



Recruitment and Selection Policy

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1 Aims and Objectives

- 1.1. A strategic, professional approach to recruitment and selection is essential to ensure that we are able to attract and retain colleagues of the highest calibre and that all posts are filled by individuals with the required skills, behaviours, experience and abilities to contribute to the organisation.
- 1.2. The Trust aims to provide a positive, respectful and rewarding recruitment experience for all candidates, irrespective of the outcome, promoting equality of opportunity within our selection methods to enable candidates to be treated fairly, equitably and without discrimination or bias.
- 1.3. This policy is designed to assist managers to get the best candidates for their vacancies, following employment legislation, NHS standards and best practice. It should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment and Selection Guidance which fully describes the recruitment and selection process to be followed by all colleagues involved in the recruitment process.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This is a Trust wide policy which applies to recruitment and selection within all disciplines and for all posts, including internal secondments, fixed term, agency and bank workers, apprenticeship schemes (internal applicants), contractors, volunteers and non-Executive appointments (external applicants).
- 2.2 Medical Staffing appointments may be subject to additional guidelines governed by national agreements and specialist advice should be sought from the Recruitment Team.

3. Principles

- 3.2. The Trust values and respects the diversity of its colleagues and aims to recruit a workforce which represents the communities that it serves. Where we know that the workforce does not reflect the diversity of the local population, we will take positive action to encourage and support applications from under-represented groups.
- 3.3. The Trust recognises and has due regard for potential inequalities within recruitment processes and aspires to constitute a diverse recruitment panel.

- 3.4. The Trust will ensure that all colleagues involved in the recruitment and selection process have appropriate training in:
- recruitment and selection techniques
 - application of the Recruitment and Selection Policy
 - equality, diversity and inclusion
 - unconscious bias
- 3.5. The Trust operates a redeployment register for colleagues that may be at risk of redundancy or seeking redeployment. All vacancies will be advertised internally for a period of 7 days to support prior consideration for redeployees. Vacancies must be considered in accordance with the Trust's Redeployment Policy.
- 3.6. The normal recruitment protocols will apply (interview and assessment). The exception to this approach will be through the use of talent pools to the roles specified below:
- Operational Team Leader
 - Operations Manager
 - Operations Unit Manager

Talent pools will only be applicable, for appointable candidates, six (6) months from the date of interview providing the following new vacancy details are the same:

- job role
- tenure of contract
- grade
- post hours
- location

The use of talent pools must be made explicit during the recruitment campaign, as per the agreed Trust processes, and will require agreement between the senior responsible manager (Band 8b or above) and the recruitment manager prior to the advert.

- 3.7. In support of the requirements of the Disability Confident Scheme and Neurodiversity Charter, candidates who have declared a disability and who demonstrate they meet the minimum essential criteria for the post, will be guaranteed an interview. The Trust will make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the application, interview, and appointment of candidates.
- 3.8. The Trust recognises the value serving personnel, veterans and military families bring and is committed to the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme which offers guaranteed interviews for candidates who demonstrate they meet the minimum essential criteria for the post.
- 3.9. All applicants will be required to disclose if they are related to a director or have a relationship with a director or employee of The Trust. Recruitment panel members must also declare if they are known personally to any

candidate during the selection process. (Refer to the Relationships at Work Policy and Declaration of Interests Policy [Declaration of Interests, Gifts, Hospitality and Inducements Policy V3.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)).

- 3.10. All appointments will be in accordance with legal requirements, the NHS Employment Check Standards [Employment standards and regulation | NHS Employers](#) and in-line with the Trusts [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) Checks and Criminal Convictions Policy](#)
- 3.11. Under the statutory Fit and Proper Person's Requirement (FPPR) [Regulation 5: Fit and proper persons: directors - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](#), the Trust is required to ensure that it does not appoint a person to an executive director level post or to a non-executive director post and those senior managers which are recognised as part of the Trust Board unless they are:
- Of good character.
 - Have the necessary qualifications, skills and experience.
 - Are able to perform the work that they are employed for after reasonable adjustments are made.
 - Able to supply information as set out in schedule 3 of the FPPT regulations.
- 3.12. The Trust will ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are applied consistently for agency staff through the NHS Approved Crown Commercial Framework, [CCS health temporary staff frameworks - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- 3.13. Recruitment data is recorded, held and destroyed in line with [General Data Protection Act \(GDPR\)](#) and [DBS Code of Practice](#) and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.2. All colleagues should support the promotion of the Trust as an employer of choice.
- 4.3. All colleagues, involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process will treat information on applicants as strictly confidential.

