

AFG College with the University of Aberdeen

Recruitment and Selection Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

AFG College with the University of Aberdeen is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse selection of candidates of the highest calibre for both academic and professional services roles.

We recognise that staff are fundamental to our success and it is therefore vital that the recruitment and selection process is fair and transparent to ensure the most diverse pool of suitable candidates are employed to maintain a motivated workforce delivering high quality services in line with our mission, vision and values.

We are an inclusive workplace, seeking out the creative vigour of diversity by being open to all, irrespective of background. We are committed to equality of opportunity, to eliminating discrimination and to creating an inclusive working environment.

This policy provides clear guidance to ensure a consistent and professional framework, based upon the principles outlined below.

1.2 Scope

This policy covers all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all staff recruitment (internal and external).

1.3 Responsibilities

The HR Manager leading the recruitment activity is responsible for ensuring that the correct procedures are followed. All staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are expected to observe these procedures and to ensure that their actions are consistent with the core principles noted below.

1.4 Core Principles

We are committed to ensuring that our recruitment and selection processes are fair, transparent, consistent, sustainable and in accordance with legislative obligations and recognised best practice guidelines. Our core principles underpinning our recruitment and selection activities are:

- A principle of fair and open competition in our approach to recruitment. All appointments will be made following a merit based process.
- Candidates will be shortlisted based on meeting the Person Specification for the post and appointments will be based on skills, experience and merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the person best suited to the position and the institution is selected.
- We will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner in line with this policy and in compliance with current Qatari labour laws.
- Any individual who participates in the recruitment process is required to engage in unconscious bias training.
- We will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We are committed to tackling unfair and unlawful discrimination and to eradicating bias in the recruitment and selection process.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about job applicants is confidential and we are committed to ensuring that confidentiality is maintained at every stage. All correspondence, documentation and other data will be kept securely.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Preparation

Before undertaking the recruitment and selection process, a full evaluation regarding the requirements for the role should be undertaken by the Principal (or delegate) with support from the HR Department.

4.2 Job description and person specification

For each new and/or replacement role, a detailed job description and person specification will be developed. This will be in line with our institutional grading criteria for academic and professional services roles.

The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience for the job. This will be used as the shortlisting tool for all positions.

5. ADVERTISING A VACANCY

The Principal will consult with the Senior Management Team to agree whether the position will be advertised internally and/or externally.

Where it is appropriate to advertise internally for a senior role, the process outlined in Appendix A will be followed

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

6.1 Application Forms

For externally advertised roles it is a compulsory requirement that candidates fully complete the appropriate application form. Applications which contain only a CV will not be accepted.

Where roles are being advertised as internal only, a covering letter will be requested in lieu of an application form, as well as an updated CV.

7. SHORTLISTING AND SELECTION PANELS

The composition of shortlisting and selection panels will have due regard to ensuring representation from all protected characteristics.

8. SHORTLISTING OF CANDIDATES

The shortlisting process will be carried out as soon as possible after the closing date for the vacancy and will usually be conducted by those who will be on the Selection Panel. The role of the HR Partner on the Selection Panel will be to actively encourage that the shortlist contains a diverse pool of candidates.

Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including whether this will involve any presentations and/or tests, giving as much prior notice as possible and before the interview.

9. SELECTION PROCESS

9.1 Interviews

Interviews should be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the Principal or their delegate. Requirements for the panel composition can be found in Appendix B.

It may be a requirement for the position that candidates are asked to deliver a presentation to colleagues prior to their formal interview. If so, candidates will be informed of this appropriately at the same time as being invited for their interview. Candidates should also be provided with a clear topic to present on at the earliest opportunity and no less than 5 working days prior to the interview

Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification. The interview panel should meet prior to the commencement of the interview to discuss and agree the questions to be asked and the format of the interview. Alternatively, questions should be agreed in advance by circulation or at a pre-meeting prior to interviews commencing.

In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the convenor of the panel.

9.2 Declaring a conflict of interest

Selection Panel members are required to consider whether there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest in relation to other panel members or any candidate being shortlisted/interviewed.

Conflict of interest arises where members of selection panels are related to each other or have (or have had) a personal relationship with each other. Conflict of interest also arises where a panel member has (or has had) a personal or working relationship with an applicant, or is related to, or has prior knowledge of the applicant outside of the work environment which could in any way affect the decision they make.

