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Policy

Fife Council's Aims and Values set a considerable challenge for our employees and we recognise that an important part of achieving them is having the right people in the right place and at the right time. To help us to achieve this it is essential that we have effective means of recruiting, selecting and retaining employees with the right skills and attitude to further the Council's aims.

In line with the Council's aims and values we also have a responsibility to be a good employer and we therefore wish to provide work which is rewarding and secure. In stating that we wish to offer secure employment, there will be occasions where this is not possible and an appointment will be made on a temporary basis (where this is the case reference should be made to the Temporary Employment Policy).

All recruitment carried out will be in accordance with this policy.

Guiding Principles

All appointments must be made based on merit and be consistent with current employment legislation and the Council's Equality of Opportunity Policy.

- All recruitment decisions should be by a panel of at least three. In the case of Headteachers, the recruitment should be by a panel which should include an Elected Member, a Parent Council representative and Education Service management.
- If anyone is involved in the recruitment and selection process and has any kind of relationship which might affect their ability to be impartial, that relationship must be declared and a decision will be made whether the person can or cannot participate in the recruitment and selection process.
- Training should be provided for those involved in the recruitment decisions. At interview stage at least one interviewer should have received formal training.
- Applications should normally be on Fife Council application forms. If accepted, CV's shall have personal details removed.
- Vacancies, with the following exceptions, should be advertised internally in the Council's vacancy bulletin. Posts filled on an "acting up" basis or used for redeployment purposes are excepted. Suitable promoted posts may have recruitment restricted to a group of existing trainees if there was open and fair recruitment to the trainee group.
- Before vacancies are advertised, an up-to-date job outline and person specification must be available.
- Decisions to invite to interview should be carried out by those who will conduct the interview. In the case of panel interviews, at least two of the

panel should be responsible for deciding which candidates should be invited to interview.

- Interviews must be conducted in a fair and consistent manner and must be structured and systematic. Candidates must be evaluated against the criteria in the job outline and person specification.
- All information on application forms must be treated as confidential and restricted to those members and officers involved directly in the recruitment process and its administration.
- Appointments should not be made without written references. Information obtained through references must be treated as confidential, though they may be shared with the candidate. Only written references in an approved format will be considered.
- The recruitment process and decisions arising from it must be documented and documentation held for at least 6 months.
- Information obtained for monitoring purposes will not be made available to recruitment panel members but will be used to monitor recruitment procedures in terms of the Council's Equality of Opportunity Policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed under the terms of the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff.

Procedure

I. Introduction

This guidance applies to the selection up to and including the long leet stages for Depute Headteacher and Headteacher in schools. The formal appointment process for Depute and Headteacher involves parent councils and elected members and is the subject of separate guidance.

The purpose of this guidance is as follows:

- a. To provide guidance to school managers, service managers and other staff involved in the process of recruiting and selecting teaching staff.
- b. To ensure that recruitment and selection decisions comply with employment and other relevant legislation and best practice.
- c. To ensure that the Education & Children's Services recruitment and selection procedures follow the guiding principles of the Council's Vacancy Management process and Equality of Opportunity Policy.
- d. To provide the basis for a fair and consistent approach to the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in Fife.

Process Map

Fife Council has adopted a structured approach to process management and the corporate Recruitment and Selection procedure is now available in the Council's Process Management Framework (sometimes called Q-Map).

This framework highlights the key stages of the recruitment and selection process along with all relevant forms, policies and guides. Although the framework is a useful quick reference source, it is recommended that these guidelines are read in full and remain your main point of reference.

The Recruitment and Selection process can be accessed on the intranet in HR Online/Staffing/Recruitment.

Further Reading and Assistance

EO01 Equality of Opportunity Policy and Guidelines (available from HR). (**Appendix I & 2**)

HR Online via First Contact (to discuss any aspect of Recruitment and Selection, discuss amendments to forms or letters if necessary and as a source of information and advice).

2. Roles in Recruitment & Selection Procedures

The Council considers recruitment and selection within the Education & Children's Services to be the overall responsibility of the Executive Director. Support in these

procedures is provided by a variety of other specialist council services, although the main responsibilities are as follows:

- The Education and Recruitment Payroll Team (ERP) is responsible for appropriate administrative procedures relating to recruitment and selection, in particular the administration of advertising, application forms, the issuing of written statements of terms and conditions.
- School managers, service managers and other staff will be responsible for appropriate administrative procedures and the selection processes, letting, interviewing and appointing as detailed in this guidance.

