

Recruitment of Staff Policy

POLICY STATEMENT:

EKC Group has ambitions to be the best it possibly can and in so doing aims to ensure the appointment of the best people through a robust recruitment and selection process to ensure the workforce of the Group is its greatest asset. Specifically, the policy's objectives are to:

- Recruit staff with the appropriate technical and personal skills, and with behaviours that are consistent with the Group's ethos in order to meet the organisation's current and future needs.
- Develop and enhance the reputation of the Group and strive to ensure that it is an employer of choice and a quality provider of further and higher education.

Work to a fair, effective and transparent recruitment procedure, which is consistent with employment legislation and the Group's Equality and Diversity policy.

- To ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that only staff who are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults are employed.
- To ensure that staff appointed to posts involving teaching responsibilities are qualified to carry out such duties or are working towards an appropriate qualification.

Policy scope

This policy is applicable to all staff recruitment, irrespective of staff group or nature of employment and encompasses all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process.

Responsibility for ensuring that the correct procedures are followed lies with the Manager responsible for recruitment activity within their area of responsibility, whilst the ongoing effective conduct of this policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Resourcing team and their respective management structures.

All staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are expected to ensure that their actions are consistent with the core principles defined in this policy.

General principles of the policy:

1. The Group will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process will ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the college.
2. The Resourcing team will oversee all appointments and will offer advice and guidance to managers on good practice in the recruitment process.

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3. The Group uses permanent, fixed term and casual contacts to enable business and individual needs to be met.
4. All vacancies will be recruited through the Group's online platform to ensure a fair and consistent approach to shortlisting and robust vetting and pre-employment checks. Assistance will be provided for any candidate who has difficulty accessing or using the recruitment platform.
5. In most circumstances vacancies will be advertised externally (whilst encouraging internal candidates) with the aim of increasing diversity amongst our workforce and avoiding any discrimination. There may be exceptions to this including role enhancements and when roles are ring-fenced during restructures, for example.
6. The Group wishes to increase applications from groups which are underrepresented in our communities and from candidates with disabilities; The Group is accredited as a 'Disability Confident' and operates a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria.
7. The Group will employ skilled workers from abroad, subject to the Government's skilled worker requirements and evidence of a candidate's right to work in the UK. This will usually be in cases where vacancies are specialised or hard to fill. A separate procedure covering the employment of skilled workers is in place.
8. The Group will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.
9. The only staff who can be designated as hiring managers are Deputy Heads and above (for Education vacancies) and Heads and above (for Group Support vacancies).
10. The Group will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities. As a minimum, all staff who undertake interviews will have attended interview skills training and the Chair of the interview panel will have up to date safer recruitment training. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy themselves that they are appropriately trained and can comply with the requirements of this policy and the internal Group procedure.
11. Recruitment and selection should enhance the reputation of the Group. As such, the Group will treat all candidates fairly, with dignity, respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
12. EKC Group will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow the implementation of new ideas and approaches.

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13. EKC Group will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost effective.
14. All documentation relating to candidates will be treated confidentially in accordance with Data Protection Legislation. A Privacy Notice advising candidates about how their data is processed will be available at the point of application. Candidates will have the right to request access to any job selection documentation held about them in accordance with that Legislation. Details relating to candidates unsuccessful at interview will not be held on file by the Group after six months at which point, they will be destroyed/deleted.
15. Candidates for posts will be asked to declare any personal relationship with a Group employee as part of their application, and any hiring manager or member of an interviewing panel must also declare any personal relationship to a candidate both at shortlisting and interview stage. Adjustments within the shortlisting process and recruiting panel may have to be made accordingly. Consideration will be given as to whether there is a conflict of interest leading to a necessary change in process or panel and each case will be judged on the circumstances pertaining to it at the time.

PROCEDURES:

There are five key stages in the recruitment and selection process, namely Planning, Advertising, Shortlisting, Interview and Offer. These are outlined in detail below. Management guidance is available for each stage of the process.

