

Tribunal Advisory Committee, 30 May 2018

## Selection and Appointment Policy

### Executive summary and recommendations

#### **Purpose**

This policy provides the framework which ensures good practice in recruitment in order to attract high quality candidates from diverse backgrounds and to fully support both the appointment process for partners to the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) and its commitment to diversity and equality.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all partners, who fulfil a range of functions, to the HCPC.

Everyone involved in the recruitment and selection of partners has a responsibility to ensure that candidates are treated fairly and decisions are made objectively in line with the HCPC's commitment to equal opportunities.

All managers who have responsibility for recruiting partners should be made aware of and adhere to the contents of this policy. External consultants, current partners, recruitment agencies, advertising agencies or other experts who assist in the recruitment process must act in accordance with this policy.

Recruiting managers and the Partner Team are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the recruitment process are carried out to avoid unfair discrimination on any ground and in accordance with legislative requirements, including equal opportunities issues, good practice and HCPC policies.

The Partner Team Manager or the Partner Co-ordinator will manage any recruitment campaign on behalf of the recruiting manager but may delegate any part of the recruitment process where appropriate to a Partner Team administrator.

Recruitment and selection training is available to all staff who may be or become involved in the appointment process.

This policy provides a framework for recruitment. Adjustments can be agreed to handle specific circumstances (for example high volumes of applicants). Any agreed

adjustments to the policy for a specific recruitment campaign must be agreed and documented in writing between the partner manager and the recruiting manager and saved in the recruitment folder of the campaign.

### **Valuing diversity**

The HCPC is fully committed to making the recruitment process accessible. Information packs and application forms can be provided in an alternative format and the recruitment process can be adjusted to meet the candidate's needs. Initial advice on access issues is available by emailing [partners@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:partners@hcpc-uk.org) or by calling 020 7840 1722.

If a potential candidate has a specific access requirement, they are asked to send a request to the Partner Team at least two weeks before closing date and/or interview/assessment date to provide the team with sufficient time to consider the request. The Partner Manager will consider any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Candidates who have declared a disability in their application form and have contacted the Partner Team, might be considered under the 'Disability Confident' scheme. The HCPC will carefully review their application form to ensure that they fulfil the minimum requirements in each criteria. This is normally set as achieving a score of 2.0 or more in each criteria.

The HCPC is committed to ensuring that no candidate receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of disability, sex, race, religion or belief, age, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.

The Partner department will provide an annual report to the HCPC on all recorded E&D data of successful and unsuccessful candidates.

### **Establishing and authorising a vacancy**

The Partner Manager in cooperation with the operational lead will identify the requirement for its partner resource. This will involve conducting a review of the resource(s) need against current and projected activities.

Before the appointment process can begin it is the responsibility of the user department to send the authorisation form to the Partner Team.

The Partner Team will review all recruitment authorisation request forms, and has to ensure that the recruitment has been budgeted for as part of the process.

### **Preparing to recruit**

Before the appointment process can commence, an 'Information for Applicants' document is produced which includes the partner role specification and competencies. The 'Information for Applicants' document will also list the required competencies and person specification, explain the application and decision making process and timescales.

This document enables applicants to understand what the role will entail and how they will contribute to the statutory functions of the HCPC. It will also enable managers to define the type of partner they require and serve as the criteria against which applications will be assessed in the shortlisting and selection process.

### **Information for Applicants**

The 'Information for Applicants' identifies the principal responsibilities and key tasks that the partner will be expected to perform. It should be accurate and concise and state the profession and modality we are looking for (if applicable). It is important that candidates declare the modality they will work in

The competency section will set out the specific skills required for each partner role and any competencies that we expect.

It is important to note that the 'Information for Applicants' document will be used to underpin the job advert, shortlisting criteria and interview questions.

The recruiting manager (user department) should prepare an initial draft and seek advice from the Partner Team Manager who will ensure that it correctly reflects the requirements and expectations of the role.

### **Amendments to the appointment and selection policy**

This policy is primarily focused on the recruitment of partner roles through internally or externally advertised campaigns and extensive networks. In some circumstances appointments may be made following agreed amendments to the policy (see point 8 of this policy). These would include expressions of interest or short term appointments where a partner works in another area and has a modality that the HCPC finds difficulty in sourcing.