As there are many stages in the recruitment and selection process you may find a Recruitment Checklist useful in keeping track of the recruitment exercise **(Appendix 3)**.

The Recruitment Checklist can be used whenever a job becomes vacant or approval has been given for a new job. You may wish to amend the format for your own use.

3. Identification of Vacancies (Establishment and Authorisation of Posts)

Before creating a new job or when a job becomes vacant, consider how the vacancy will be filled or if it needs to be filled at all. If a job does not need to be filled tell the employees affected by the decision, or their Trade Union Representatives, and HR Direct. Further guidance can be sought from HR Direct.

In cases where it is anticipated a vacancy will last for no more than four months it may be appropriate to fill the gap by secondment, acting up or redistribution of the work. In the case of secondment or acting up an advert may not be necessary provided that you are satisfied that you are aware of all the employees who may be interested.

Where it is decided that an advert is not necessary the rest of the procedures detailed in this guidance would normally be applied e.g. interested employees would still be interviewed before an appointment. The recruitment analysis and interview assessment forms should be completed as fully as possible.

If only one employee who meets the requirements of the job or only one employee is interested, a meeting with the employee must be held in order that he or she is made fully aware of the duties and responsibilities of the job.

When considering potentially interested employees you should also consider the possibility that there may be experienced and qualified people outside your own Section or Service.

Caution needs to be exercised when considering not advertising a job. There is a potential conflict with equality of opportunity when not opening up job opportunities.

When you consider that a job does not need to be filled in the normal manner this should be discussed with HR Direct and the Trade Union representatives for your Section or Service.

3.1 Temporary Posts

A Code of Practice for Temporary Teachers has been issued to all establishments. This identifies procedures to be followed for staff in a supply context and those engaged for a longer period of time. Schools should follow guidance provided

3.2 Authorisation of Vacancy

A job becoming vacant is an opportunity to review the job requirements and the duties attached to it. Where there are major changes to a job discuss this with the Trade Union representatives for your Service or Section and HR.

To get a new job, or a significant change to an existing job, approved the Establishment Change Form must be completed (**Appendix 4**) and sent to Human Resources. Once the post has been evaluated, the financial implications can be assessed by Finance before authorisation by the relevant senior manager or Executive Director. Allow time for the various parties to complete this process. It is likely to take a **minimum of 26 days** before the advert is published. The Establishment Change Process Flow Chart (**Appendix 6**) shows who is involved, when, and how long it will take them to complete their part of the process.

Adverts must not be sent to the Recruitment Administration Team until all the signatures giving authorisation are obtained.

3.3 Job Details (Appendix 7)

All recruitment exercises will begin with the job profile. The job profile is vital to the success of the recruitment exercise since it will set out clearly the duties and responsibilities that the jobholder will carry. It is also one of your main opportunities of selling the job to potential applicants.

The job profile will assist you in ensuring that there is no doubt or ambiguity about the requirements of the job.

Standard job profiles are available for most posts under this policy. Please check with the Recruitment and Payroll Team if you are unsure, or if you feel there is specific information required for your post.

All schools and establishments will provide information for each post which is consistent with local and national agreements. This would include the following:

- Grade/Salary Point (resulting from the job sizing process)
- Job Outline including key responsibilities and duties
- Reporting structure

In the case of a headteacher or head of establishment vacancy, this will be completed by the Recruitment & Payroll Team in conjunction with the relevant senior manager.

3.4 Person Specification

The person specification is the next step after the job profile has been completed. You should prepare it before the advert.

A good person specification will ensure that there is no doubt about what attributes a person will need to be successful in the job. This will minimise subjectivity during recruitment and selection. The person specification is crucial to the success of the recruitment exercise and in avoiding subconscious bias.

The requirements identified in the person specification will form part of the advert, it will be used to help select the best applicants for interview and to select the best interviewee to be appointed.

The person specification will define essential and desirable criteria and look at how this can be tested i.e. through the application form, the interview, references, some form of test, a piece of written work, group exercises or in-tray exercises.

Characteristics, qualities and competencies included in the person specification as requirements to do the job, should be set out clearly and precisely. Requirements must be those which are currently necessary to do the job. Do not just copy the requirements that were used the last time the post was advertised without asking whether they are still relevant. This may work against women, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people and those with non-traditional but valid experience. By excluding unnecessary requirements, we avoid being unfairly discriminatory.