Examples of conflicts of interest could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Where a panel member is involved in the shortlisting and/or interviewing of a candidate who is (or has been) a spouse, partner, close friend or other family member;
- Where a selection panel consists of members who are spouses, partners, close friends or family members;
- Where a panel member is a supervisor or a co-supervisor of a PhD candidate who has applied for a job;
- Where a panel member is a co-author on more than one journal article or publication with a candidate who has applied for a job;
- Where a panel member has a close working relationship with a candidate who has applied for a job, such as previous line management responsibility or previous relationships as a client and/or consultant;
- Where a panel member is aware that they have had previous involvement in management procedures (for example, performance management) concerning the candidate themselves or a spouse, partner, close friend or other family member of the candidate.

Account will also be taken of the requirements of the Staff: Relationships Policy where appropriate.

Once selection panel members have been identified, HR will contact them and ask them to consider if there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest in relation to other panel members or any of the candidates. It is the individual panel member's responsibility to declare a conflict of interest.

Where a potential conflict of interest is declared, HR will discuss this with the convenor of the selection panel who in turn will determine whether the panel member(s) should continue to be involved in the process.

Staff should avoid involvement in selection panels where there is a potential conflict of interest. If this cannot be avoided, the potential for conflict of interest will be declared and acknowledged prior to and again at the outset by the selection panel, which will determine how it can best be dealt with as well as keep a record of what is agreed.

10. MAKING AN APPOINTMENT

All selection panels will conclude with the completion of the Selection Panel Decision Form, which forms the basis for providing feedback to unsuccessful candidates, if requested. The Principal or Group Chairperson (or delegated authorities) are responsible for confirming whether an offer of appointment should be made, seeking consensus from the other panel members.

10.1 Communication of outcomes to candidates

Responsibility for communication to candidates following interview is to be determined at the end of interviews and will usually rest with HR. All panel members should be reminded that communications with candidates should be in line with HR advice at all times.

11. PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

11.1 Compliance with Qatari Labour Law

All offers of employment are subject to the candidate meeting the legal requirements for work visas and residency.

11.2 Qualifications/Professional Memberships

We will require candidates offered a position to verify their qualifications and professional memberships (deemed essential as part of the person specification) through the production of original certificates prior to commencement of employment. Additional supporting documentation may be needed as part of the process for gaining a work visa and residency.

11.3 References

All offers of employment will be made subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, which will be taken up by the HR Department. Strict rules of confidentiality apply to references and we will ensure that we adhere to our legal obligations.

APPENDIX A

AFG COLLEGE WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

RECRUITING INTERNALLY FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

New/replacement senior post identified by the Principal.



HR supports the Principal to create a job description and person specification which is in line with the grading criteria.

Details of proposed role including the job description and person specification come to SMT for discussion and approval.



Aberdeen are notified about the role via the Qatar Partnership Management Group (QPMG) if it falls within the scope of a senior appointment as detailed in the Academic Co-operation Agreement (ACA).



Role advertised internally by email to all colleagues who would be eligible to apply for the role (based on person specification) with the requirement for a two page letter of application plus a current CV.



If multiple applications are received - all applications are reviewed against the person specification by a shortlisting panel which includes the Principal, HR and an appropriate SMT representative. Single gender panels will be avoided.



HR convenes an interview panel for shortlisted candidates (to include UoA representation where appropriate) and agrees a common set of questions to be posed in each interview. All panel members will be required to review the information on unconscious bias and single gender panels will be avoided.



Interview takes place with the panel and all panel members make independent assessments against the agreed criteria. The appointed Panel Chair will make the final decision after considering the feedback from all panel members.

APPENDIX B

AFG COLLEGE WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

SELECTION PANEL COMPOSITION

The composition of a selection panel is an important factor affecting the fairness and equity of selection processes. A panel composed of members of identical social, cultural educational and/or employment backgrounds may be limited in its ability to fairly assess the experiences and qualities of applicants from backgrounds different to their own. As a result, all selection panels must ensure they are balanced in terms of gender.

1. SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM APPOINTMENTS

The composition of the Selection Panel for appointing to senior management level positions will be determined by the Principal and or delegated authority on an individual basis. In line with the Academic Co-operation Agreement (ACA), the University of Aberdeen will be represented on the panel where appropriate.

2. ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

All selection committees for appointment to Academic positions (i.e. Lecturer and Senior Lecturer) will be convened by the Principal, Senior Academic Lead (or nominated deputy), a representative from the appropriate Academic discipline and one other member of academic staff. The University of Aberdeen will also be represented on the panel.

3. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES APPOINTMENTS

All selection committees for Professional Services staff will be convened by a representative from SMT, and will include a minimum of 2 other individuals.