4.4. Recruitment Manager

- Providing a high-quality recruitment service which includes the operational delivery of the recruitment administration, ensuring the process is safe, fair, effective and maintains Trust, national, legal and best practice standards.
- The introduction, application and monitoring of this policy and associated guidance.

- Producing data and management information on recruitment activity.

4.5. **Recruitment Team**

- Providing recruitment administration, co-ordinating pre-employment checks in line with the NHS Employment Check Standards [Employment standards and regulation | NHS Employers](#), ensuring that any concerns are raised to the Recruitment Manager.
- Providing advice and support in relation to recruitment and selection which is compliant with employment law/best practice.
- Advising the Recruiting Manager and overseeing the recruitment process for candidates who are on the redeployment register, part of a talent pool or who meet the prior consideration criteria.
- Ensuring successful candidates are supported through the on-boarding process.
- Maintaining records of recruitment and selection activity, including transferring appointment data onto ESR, creating/ updating personnel files, issuing offer letters and contracts of employment.
- Produce data and management information on recruitment activity.
- Ensuring the Starting Salaries and Pay Progression Policy is adhered to and Inter Authority Transfers (IAT's) are requested where appropriate.

4.6. **Recruiting/ Hiring Manager**

- Taking responsibility for reviewing and advertising the vacancy
- To select candidates of the right calibre, qualifications, skills, experience and values.
- To comply with the timelines identified for each part of the process they are responsible for.
- Liaising with the Recruitment Team where agency workers or contractors are being considered.
- Where recruitment relates to externally funded positions then discussions must be held with the Finance Team as early as possible, and prior to commencing the recruitment process, to ensure that any external funding is accurately assessed and to ensure that any resulting liability for the Trust is transparent and properly managed.
- Seeking advice and guidance from the HR Business Partner when recruiting to fixed term contracts.

4.7. **Recruitment Panel Chair**

- To ensure that all external candidates understand that offers of employment are subject to the successful completion of a probationary period.
- To ensure the appropriate constitution of the selection panel.
- To ensure that there are no actual or perceived conflicts of interest between the candidate and the panel.

- Verify the identity of candidates on commencement of the assessment / interview process.
- Take responsibility for the panel's appointment decisions, keeping detailed, legible notes from the interview and recording the decision of the panel, including objective reasons for not appointing.

5. Reviewing the Vacancy

- 5.1. When a post becomes vacant both current and future service needs should be considered, taking account of skill mix requirements and job design and ensuring that any recruitment activities are consistent with the workforce plan for the service.
- 5.2. All Job Descriptions must be up to date and formatted using the Trust approved Job Description and Person Specification template. Job descriptions and person specification must comply with the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- 5.3. All new roles or significantly updated existing job description or person specification must be formally evaluated in line with the Trust's Job Evaluation Policy [Job Evaluation Policy Procedure](#) . Information on this process is available from the HR Business Partnering and Job Evaluation Team. HR will not process any vacancy that has not been through the AfC job evaluation process.
- 5.4. The Trust has a range of employee friendly working practices to attract and retain colleagues which should be considered and promoted when recruiting. The Trust also has a number of initiatives to attract and retain applicants to posts which are harder to recruit to such as High-Cost Area Allowance, Recruitment and Retention Premia [Starting Salary and Pay Progression Policy V1.00.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#) and support towards relocation [Relocation Expenses Policy V3.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#), which can be considered prior to advertising.
- 5.5. To ensure the Trust complies with its legal requirements, it is important that the use of fixed term contracts is appropriate and limited to circumstances where this is strictly necessary.

6. Advertising the Vacancy

- 6.1. Authorisation must be sought through the relevant workforce controls process before any vacancy may be advertised.
- 6.2. Job adverts should give clear, accurate information about the Trust and the role, with bias free language. In line with the Trust ambition to be reflective of the communities it serves, adverts should include text inviting applications from underrepresented groups.