## **Recruitment plan**

Once the relevant authority has approved the partner resource requirement and the 'Information for Applicants' is agreed, the Partner Team will agree a recruitment plan with the operational lead.

The plan will take into account the resources and the budget available and will also include the advertising, the assessment methods and the timescales in which the recruitment campaign will be delivered.

The timescales will normally be published at the start of the campaign and will be used to monitor the progress of the campaign at each stage. All dates are provisional and may be subject to change.

Timescales can be flexible to meet the availability of the assessors and the different times of campaigns. However as a guide:

- All partner vacancies will normally be advertised for a minimum of 10 working days.
- Where practicable, the shortlisting process will be completed within 10 working days of the closing date.
- The interview / assessment date should normally be around 15 working days after the candidate has been notified of the outcome of their application.

Once the recruitment plan has been agreed, the Partner Team will instigate the campaign and manage the process.

## **Advertising**

Partner vacancies will be advertised on the HCPC website, they may also be advertised in the relevant national or specialist professional media, social media and/or other external sources.

In exceptional circumstances only, for example if there is an urgent or temporary need for a Partner role, the HCPC may consider advertising the role to existing partners in the relevant profession only.

For each campaign, the Partner Team will recommend an appropriate and cost effective solution to attracting a high-quality and diverse pool of candidates.

All vacancies that are advertised externally will be displayed on the HCPC website.

Any advert will need to be reviewed and formally signed off by the Partner Manager.

The advertising media may include, but is not limited to the press, websites, social media and trade publications.

All adverts will include a diversity statement.

### **Application process**

Candidates are normally asked to complete an online application form via the Partner Portal (for current partners) and the Partner Recruitment site (for external applicants).

Applications will continue to be accepted up to date and time advertised.

### **Initial screening**

A member of the Partner Team who is not involved in the shortlisting process, will be responsible for managing the applications via the Partner Portal. On running the report, the system will automatically anonymise the applications and allocate a candidate number.

Sections which contain personal details, declarations, and equal opportunities information from the application will not be passed to the shortlisters.

The pre-screening process will confirm candidates have completed the mandatory questions in the application.

The mandatory questions will ensure that candidates:

- provided details of their eligibility to work in the UK and details of the necessary work permits
- provided details of any conflict of interests, significant political activities and disciplinary issues.
- are registered in the relevant profession/modality (for registrant recruitment only)
- ticked the declaration box.

The pre-screening process will also ensure that all requests for adjustments that are detailed in the application form are forwarded to the member of the Partner Team managing the recruitment campaign.

Where candidates have detailed an unspent conviction under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, their application will be progressed for shortlisting. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily stop the candidate from providing services to the HCPC. The Partner Manager will communicate with the candidate about the offence and discuss the issue with the Director of HR/Head of the Operational area to consider how relevant it is to the role they are applying for before making a decision.

The Partner Team will also verify information for registrant applicants via NetRegulate and cross reference with information provided by the candidate.

### **Shortlisting applications**

The shortlisting process will determine the most suitable candidates to invite to interview. The final cut-off score will be adjusted, especially where a high number of suitable candidates has been identified, to allow those to the next stage with the highest scores only.

All shortlisters will be the HCPC departmental managers, senior officers and/or a HCPC recruitment partner and will be familiar with the role and the shortlisting process and policy. In exceptional circumstances current Council Members and Panel Chairs might be used for the purpose of shortlisting.

Shortlisters will be fully briefed on the shortlisting process and will review application forms within a set timeframe. They will ensure that all applications are kept securely and are treated confidentially.

Part 2 of the application form is used in the formal shortlisting process. It is forwarded to the shortlisters to enable them to determine whether candidates:

- are meeting the criteria set out in the 'Information for Applicants'.
- have a clear motivation for applying for the role and to the HCPC
- have the relevant competencies for the role.

Alongside the application form the shortlisters will receive a copy of the 'Information for Applicants', which illustrates the pre-agreed level of skills and ability that is expected, and a scoring grid to record their scores.

### Scoring application forms

One or two shortlisters will review each application form independently and will allocate a score from zero to four against each of the criteria detailed on the scoring grid. The criteria will normally be the competency headings from the 'Information for Applicants' document, specific skills for the particular partner role and the response to Question 1 about a candidate's motivation for applying for the role and the HCPC.

The definitions of the scores are detailed in the table below.