You must ensure that you are not too restrictive. This could result in unlawful indirect discrimination. For example, seeking lengthy experience can be discriminatory to people who have taken time away from work for childcare responsibilities. Experience of a particular kind of work is only one way of developing the skills required. Skills developed in other types of work, voluntary work, or in organising a family may be just as relevant to the role.

This danger is minimised, however, when the person specification is written with the job profile in mind and therefore linked to the needs of the job.

A template for the Person Specification is attached (**Appendix 9**).

3.5 School/Establishment Information

All schools/establishments will provide information about themselves which should be up to date and should be sent to the Recruitment and Payroll Team by email education.recruitment@fife.org.uk or with the ECI. This should include:-

- Type of School/Establishment
- Size - related to staff, pupils
- Purpose

- Location
- Environment (possibly a photograph)
- School/Department Development Plan Priorities

In the case of management posts and particularly headteachers, the following information may be considered appropriate. Where possible information should be provided through the corporate website – Fife.gov.

- School Prospectus
- Standard and Quality Reports
- Education & Children's Services Improvement Plan
- Education & Children's Services Plan
- Fife Community Plan
- Most recent HMle Report
- Summary of the SDP

This information will supplement the service information carried in all Education & Children's Services Job Packs.

3.6 Advertising a Vacancy

The primary purpose of recruitment adverts is to attract suitable candidates to the organisation and to the specific post. In order to achieve this, the Council has agreed the following procedure.

All recruitment adverts are placed in

- the Council's intranet
- **fife.gov.uk** - the Fife community partners' website
- Weekly Vacancy Bulletin, which is circulated within the Council, and to community partners
- JobcentrePlus offices and website

Services may choose to advertise in local and national newspapers and other publications. The Council uses a corporate advertising style for all recruitment adverts. Recruitment adverts are placed in one composite advert in each publication.

There are 2 basic layouts of advert. Firstly, a short list style composite advert, with information on each vacancy restricted to 75 words. This is the standard layout for adverts in the vacancy bulletin and in the local press. Secondly a slightly larger advert, with information on each vacancy limited to 150 words. This is more suitable for

national press and publications. Special adverts for senior posts, difficult to fill posts or recruitment campaigns can be specially designed.

The Council's advertising agent creates the adverts for publication; combining individual adverts and applying the corporate style.

All adverts are channelled through the Corporate Services, Administration Support Team for placing in the intranet, fife.gov, Vacancy Bulletin, Job Centre and all external publications.

Adverts should provide the necessary information for candidates but avoid too much detail. Instructions and guidance on writing adverts is given below.

The recruiting manager has responsibility for the accurate and timely completion of the advert and advertising approval form.

The advert must be written after the Job Profile and Person Specification, as it is based on the information in them.

The Administration Support Team, Corporate Services must receive all adverts (and the complete electronic application pack) by 12 noon on the Friday before the week of publication.

Draft the advert as an MS Word document. The standard information that should be included in any advert is listed here. Guidance and examples are available to assist with this.

- a) Job Title
- b) Grade and Salary or Wage
- c) Terms and conditions (such as part time, shift work, temporary)
- d) Information about job such as purpose, responsibilities, main duties, and location
- e) Main selection criteria (appropriate qualifications, experience, skills and attributes)
- f) Contact details for application packs (the standard wording will be applied to composite adverts by the advertising agency)
- g) Reference number and closing date.

Complete the advertising approval form and ensure the Head of Service or delegated person signs it. The form can be found in Teachers Recruitment Support Pack (Appendix 4). Email the advert, Advertising Approval Form and complete application pack.

Internal Only Vacancies

Vacancies advertised as 'internal applicant only' allow applications not only from current temporary and permanent Fife Council employees but also from a number of associated organisations including:

- Council led government initiatives
- ESF funded programmes
- New Deal
- Skillseeker
- BRAG
- West Fife Enterprise

These organisations provide training that will improve the client's employability. Please note, applications from **employees** of these organisations should not be considered as 'internal' – only from their clients.

While it is important to provide development opportunities to existing staff, it is essential that achieve a balance in our recruitment practice which also promotes partnership working and equality of opportunity.

Agency workers and external consultants are not employees and cannot apply or be considered for vacancies that are internal only.

