



The NHM Approach to Recruitment and Promotion: Guidelines for Managers

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. The 6 Principles of Recruitment and Promotion**
- 3. Summary of services provided by HR**
- 4. Responsibilities of the appointing manager**
- 5. Recruitment flow-chart**

1. Introduction

Like any other large organisation, we have a framework of policies and underpinning principles which define the purpose and boundaries of our activities. The way in which we collectively and individually operate policy determines the Museum's character and defines its reputation.

When under pressure to fill vacancies, it is easy to become obsessed by our own narrowly focused agenda and exclusive concerns. But as a public body, the Museum has a special mandate to be part of "the big picture" of Government social policy - both National and European. For example, the vision of a fair, just inclusive society which is respectful of human rights is expressed through a patch-work of employment laws and public sector equality duties. The legislation sets the boundaries of good practice in employment and provides remedies through the legal system when employment regulations are breached. But good practice is not simply a legal issue or a matter of morals and ethics: it also has a business imperative: good practice is good for the health of the organisation.

The intent of our general framework of employment policies and our approach to recruitment in particular is to enable fairness in the choices and judgements we make and the actions we take.

These guidelines give practical advice on how fairness and consistency may best be embedded into the Museum's recruitment and promotion practice.

Chris Hills
Head of Employment Policy and Recruitment
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2. The 6 Principles of Recruitment and Promotion

Our approach to recruitment practice is underpinned by six principles

Principle 1: Fairness

We seek to achieve best practice in delivering our diversity and equality objectives. Selection for appointment is based on merit irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, marital status, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Principle 2: Equality

We provide up-to-date equal opportunities training for all those involved in recruitment, selection and appointment decisions, from initial recommendations to final decisions.

Principle 3: Accessibility

We ensure accessibility in the application process so that certain groups are not inadvertently hindered or prevented from applying for a vacancy or being considered for it as a result of, for example, the locations in which job opportunities are advertised, the form of those adverts or required method of application.

Principle 4: Information to decision makers

We take care not to expose decision makers to information from candidates that could be used in a discriminatory manner (such as date of birth, equal opportunities monitoring information etc)

Principle 5: Objective criteria

We base selection decisions on merit and have clear, objective criteria at each stage of the recruitment and selection process. The focus rests on evidence of the candidate's capability to undertake the full range of duties of the advertised post.

Principle 6: Administration

The appointing manager is required to keep a paper-trail of the selection process, evidencing decisions and the reasons for them which HR will retain.

These general principles apply to both external recruitment and internal promotions.

PRINCIPLE 1

We seek to achieve best practice in delivering our diversity and equality objectives. Selection for appointment is based on merit irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, marital status, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

What this means in practice

To assure consistency, fairness and appropriate assessment, we aim to

- Raise awareness among minority groups about the Museum as a potential employer through signpost advertising
- Define objective criteria at each stage in the recruitment process based on clearly defined job and person specifications which highlight the skills for the post
- Compose selection panels that reflect diversity as well as a range of relevant experience.
- Select people for appointment for their relevant qualification, abilities and skill regardless of background

PRINCIPLE 2

We provide up-to-date equal opportunities training for all those involved in recruitment, selection and appointment decisions, from initial recommendations to final decisions.

What this means in practice

We recognise the importance of up-to-date training for all those involved in recruitment decisions, therefore we aim to

- Ensure that all managers involved in the recruitment and selection process receive relevant and regular up-to-date training.
- Monitor recruitment and appointment results using a diversity data framework

PRINCIPLE 3

We ensure accessibility in the application process so that certain groups are not inadvertently hindered or prevented from applying for a vacancy or being considered for it as a result of, for example, the locations in which job opportunities are advertised, the form of those adverts or required method of application.

What this means in practice

- HR will so far as possible make special arrangements to ensure accessibility in the recruitment and selection process

PRINCIPLE 4

We take care not to expose decision makers to information from candidates that could be used in a discriminatory manner (such as date of birth, equal opportunities monitoring information etc)

What this means in practice

We appreciate that care is needed not to expose decision-makers to information about candidates that could be used in a discriminatory manner, therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- Managers involved in recruitment and selection do not see biographical data that could be used in a discriminatory manner

PRINCIPLE 5

We seek to base selection decisions on merit and have clear, objective criteria at each stage of the recruitment and selection process. The focus rests on evidence of the candidate's capability to undertake the full range of duties of the advertised post.