Score	Performance Rating	Rating Meaning
0	Unsatisfactory	Did not address the competency
1	Limited	Did not demonstrate the competency due to limited example and/or explanation
2	Satisfactory	Demonstrates the competency to a satisfactory level
3	Good	Demonstrates the competency to a good level
4	Excellent	Demonstrates the competency to an excellent level

The shortlisters are essentially looking for evidence in the form of specific and concise examples that illustrate how the candidate meets the skills required for the role.

As guidance, comments like 'I am good at working as part of a team' would score zero.

The shortlisters should focus on the actual evidence provided rather than assumptions of what this may mean the candidate has done.

The scores for each competency section, as well as the reason for application should be entered onto the shortlisting grid under the relevant heading and totalled.

Once the shortlisting process has commenced, the criteria must not be changed or new criteria introduced.

After the shortlisters have independently reviewed their application forms, they must provide the Partner Team with their scores.

The Partner Team will collate all scores in the Master spreadsheet and review any comments being made. After the shortlisting is completed the Partner Team will provide the recruiting manager with all scores of the shortlisting exercise and an analysis of potential cut-off scores.

- The cut-off score will typically be around half of the total points available from each shortlister (depending on the scoring scale). However the cut-off score may be adjusted depending on the business needs and the number and calibre of the candidates.
- Where a role has a very specific requirement such as a particular modality and the candidate does not meet this criteria, they should not be subject to the shortlisting process or be considered further. A clear note of the decision and the reason not to shortlist should be retained on file.
- Shortlisters will come to different decisions about candidates and this is reasonable. There is no requirement for all scores to be identical.
- Where the total scores of the two shortlisters show a large discrepancy, they might be referred for further consideration to the Partner Manager as part of the quality assurance process.

Provisional cut-off	Shortlister 1	Shortlister 2	Action
16	15	18	Review scores
16	16	12	Review scores
16	17	18	No action

- There is no requirement to review scores where both scores are below the provisional cut-off.

Provisional cut-off	Shortlister 1	Shortlister 2	Action
16	5	1	No action



- Where there is a high volume of candidates the Partner and recruitment manager will decide if applications should be reviewed by one shortlister only. In this case an increased percentage of application forms should be quality assured by the Partner Team (at least 20%).
- Any anomalies or issues arising out of the shortlisting process should be discussed with the Partner and recruiting manager and noted where appropriate in an email and saved in the recruitment folder.

The Partner Manager:

- may carry out a random spot check on the scoring process to ensure consistency and compliance
- should review the final recommendations for interview to ensure that the decisions made by the line managers fall within the scope of the recruitment policy.

On making a decision about the final cut-off scores this should be documented in an email from the Partner manager to the recruiting manager. Any matters or decisions that need to be documented following the shortlisting process should also be captured in this note.

### **Quality assurance**

The process of quality assurance (QA) might take place where the shortlisters scores are either side of the cut-off score or where the decision was taken that one shortlister should score each application form.

The person to undertake the QA will normally be the Partner Manager or the Partner Co-ordinator. The QA scores will be reviewed against the original scores from the appointed shortlisters. The designated QA person will make a decision as to whether to invite the candidate to interview or not based on their QA scores.

In exceptional circumstances the designated QA person may also decide to adjust the cut-off point that was agreed by the original shortlisters. The score and the decision of the QA process will be final. All QA scores and decisions will be recorded in the recruitment spreadsheet.

For example and for the avoidance of doubt, where a proposed cut-off score was 16 and a candidate had scored a 12 by shortlister one, 17 by shortlister two and a 15

during the QA; then the candidate would not be invited to attend a selection event as two scores were below the anticipated cut-off.

However, where a proposed cut-off score was 16 and a candidate had scored 13 by shortlister one, 17 by shortlister two and a 16 by the lead QA; then the candidate would be invited to attend a selection event as two scores were above the anticipated cut-off.

### **Following shortlisting**

Once a decision has been made on the final shortlist of candidates they will be invited to the next stage of the recruitment process.

Once the Partner Administrator receives the shortlist, they should highlight to the Partner Manager:

- Any candidates who have indicated that they require adjustments to the recruitment process to enable the required adjustments to be established and agreed.
- Any candidates who have the right to work and have provided details of a work permit or require an imminent extension to their work permit.
- Any candidates who answered 'Yes' in the Conflict of Interest, Significant Political Activities, Other Business or declared any conviction or other disciplinary issues.
- Any issues identified as part of the Fitness to Practise NetRegulate check and in particular where there are inconsistencies.