- 6.3. It is best practice for interview dates to be stated in the advert to ensure that prospective candidates are given as much notice as possible. Highly subscribed roles may be closed before the advised date where it is deemed that the candidate pool is adequate for the number of vacancies to be processed, however this must be made clear at the advertising stage.
- 6.4. All approved vacancies will be highlighted to the HR Business Partners in the first instance to identify any colleagues who are on the Trusts Redeployment Register. Any roles that have been identified as potentially suitable will be placed on the restricted vacancy list for no less than 1 week and all potentially suitable redeployees/at-risk colleagues will be notified of the vacancy and the closing date.
- 6.5. If the vacancy is not suitable for any redeployees/at-risk colleagues, the Recruitment Team will review the appropriate talent pool to identify previously appointable candidates prior to wider advertisement.
- 6.6. Vacancies will then be advertised via NHS Jobs and the Trust's Vacancy Bulletin. Social media platforms and other media can be utilised, by prior agreement with the Recruitment Team. Any costs incurred as a result of external advertising will be charged to the appropriate directorate.
- 6.7. Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted to ensure a fair and consistent application opportunity for all applicants.
- 6.8. Applicants who identify themselves as wanting to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme, Neurodiversity Charter or Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme must be offered an interview if they meet the essential shortlisting criteria of the post.

7. Recruitment Timescales

- 7.1. Vacancies will be advertised for a minimum of seven (7) calendar days, (see section 6.3).
- 7.2. The use of rolling campaigns or open days, where a number of similar posts, or a number of posts in the same department/ service area, are being recruited to at the same time may be considered. Advice should be sought from the recruitment team for these initiatives.
- 7.3. Timescales from closing date:

Longlisting/ Shortlisting	Ideally within 5 calendar days.	Recruitment Team / Recruiting Manager
Interview date	Ideally 7 working days from notification to	Recruiting Manager

	shortlisted candidates.	
Interview and assessment paperwork must be returned to the Recruitment team within	Within 2 working days.	Recruitment Panel Chair
Following completion of the interview both successful and unsuccessful candidates will be contacted	Within 1 working day	Recruiting Manager or Recruitment team, as agreed.

8. Shortlisting

- 8.1. Shortlisting will be undertaken by a minimum of two persons who have undertaken recruitment and selection training.
- 8.2. Shortlisting should objectively assess information presented in the application against the essential requirements for the post, as detailed on the person specification.
- 8.3. Where there are high numbers of applicants, longlisting may be requested from the Recruitment Team. It may also be necessary to undertake further shortlisting based on the applicant evidencing the desirable criteria, within the application form. Where the shortlisting pool remains high, pre-screening assessments may also be considered.
- 8.4. When shortlisting for apprenticeships, particular care must be taken to ensure the candidate has not already achieved the qualification or achieved a qualification that is materially similar. Further advice must be sought from the Recruitment Team.

9. Selection (interview and assessment)

- 9.1. Each candidate will be assessed against the satisfactory demonstration of Trust values/behavioural competencies, experience and other criteria outlined in the person specification. Where recruitment activity relates to a post at Band 7 and above, selection will include a structured interview and a minimum of one other assessment method which incorporates the [NHS Leadership Framework](#).
- 9.2. The interview panel will consist of a minimum of two people who can demonstrate competency in recruitment and selection techniques, gained through the Trust's Recruitment & Selection Training or recognition of prior learning. Wherever possible one of the interview panel members should be the prospective line manager of the vacant role. Interview panels may include panel members either external to the Trust or to the area of work to where the

role sits. The Chair of the panel should, where possible, be of a higher band to the post to which they are recruiting.

- 9.3. For Executive Director positions the panel should include one external assessor who is at Director level or above, a Non-Executive Director, the Chief Executive, and the Trust's Chairman.
- 9.4. The Trust may use assessment methods such as situational judgement tests, literacy, numeracy or technical / clinical/ physical assessments. Where considering Psychometric assessments, a full assessment centre, multiple-mini-interviews (MMI's) or stakeholder approach, this should be agreed in advance with the Recruitment team.
- 9.5. Conditional offers of employment will be made to highest scoring candidate. Where two or more candidates have both/ all reached the same highest score, consideration may be given to positive action where this is a proportionate way of addressing an under-representation or disadvantage to those with a protected characteristic. Specialist advice must be sought from the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead.
- 9.7. All panel selection and non-selection decisions must be fully and legibly documented in writing.
- 9.8. To support internal development and progression, all internal candidates will be given feedback if they are unsuccessful. All external candidates will be entitled to receive feedback, if requested within 8 weeks of the interview/ assessment date. Feedback will be provided via the Chair (or nominated chair) of the interview panel/ MMI within 10 working days.
- 9.10. Copies of all confidential documentation relating to unsuccessful candidates will be retained by the Recruitment Team for twelve months.