What this means in practice

We seek to reduce subjective decision-making and to increase objective decision-making based on non-discriminatory requirements. The responsibility for selection and appointment decisions rests with the appointing manager, but through training we aim to ensure that

- Managers appreciate the importance of having clear and objective requirements/criteria at each stage of the recruitment process
- HR can assist with creating objective criteria to ensure they are not directly or indirectly discriminatory

PRINCIPLE 6

From a public administration point of view, we (the Museum) can be asked to explain our procedure and reveal detail about decisions under Freedom of Information legislation. In addition to that, people are entitled to know the basis upon which decisions about them are being made and this extends into recruitment and selection. There have to be exceptional circumstances to justify refusal to explain why a person is not selected.

What this means in practice

HR and recruiting managers ensure there is a good paper in place of the recruitment process, evidencing decisions and the reason for them. For example

- Scoring sheets against the selection criteria
- Agreed sets of selection questions and interview notes
- Reasonable records of decisions taken throughout the recruitment and selection process are held

In addition to offer to provide feedback scripts for candidates to explain the reasons for a decision. These are made available on request.

Feedback script

We use a simple bullet-point framework for feedback. We avoid making personal comments or judgements in favour of being specific about the criteria which the candidate satisfied and the gaps which the selection procedure identified. Feedback scripts provide

- 2 or 3 positive points about the criteria that the candidate satisfied or was very close to meeting
- 2 or 3 examples of the selection criteria that the candidate did not satisfy

4 Summary of services provided by the HR recruitment team and responsibilities of the appointing manager

Standard services provided by HR recruitment team

Authorisation

- Respond to a recruitment request and contact client
- Agree recruitment plan and timetable with client
- Input details to recruitment master file
- Liaise with payroll

Job description and person specification

- Liaise with client to develop job description and person specification
- Apply competence frameworks if available
- Complete job evaluation or job family classification as appropriate

Setting the selection criteria

- Provide advice on selection criteria based on the competence framework or skills and type of experience

Selection criteria that will be applied to

- Sift out candidates who fail to meet the specification or who are not eligible
- Make recommendations for the short-list interview
- Justify recommendations for appointment

Develop recruitment materials

- Collect information for the candidate briefing pack
- Review Corporate material and Job specific information
- Produce a brief about the selection process and the timeframe that will be followed

Select media

- Brief agency and collect advice on effective media options
- Agree content, coverage and costs with client

Advertise the vacancy

- Provide draft advertising copy
- Operate two-tick symbol
- Use NHM Corporate introduction
- Use NHM Brand employee benefits statement
- Apply NHM written and visual House Style Guide
- Check proofs and sign-off with client
- Load to website
- Release to other media

Candidate care

- Provide recruitment materials and information
- Respond to enquiries/correspondence from candidates
- Investigate candidate complaints
- Invite candidate to interview
- Provide feedback from feedback script agreed with client
- Issue (conditional) job offers and contracts
- Issue Welcome Packs to new starters
- Liaise with payroll
- Book new starters to the Big Welcome and managers to Induction

Selection process

- Implement each stage of the selection process
- Keep records of selection decisions at each stage of the process
- Provide advice on specialist selection methodology if needed
- Confirm the selectors and their respective roles
- Confirm the timetable for each stage in the selection process

References and job offers

- Establish candidate suitability for job and complete pre-employment checks
- Prepare unconditional offer letter and contact documentation
- Issue welcome pack

Monitor completion of pre-employment checks for all jobs

- Identification documents e.g. passport, visa or work permit for non-national
- Reference from previous employer
- Criminal records check
- Health check questionnaire

Additional checks for certain jobs:

- Verify qualifications if job needs particular accreditation
- Security-related or financial checks for specified roles

Monitoring

- Implement equality monitoring
- Produce recruitment statistics

Additional services from HR

The following additional services can be arranged. For details and costs (where appropriate) please contact us:

- Legal advice
- Training
- Pension information
- Information about terms and conditions of employment

Services provided by third parties

- Adverts in the press/other publications are handled by Tribal Resourcing under our instruction
- Specialist recruitment agencies can be used subject to cost and procurement rules

5. Responsibilities of the appointing manager

Successful recruitment relies on a detailed specification at the very start of the process. Incomplete preparation and “making- it- up -as -you- go-along” affects cost and creates potential for long time delays. Having clear and objective criteria also helps to ensure that our recruitment practice is lawful.

It is essential that a timetable of all the actions needed to complete recruitment is agreed. In particular, you are responsible for the following:

- Your training in recruitment skills and equal opportunities is up-to-date
- Authority to recruit and the signed CTE or other authority
- Preparation of the job specification and the selection criteria.
- Attendance at briefing meetings, sifting meetings and selection interviews
- Commitment to the timetable
- Feedback scripts
- Avoiding changes of mind once the specification is set