1. Planning

- 1.1. Once a vacancy has been identified the hiring manager will fully complete a staffing request form which will include all the details of the post, how it will be funded and essentials for advertising and recruitment. All staffing requests will be authorised by the relevant Principal or Business Unit Director before being forwarded to the Resourcing team for processing.
- 1.2. The hiring manager will ensure that a job description and person specification is in place for the role. The content of the job description will clearly reflect the duties, skills and experience required for the post as well as the essential and desirable criteria. Job descriptions will have been evaluated in accordance with the Group's job evaluation process to ensure that the salary and job grade is as fair and as competitive as possible.

2. Advertising

- 2.1. As a minimum, adverts will be placed on the Group's website '[Work with Us](#)' pages, however most vacancies will be advertised more widely on job boards such as LinkedIn and Indeed. We may also advertise on sector specific sites and sites which candidates with certain protected characteristics may use.

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- 2.2. Adverts will utilise proactive and inclusive language, reflecting the Group's aim of attracting diverse candidate pools, including women, minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities, LGBTQ and Care Leavers, particularly where these groups are underrepresented in the organisation.
- 2.3. Adverts will endeavour to state an interview date or interview period so that candidates can plan ahead.
- 2.4. External adverts will be live for a minimum of two weeks. Internal adverts will be live for one week.
- 2.5. It may not be appropriate to advertise a vacancy externally where:
 - an appointment may be made via an internal advertisement only to support career development and/or retention;
 - the length of post is less than 6 months and a suitable candidate has been identified;
 - other circumstances, in which case, advice should be sought from the Resourcing Team.

3. Shortlisting

- 3.1. Shortlisting decisions will be fair, objective, non-discriminatory and properly documented. Shortlisting decisions will be recorded on the recruitment platform so that candidates can seek feedback if they ask for it.
- 3.2. Within two days of the vacancy closing the initial shortlisting of applications will be carried out by comparing evidence in the application against the essential and desirable criteria for the post as set out in the job description. Because of the risk of lack of objectivity and data protection concerns, EKC Group has a policy not to check candidates' social media profiles as part of the recruitment process unless directed to these by the candidate to evidence experience or expertise and accompany an application.
- 3.3. Shortlisting will be carried out by the hiring manager and one other person, usually the line manager for the role, both of whom should sit on the interview panel.
- 3.4. Staff who shortlist will not have access to a candidate's personal information/identifiers until such time as a candidate is selected for interview. This is done to ensure that the shortlisting process is objective and free from bias.
- 3.5. Where a candidate discloses a criminal conviction on their application, this information will be made available to the Resourcing Team who will discuss the circumstances of any convictions with a candidate prior to the interview taking place. This information will not be available to staff who shortlist. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily debar someone from working in education. It depends on the

circumstances of each case which will be carefully explored and risk assessed by the Resourcing Team in collaboration with the candidate.

- 3.6. All candidates invited to interview should be considered to meet the essential criteria, given the expectation that candidates will not otherwise be able to operate successfully in the role. Where a candidate does not meet one or more of the essential criteria, that candidate cannot be invited to interview. Where a large number of candidates appear to meet the essential criteria then the desirable criteria will be used to identify those who are most suitable to be invited for interview.
- 3.7. Where a candidate has disclosed that they have a disability and they meet the minimum criteria, they will be invited to interview and offered reasonable adjustments to help them fully participate in the interview.
- 3.8. During shortlisting, the hiring manager will identify which of the criteria will be assessed as part of the application and which criteria will be assessed as part of the interview process (this may be an exercise, activity, panel interview or a combination). Criteria can be assessed at both application and interview stage.
- 3.9. For the criteria which will be assessed at application the hiring manager will indicate the weighting that will be used when they complete the shortlisting stage. They will indicate what weighting is being given to each criteria on the person specification which is part of the job description.