The Partner and recruiting manager will review any issues, declarations or convictions and come to a decision about their impact. In exceptional circumstances the Director of HR will be consulted to make a final decision. Any decision will be documented and saved in the recruitment folder.

Candidates who do not meet the final shortlist will be sent a suitable response advising them of the outcome of their application. All correspondence will be sent by email where an email address has been provided on the application form.

Feedback is also available to unsuccessful candidates and will be provided by the Partner Team upon request.

## **Selection and assessment**

The Partner Team will support the operational manager to design and deliver the most effective process but the manager will need to consider the following in advance.

- The most important key skills, experience, knowledge, ability and attributes that are required for the role, recognising that they cannot test for every competency.
- The location, resources, availability of assessors and budgetary implications.
- Any form of testing forms part of the process and cannot be used in isolation.
- The methods they use to assess the required skills.
- Draw on previous experience and expertise.

The Partner Team will aim to meet with the operational manager to agree the details of the recruitment process, the number of stages, the interview and training dates and the types of exercises that will be used at the start of the recruitment campaign.

## **Assessment methods**

There are a number of options for assessment and these are detailed in the list below. It is important that assessment methods are appropriate for the role and relate back to the key skills and competencies which are being assessed.

- Competency-based interview
- Group exercise
- Case study
- Assessment centre
- Presentations

This list is not exhaustive and new and effective ways of obtaining additional information about the competencies that cannot be obtained from the candidate during the interview or the application form may be designed and implemented from time to time.

The Partner Team will be able to provide support and guidance in determining the most appropriate options for assessment and designing new materials/interview questions

etc. A combination of these methods might be used during the recruitment process to assess the candidate's skills and potential.

Out of fairness, interview questions cannot be altered after the assessment process has started.

Candidates will receive a full briefing on the details of the selection event, the type of selection methods to be used and any materials they need to read or prepare.

Candidates will be asked to bring the relevant original documents to confirm their identity to the interview for the Partner Team to check

Candidates who contact us because of a disability will be able to discuss any reasonable adjustments that need to be made to the recruitment process including accessibility requirements. The Partner Team will write to the candidate detailing the adjustments that have been agreed and will ask the candidate to confirm their agreement in writing, where practicable, to ensure the requirements have been captured correctly.

### **Assessors**

All assessors will be HCPC departmental managers, senior officers and/or a HCPC recruitment partner and will be familiar with the role and the interview process and policy. In exceptional circumstances current Council Members and Panel Chairs might be used for the purpose of shortlisting.

All assessors involved in the recruitment process will receive a full briefing on the selection methods and the scoring mechanisms in advance. They will also be provided with a full timetable and copies of Part 2 of the application form for all candidates in advance of the assessment process.

In the event that an assessor is unable to attend a selection event due to absence, alternative arrangements will be made by the Partner Team.

Where adjustments have been made for candidates with a disability, the assessors will be fully briefed on the adjustments required and will ensure these are implemented in conjunction with the Partner Team.

## Scoring

For each part of the selection process one score sheet will be provided and the assessors will be responsible for scoring and awarding points to reflect the candidate's performance in the exercise and/or interview.

The scoring mechanism for each exercise will be agreed prior to the selection event and provided to the assessors. It cannot be changed or a new one introduced after the start of the assessment.

Scores will normally be allocated for each competency or criteria from 0 - 4 as detailed in the scoring grid of the assessment method.

Score	Performance Rating	Rating Meaning
0	Unsatisfactory	Did not address the competency
1	Limited	Did not demonstrate the competency due to limited example and/or explanation
2	Satisfactory	Demonstrates the competency to a satisfactory level
3	Good	Demonstrates the competency to a good level
4	Excellent	Demonstrates the competency to an excellent level

If an interview is used as part of the process, assessors will be provided with one scoresheet for the interview and have to discuss the performance of the candidate and agree on **one score per criteria** based on the candidates' responses to the questions put to them by the interview panel. The scores allocated for each criteria or competency will be totalled to provide an overall score.

Half marks may be allocated by the assessors.

Assessors should provide comments based on the evidence detailed on their observation forms to support their scores. This will be used as the basis for feedback.