10. Clearances and Offer of Employment

- 10.1. Successful candidates will be notified of a conditional offer of appointment subject to satisfactory the required pre-employment checks. Internal references will be sought from the colleagues' current line manager.
- 10.2. Any unsatisfactory checks will be escalated for investigation/ risk assessment via the Recruitment Team. After further checks are carried out, if this remains unsatisfactory the conditional job offer will be withdrawn. This withdrawal will be actioned by the Resourcing Team, whilst in communication with the Recruiting Manager for the post.
- 10.3. Conditional offers will be made on the salary and associated benefits stipulated in the advert. Starting salaries above the bottom of the pay band will only be considered in accordance with the Trust's [Starting Salary and Pay Progression Policy](#) or [Pay Protection Policy](#), as applicable.

- 10.4. Once all the necessary clearances have been validated a formal offer of employment will be made. It is a legal requirement to ensure that a newly appointed colleague receives a written Statement of Terms and Conditions of Service (Contract of Employment) within a maximum of 8 weeks of date of commencement in post. This will be sent out by the Recruitment Team along with their appointment letter, confirming the start date.
- 10.5. If a candidate is not responding to requests from the recruitment team for pre-employment information the candidate will be given a date to respond and, failure to do so will result in the offer being withdrawn.

11. Induction

- 11.1. All new colleagues must undergo a formal induction process; this will include a Corporate Induction event (see [Induction Tool Kit \(sharepoint.com\)](#)).

12. Probation

- 12.1. All new colleagues are subject to a probation period before their employment is confirmed as substantive (see [Probation Policy](#)).

13. Anti -Fraud and Bribery

- 13.1 South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has zero tolerance in relation to any forms of fraud or bribery as defined under the [Fraud Act 2006](#) and [Bribery Act 2010](#).
- 13.2. Should an applicant be found to have made a false declaration at any point during the recruitment process the Trust reserves the right to withdraw them from the process. Applicants and employees must be aware that failure to provide a true declaration when asked by the Trust, or the making of a false declaration, will result in an investigation and may lead to disciplinary action. The Local Counter Fraud Specialist may also become involved which could lead to criminal/civil action.
- 13.3. The Trust prohibits bribery and will not tolerate its directors, management, employees or third parties, in their involvement in the organisation, being engaged in bribery whether by offering, promising, soliciting, demanding, giving or accepting bribes or behaving corruptly in expectation of a bribe or advantage.
- 13.4. As part of this fair recruitment process, South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust will not accept any attempts to bribe, corrupt or participate in fraud by interviewers or interviewees. If an individual(s) is suspected of attempting to bribe, or of being bribed by, another individual during the recruitment process then the suspicion should be reported

immediately to the Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) and the HR Department.

14. Monitoring Compliance

- 14.1. The HR Working Group is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. Human Resources (HR) will monitor the application of the policy and procedure through feedback from staff and managers. Feedback, legislature and changes to terms and conditions will be used to inform and improve policies, as well as provide recommendations for improving working practices. HR will provide relevant reports, based on this data, as required.

15. Audit and Review (evaluating effectiveness)

- 15.1. All policies have their effectiveness audited by the HR SLT at regular intervals, and initially six months after a new policy is approved and disseminated.
- 15.2. Effectiveness will be reviewed using the tools set out in the Trust's [Policy and Procedure for the Development and Management of Trust Policies](#) and Procedures (also known as the Policy on Policies).
- 15.3. This document will be reviewed in its entirety every three years or sooner if new legislation, codes of practice or national standards are introduced, or if feedback from employees indicates that the policy is not working effectively.
- 15.4. All changes made to this policy will go through the governance route for development and approval as set out in the Policy on Policies.

17. Financial Checkpoint

- 17.1. To ensure that any financial implications of changes in policy or procedure are considered in advance of document approval, document authors are required to seek approval from the Finance Team before submitting their document for final approval.
- 17.2. This document has been confirmed by Finance to have financial implications and the relevant Trust processes have been followed to ensure adequate funds are available.

18. Equality Analysis

- 18.1. The Trust believes in fairness and equality, and values diversity in its role as both a provider of services and as an employer. The Trust aims to provide accessible services that respect the needs of each individual and exclude no-one. It is committed to comply with the Human Rights Act and to meeting the Equality Act 2010, which identifies the following nine

protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Sex, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity.

- 18.2. Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty: If a contractor carries out functions of a public nature, then for the duration of the contract, the contractor or supplier would itself be considered a public authority and have the duty to comply with the equalities duties when carrying out those functions.