Shortlisting Weighting are as follows:

Criteria	Description	Weighting (what the score will be out of)
Critical / Minimum requirement	<p>These criteria are essential for the role i.e. it would be extremely difficult for the person to carry out the role without already having these essential skills, experiences or qualifications.</p> <p>This also assists in our commitment to being a disability confident employer whereby we interview all candidates who have declared a disability as long as they meet the minimum criteria for the post.</p>	6
Important	<p>These criteria would be significant to the candidate being successful in the role. These may be skills, experiences or qualifications that have substantial meaning for the role but could be supported or taught on the job. You would consider the candidate as long as a higher proportion of the significant criteria was met.</p>	4

Other relevant	These criteria are desirable but not a 'deal breaker'. It would be great if the candidate had these, but it is not expected for the candidate to be shortlisted. If you still have a large number of candidates you may want to consider the scoring of the 'desirable' criteria.	2
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Scoring will be made under 3 criteria based on the evidence that has been provided in the application:

- Fully meets criteria – full marks
- Partly meets criteria – half marks
- Does not meet criteria – no marks

If a candidate does not pass the shortlisting stage, they will be advised via the recruitment portal within 2 days of the shortlisting being completed. Feedback to external candidates will not be given as a matter of course, although it can be requested. Feedback to internal candidates will always be given.

4. Interview and Assessment

- 4.1. A minimum of one week's notice of invitation to interview will be given to candidates.
- 4.2. All interviews for one post will be conducted by the same panel, usually on the same day.
- 4.3. The hiring manager will invite all candidates to select an interview slot via the online recruitment platform, advise them about the interview schedule and if there are any assessments or skills tests which need to be undertaken prior to the interview.
- 4.4. Candidates will be asked to bring a form of photographic ID to the interview which may be checked by the hiring manager.
- 4.5. Candidates for teaching positions will be required to undertake a short teaching session prior to the interview itself.
- 4.6. In all cases, if the skills test or teaching session reveals a safeguarding concern, candidates will not progress to interview stage.
- 4.7. All teaching sessions and skills tests will have accessibility and inclusivity designed into them so that candidates are not discriminated against or disadvantaged if they have a disability or learning need.
- 4.8. Candidates for senior positions (Service Heads, Curriculum Heads and above) will be asked to complete a psychometric profile assessment and responses will be explored during the interview.

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- 4.9. Interviews will involve a minimum of two people. One of these must be the hiring manager. For all Head and Director of Service posts and above (i.e. Group Directors, Principals and Group Leadership posts) the appropriate Group Leadership Board member will be on the panel. For heads of curriculum the Deputy Chief Executive Officer will be on the panel.
- 4.10. There is also an option for the hiring manager to call on other staff to be on the panel as well as external independent persons.
- 4.11. All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. This is done to ensure equity in the selection process. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. At least one question will cover the candidate's understanding of safeguarding and how it applies to the role. Gaps in employment and other safeguarding matters raised in the application will also be explored.
- 4.12. Each interview will be chaired by the most senior member of staff present at the interview. It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that the interview is conducted professionally and in accordance with legislative requirements. The chair will cover the following with each candidate:
- Welcome and introduction to the interview panel
 - Ask if the candidate requires any reasonable adjustments
 - Advise that notes will be taken
 - Ensure that all the questions are covered
 - Ask if the candidate has any questions
 - Advise that any offer is subject to two satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, ID check, right to work check, occupational health assessment, teacher prohibition check (if relevant) and section 128 check (if relevant), International criminal records check (if applicable)
 - Advise about EKC Group's staff policies, benefits and working conditions
 - Advise when the candidate will hear the outcome of the interview and thank them for attending
- 4.13. Unsuccessful interview candidates will receive notification of the outcome of the interview via the Group's recruitment portal as soon as possible after the interviews have been completed. We will not routinely give feedback to unsuccessful external candidates but where this is requested, feedback will be fair and constructive. Internal candidates will always receive feedback where they have not been successful at interview so that any development needs can be captured in development and career plans.

5. Offer

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- 5.1. The Resourcing Team is responsible for drawing up the letter of appointment and contract and confirming that the candidate agrees to the terms and conditions offered.
- 5.2. All appointments to posts will be subject to pre-employment checks under the Group's Vetting policy and this will be clarified at the offer stage.
- 5.3. The hiring manager is responsible for keeping in touch with the candidate once the offer has been made and accepted to ensure that they feel welcomed, engaged and ready to start the onboarding process.

Associated policies and procedures

- DBS and Vetting Checks Policy
- Skilled Worker procedure
- Relocation procedure
- DBS risk assessment process
- Internal recruitment procedure and management guidance