Scores for specific skills within exercises, presentation, interview etc, may be weighted depending on the overall importance. In case different weightings are used, this will be documented by the Partner manager in cooperation with the recruiting manager and saved in the recruitment folder of the specific campaign.

## Decision making process

The Partner Team will collate and review all interview and/or assessment scores and forward these to the recruiting manager with an analysis of potential cut-offs.

The recruiting manager will review the provided scores and, in cooperation with the Partner Team, make a decision about the cut-off scores which will determine the number of successful candidates.

### **Outcome of assessment**

All candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application shortly after the selection process. Correspondence will be by email where an email address has been provided on the application form.

The Partner Team will review any declarations made on the application form and if necessary review these as described above.

Feedback is available to unsuccessful candidates and will be provided by the Partner Team upon request.

### **Offers**

All Partner appointments are signed off by the Chief Executive or Director of Human Resources.

Offers will be made in writing, normally within one week of the assessment.

Email confirmation should be retained on the recruitment file.

All offers to external candidates are subject to the candidate providing within our required timescales the following to the Partner Team:

- appropriate original documents that confirm their eligibility to work in the UK
- a minimum of two references that are entirely satisfactory covering their employment during the last three years (at least one from their line manager or supervisor)
- if the candidate had more than three employers in the past three years, we will use the most recent referees.
- for those who have not been employed during the last three years, references from appropriate professionals/university lecturers
- completion of training within 12 months of interview

- evidence to allow the HCPC to undertake any other relevant checks.

## **Feedback**

Upon request, the HCPC will provide feedback to candidates in relation to their performance at all stages of the recruitment process.

Requests for feedback must be sent to the Partner Team in writing within one month of the date of the outcome letter.

Requests for feedback will normally be provided within two weeks of receiving the request; although this may vary depending on the size of the recruitment campaign.

The Partner Team will be responsible for managing the feedback with support and input from the assessors involved in the process.

## **Expenses**

Expenses for standard travel will normally be reimbursed upon request and in accordance with the Interview Expense Policy.

Candidates must complete the Interview Expense Claim Form and send it to Finance within one month of attending the assessment process.

## **Restrictions or Exceptions for Partner Roles**

Council Members of the HCPC are not eligible to perform the Partner role of Visitor or Panel Member on either a temporary or permanent basis.

Council Members of the HCPC are not eligible to perform the Partner role of Registration Assessor on a permanent basis. However, Council Members are eligible to perform a partner role, on a temporary basis only, in exceptional circumstances. For example exceptional circumstances could be when there is a shortage of Registration Assessors in a particular profession and modality, and there are no Partners available to perform this role. Council members are eligible for temporary appointment to this role only whilst recruitment takes place to fill the Partner role with a non-Council member. This should be approved by the Director of HR.

Former Council members or Presidents of the HCPC are not excluded from applying to become Partners through the normal application process.

For further information please refer to the [Role Restriction Guidance](#).

### **Conflict of Interest**

Candidates are required to declare any potential conflict of interest in accordance with the [HCPC Conflict of Interest Policy](#) when applying for Partner roles. If there is a perceived conflict of interest, this may prevent a Partner from being shortlisted for a Partner role.

Any partner, HCPC staff or external advisor involved in the recruitment process is required to declare any potential conflict of interest in relation to all applicants.

### **GDPR**

The HCPC will retain information about unsuccessful candidate for 13 months only, Successful applicants' data will be retained and stored for a minimum of ten years after their contract expired, but specific details such as bank details will be deleted within six months.

### **Complaints**

Complaints should be addressed to the Partner Team within two weeks of the outcome of any assessment notification and will be reviewed by the Partner manager.

We will send you written acknowledgement (email or letter), on receipt of your complaint within 5 working days. We will also inform you of the dedicated member of the Partner Team who will be dealing with your complaint.

We will then record your complaints and start to investigate on your behalf. This is likely to involve the following steps:

Examining your record to ascertain the sequence of relevant events & related correspondence

Interviewing the relevant members of staff for clarification on the issue

- Liaising with senior management as appropriate
- We aim to acknowledge, fully investigate and duly resolve all complaints within 14 working days



A full written response to your complaint will be drafted by the appointed member of the Partner Team and sent to you with supporting documentary evidence (if applicable).