

# POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Solihull  
Life  
Opportunities

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Charity No. 1102297  
England Company No.  
5025939

## Recruitment

**Category:** staff

## Introduction

Recruitment of staff is an integral part of providing services to our learning disabled members and if done well ensures that staff are placed in a timely way, with the appropriate skills mix and experience to ensure high quality provision.

## Policy Statement

Solihull Life Opportunities (SoLO) considers that good recruitment and selection procedures are an essential element of its Equal Opportunities Policy. The procedures are intended to ensure that:

- No job applicant suffers direct or indirect discrimination or victimisation
- Posts are advertised to encourage applications from a wide variety of communities

Monitoring systems will be used to ensure that the policy and procedures are effective.

## Reviewing the post

When a post becomes vacant check whether positive action needs to be taken to assist the recruitment of:

1. Black people or those from ethnic minority groups
2. People with disability – what adaptations/adjustments could reasonably be made to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged.
3. People with additional responsibilities - by offering flexible working arrangements
4. Carers – by offering flexible working arrangements
5. Gender specific – where the work requires specific support from either male or female workers

Also review the post to assess the appropriate level of Criminal Records Certificate required so as not to discriminate against ex-offenders.

## **Job description/Purpose statements**

Job descriptions/Purpose statements will be based on a task analysis and need to include:

- The job title
- The main purpose of the job
- To whom the worker is responsible
- For whom the worker is responsible
- Main working contacts
- Key areas of the job
- Main tasks of each key area

Job descriptions/Purpose statements will be drawn up by the Line Managers, authorised by the CEO and, where appropriate, brought to the Trustees for agreement.

## **Person Specification**

A person specification helps to ensure that employees are selected on the basis of their relevant abilities rather than on subjective or irrelevant criteria.

The person specification needs to include all the qualities required to perform the job.

The following categories will be included:

1. Experience
2. Skills, knowledge and abilities plus an indication of the level of competence required
3. Qualifications – or ask for skills and knowledge to be evidenced via qualifications
4. Personal attributes
5. Personal circumstances (eg available in evenings etc)

The specification will be drawn up by those who have a good knowledge of the tasks in the job description – normally the line manager, authorised by the CEO and, where appropriate, brought to the Trustees for agreement.

## Advertising

Advertising must be appropriate for the post and take into account the desire to encourage applications from a wide group of communities.

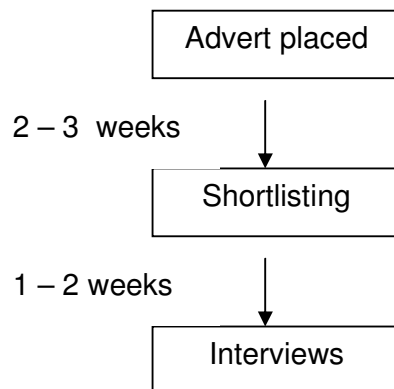
All funding bids must include adequate costs for appropriate advertising of related posts.

The advert content should include:

- The name of the organisation and the fact that it is a registered charity
- Job title
- Brief description of the job
- Brief summary of skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications
- Whether the post is only open to women or men or a particular racial group and, if so, the section of the Sex Discrimination Act or Race Relations Act under which the post is advertised.
- Salary (identifying the base salary with holiday entitlement)
- Hours and flexible working arrangements
- If post is temporary or fixed term
- Name/address/phone no. and website for enquiries and application packs
- Closing date for applications (and date for interviews if known)
- Statement of Equal Opportunities Policy operated
- CRB screening requirements of the post
- Any other relevant information, eg applications particularly welcome from...

Applicants will be given sufficient time to obtain the application pack and return it before the closing date.

A member of staff will be nominated to take telephone calls at the time when job adverts appear in newspapers.



## Job Application Pack

Enquirers will be sent a pack containing:

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- Application form
- Job Description or Purpose Statement
- Person Specification
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Information about the organisation/project
- Interview date if known
- Summary of the main conditions of service
- CRB policy and recruitment of ex offenders policy

## Application forms

Application forms will be used. Comparison of applications can be undertaken without bias if information is presented in the same way and only includes information relevant to the post.

Application packs can be sent via email. This can be amended to meet specific requirements but should only ask for information relevant to the post.

## Monitoring form

A separate form to monitor ethnicity/gender/disability should also be included. This must be separate from the application form.

On receipt of a completed application, a code number should be assigned to the application form and monitoring form; these should be separated before the short-listing panel has sight of them in order to prevent discrimination.

The monitoring forms should be used after the selection process is complete in order to monitor:

- The range of ethnicity/gender/disability groups to which applicants belong
- The number from each group who were short listed and/or interviewed
- The number from each group who were successful

Statistical information from these forms will be used to evaluate recruitment processes.

