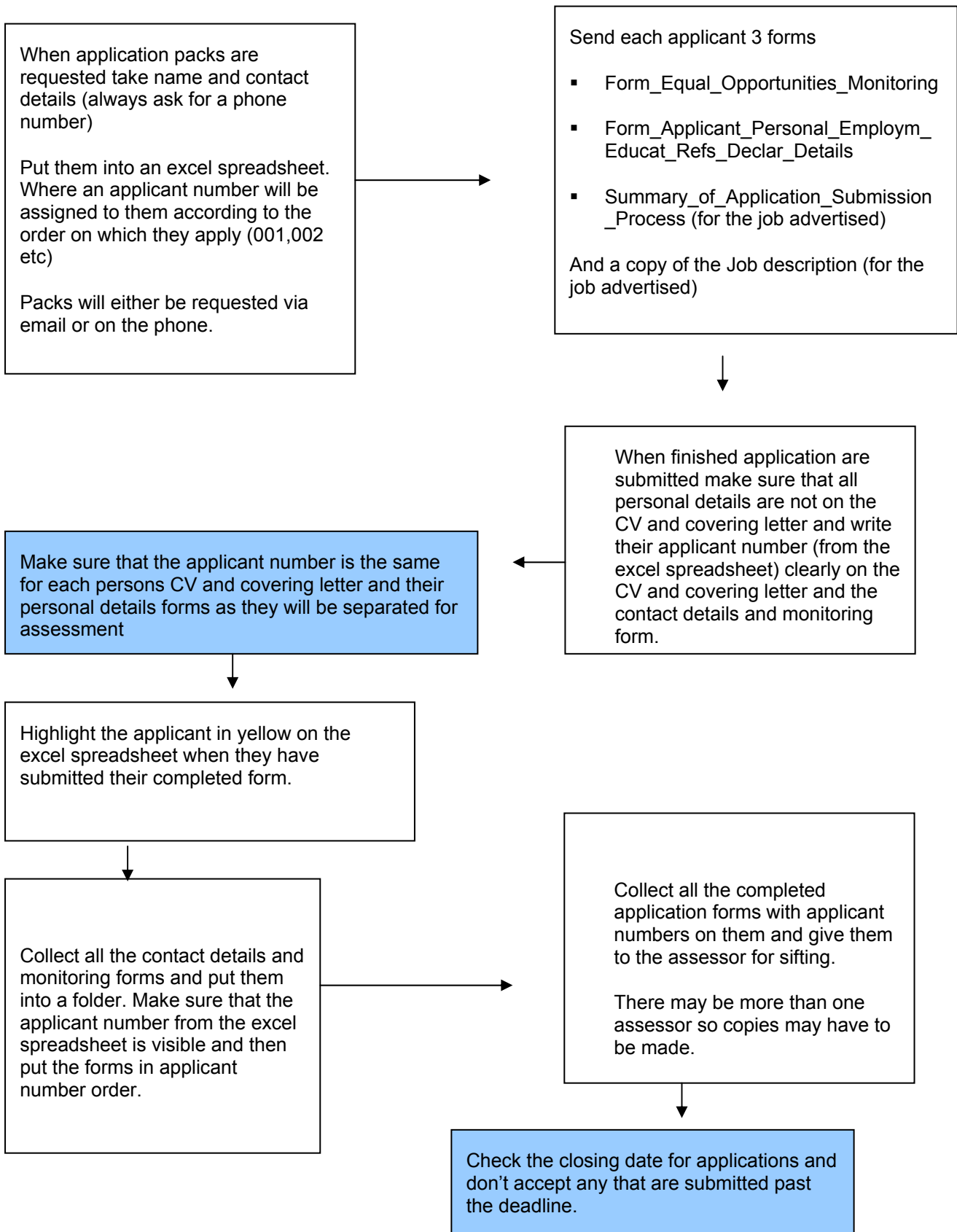
#### Do:

- ✓ Scrutinise all your recruitment and selection procedures to make sure they are discrimination free
- ✓ Look for ways of promoting equal opportunities through your recruitment and selection procedures
- ✓ Make your advertisements appeal to all sectors of the community by using positive language and imagery
- ✓ Make sure you acknowledge all responses to your advertisements
- ✓ Ensure that you are objective when short-listing: look for essential skills and experience
- ✓ Apply the same criteria to every application form or CV
- ✓ Prepare carefully for interviews. Make sure you have correctly identified the right criteria for the job and structure your questions to probe those criteria
- ✓ Check for gaps in employment or information: make a note to ask a relevant question within the interview
- ✓ Remind yourself of what is required to do the job
- ✓ Ensure that you can justify your choice of short-listed applicants

#### Don't

- ✗ Assume that 'no-one discriminates in this day and age ...'
- ✗ Allow assumptions to go unchallenged e.g. 'our clients couldn't cope with someone who was deaf...'
- ✗ Always advertise in the same place: consider other sources
- ✗ Fail to respond to individuals who do not meet the criteria: they may be a potential future employee
- ✗ Be affected by points that interest you, e.g. 'oh they used to work for the same company as me!!'
- ✗ Make decisions based on irrelevant information, i.e. age, address, name, gender, race or marital status
- ✗ Assume that because an individual hasn't mentioned it within the form, that they don't have the relevant experience
- ✗ Assume that because an individual hasn't mentioned it within the form, that they do have the relevant experience
- ✗ Assume that they are trying to mislead you!
- ✗ Assume that because grammar and handwriting is 'poor' (in your view), that the individual is not literate (particularly if this is not a requirement of the job)
- ✗ Be tempted to invite someone for interview to 'make up the numbers', if they don't meet the criteria

### APPENDIX 4 – RECRUITMENT PROCESS FLOCHART



**APPENDIX 5 – OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT**

Agreed forms/letters:

- Offer of Employment Letter (2 copies)
- Principal Statement of Employment (PSE) (2 copies)
- Payroll Details Form
- Pre-employment Health Questionnaire
- Pension Questionnaire
- **Criminal Record Check Form** by Disclosure Scotland (info@disclosurescotland.co.uk)
- Employment Authorisation Form
- New Starter Checklist
- New Starter Induction Checklist

The Employment Authorisation Form is completed by the relevant manager and forwarded to the Director, Operations for authorisation. This will then be passed to the HR team.

As soon as the Employment Authorisation Form is received by the HR team, a member of the team (administrator) will commence the New Starter Checklist and follow the process outlined on the form to completion.

The administrator will prepare the Offer Letter and Principal Statement of Employment, which will then be passed to the HR Manager for checking.

Once agreed, the administrator will despatch Offer letter, Principal Statement of Employment, Bank Details Form, Criminal Record Check Form, Pension Questionnaire and Pre-employment Health Questionnaire to the applicant.

On the employee's first day, the administrator will confirm attendance and the HR Manager complete Basic Check Vetting. A copy of the New Starter Checklist will be forwarded to the relevant Line Manager for completion.

### APPENDIX 6 – OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT FLOWCHART