## Short-listing

A panel of at least two people should be identified to undertake the short-listing process. Copies of the job description and person specification should be issued and the panel members must be aware of the work of the organisation/project and any other relevant information. Panels may include relevant senior employees and board members; whenever possible the same individuals should be used for both short listing and interviewing.

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The decision to short-list a candidate for interview must be based on whether or not that person meets the essential criteria of the person specification. If further refinement is required the desirable criteria should be used to select candidates for interview.

Each member of the panel should be given a copy of all the applications or one set of photocopies can be circulated in turn to those undertaking the short-listing. Each member should short-list individually and keep a written record of his/her views on a standard score sheet. Discussion of the individual scores should inform a collective decision on whom to call for interview. A record must be kept of why each applicant has/has not been selected for interview.

After communicating with those applicants who have not been short-listed, a record of those who have been successfully short-listed should be kept for a period of 12 months, together with their score sheets.

## **Interviews**

The interviewing panel should whenever possible consist of the same members who were responsible for the short-listing or at least one of them. The panel should select a chairperson from amongst their number.

The whole panel must agree a list of interview questions prior to the interviews and the questions must relate to the skills and qualities required for the post. The panel must be sure what kind of information or response each question is designed to elicit and whether there is a 'right' answer.

Questions that are discriminatory, eg about childcare arrangements, should be asked only if they are relevant to the post. If such a question is required it should be posed to all interviewees in the same way, e.g. "Would working school holidays pose any problems for you?"

Interviews should be held in a place and at a time and length that is reasonable for all the candidates.

A written record of the interviews must be kept, to include scoring systems, weighting, and scores recorded by each panel member.

Discussions about the performance of candidates should be reserved until all have been interviewed. Each candidate should be assessed against the person specification rather than against other candidates. A written record of the final decision including reasons for the decision should be kept for a period of twelve months.

## **Qualifications**

Where qualifications are essential to carrying out the job, for instance on Summer Activities where working with children under the age of 8 requires us to have 50% of staff qualified to NVQ level 2 in child care, SoLO will require evidence of these qualifications.

## Selection Options

The interview panel has to decide who is appointable and may be able to agree a first, second and third choice. In this case the chair of the panel should contact the choices in order, offering the post subject to satisfactory references, CRB checks and medical examination if required, until an acceptance is obtained.

If a decision cannot be reached, the following options are possible:

- Re-interview two or three possible candidates
- Re-advertise the post. In this case check that the job description and person specification is realistic.
- Consider offering the post to a less than suitable person if it seems that additional training will enable the person to do the job. This option must be very carefully considered.

Where possible, telephone contact with each interviewee should occur as soon as possible after the interviews to let them know the outcome. This should be followed up by a letter, to be sent as soon as possible.

If an unsuccessful candidate asks for feedback, a member of the interview panel can discuss the reasons for that candidate being unsuccessful, and may also give pointers for greater success in the future.

A letter to the successful candidate should include:

- Starting date
- Any conditions e.g. subject to references, medical etc
- Salary
- Job title
- Request for any further documentation, eg P45, proof of entitlement to work in England
- Request reply in writing
- A contract including details of the probationary period

At the point when an unconditional offer is made to a candidate (eg when satisfactory references are received) and unconditionally accepted, a contract of employment comes into force.

## Accelerated procedures

This procedure may be appropriate for temporary or short-term contracts (less than six months or pilot schemes where it is determined that going out to open recruitment will significantly impede the delivery of the scheme).

A pool of staff that has been properly recruited and selected will be maintained for staffing both long-term and short-term leisure projects.

It is still important to follow equal opportunities procedures. The time and cost taken to recruit can be reduced as follows:

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- Limit advertising to publications where an advertisement can be published within two weeks. Also advertise internally, through our own mailing lists and in job centres.
- State in the advertisement that the applicant must be able to start immediately.
- Give only a telephone number in the advertisement so that applicants telephone for an application pack
- Have only two people involved in the short-listing and interviewing procedure and diary in dates for both procedures at the start of the recruitment process.
- Contact staff from organisations with whom we work in partnership, where those staff have been properly recruited and selected.

The procedures relating to job description, person specification, short listing and interviewing must be followed in all cases.

## **Change in status**

If a post within Solihull Life Opportunities changes from temporary, fixed-term or part-time to a different status, eg permanent, extended fixed-term, or full time; then the following options are available:

1. Treat it as a new position and advertise etc in the normal way, with the current post-holder eligible to apply.
2. Offer the post to the current post-holder provided:
  - The post holder was recruited following the SoLO recruitment policy in the first instance, including the accelerated procedure
  - The job description remains largely unchanged

### **Linked with Policies:**

- Equal Opportunities
- Recruitment of Ex Offenders