Supply staff and casual workers are not employees and cannot apply or be considered for vacancies that are internal only.

3.7 Application Packs

The purpose of the application pack is to provide information to encourage suitably qualified people to apply for jobs. It should contain relevant and accurate information, presented in an attractive, easily understood way and should be easily accessible to applicants. It must promote a positive image of the Council as an employer and Fife as a place to live and work.

To achieve this, the Council has agreed the following guidelines.

- Fife.gov is the main source of recruitment information.
- All Fife Council vacancies are placed on fife.gov and must have the complete application pack attached, to be available instantly to prospective applicants.
- The same information is also available on the intranet.
- The application packs can also be printed and posted out to applicants on request.
- All application packs must contain a standard range of information, although these differ depending on the post.

- Additional information may also be included, provided it is relevant to the post, it is suitable for both printer friendly electronic format and paper packs and it is cost effective to post out.

The recruiting manager has the responsibility for the quality of information and presentation of the application packs but, in practice, may delegate collating the information.

The Application Pack is compiled after the advert is written and the Advertising Approval Form is completed as it contains information from both these sources.

Compile an application pack for each vacancy, which includes:

- Information Sheet
- Job Details including
 - Job Profile
 - Person specification
 - Terms and Conditions
- Standard Fife Council Information
- Service information
- Job Application Form
- Any additional information

Ensure all information is in a suitable user-friendly electronic format for applicants to access. This master copy will be used to print /photocopy the packs for posting out to applicants

The complete application pack must be in electronic format, capable of being downloaded from fife.gov by applicants and printed on their home computer.

All packs must include the standard elements, but Services can add additional material if required. Any additional material should be as concise as possible; too much information can be confusing and may discourage applicants.

The style and format of all information should be consistent, to provide a quality, well presented pack. Arial 12 is the standard font.

Standard pack

The following paragraphs explain the standard elements to be included in application packs, where you can access them and what you need to do to compile the complete pack.

The standard pack contains:

1. Cover - Information Sheet
2. Job Details including
 - a. Job Profile
 - b. Person Specification
 - c. Terms and Conditions, including employee benefits
3. RS66 Living and Working in Fife
4. Service Information
5. Application Form

The post title and date of advertisement should be included in the footer to facilitate an audit trail for future recruitment of the same post.

Information sheet

This provides applicants with information about the selection process and how to apply. Copy the model Cover – Information Sheet from RS71 Job Application Information Pack (**Appendix 8**) and modify for your vacancy by adding the following information.

- Post title.
- Vacancy Reference Number.
- Closing date.
- Contents list.
- Information on the selection methods to be used e.g. an interview, keyboard test, presentation.
- The length of time the selection process will take, e.g. an hour, half a day.
- The proposed dates, or at least a week beginning date, for interviews or other selection methods.
- The person to whom the application form has to be returned, including an email address and a postal address.
- Contact person for general enquiries.
- Optionally, you can include a contact name for informal chats. (However, if you do so, make sure that the person blocks out time in their diary to be available. If this is not done, it is extremely difficult to manage and gives a bad impression to prospective applicants.)

Job Details

This comprises the Job Profile, Person Specification, and Terms and Conditions.

Living and Working in Fife

This is a standard sheet about Fife and the Council which should be included in all packs. It can be found on the intranet as RS66 Living and Working in Fife **(Appendix 11)**.

Service Information

A short statement about the Service should be included as standard, to allow all applicants to identify with Service aims and values. The information in this document should complement the job description, terms and conditions and information on Fife and Fife Council in the Recruitment Pack by providing brief, concise information on the specific Service the vacancy falls within. We suggest you keep it to one page and avoid jargon, acronyms or over-description. Most applicants will best appreciate a snapshot of the Service, though there is a case for providing more detail for senior management positions. The following content is suggested.

- Name of Service.
- Introduction – keep this to a short paragraph describing the overall role the Service provides to the people of Fife.
- Service activities – a brief description of what the Service actually does and the specific issues it covers.
- Service aims - a brief description of what the Service aims to deliver for the people of Fife.
- Service resources - this can be a broad description of locations, facilities, finances, staffing, transportation, machinery etc.
- Organisation chart - this should show the general structure of the Service, and should not identify names, grades etc,

Additional information

Only send additional information if it is necessary to the recruitment process. Applicants cannot cope with information overload. The information could be job, Service or Council related, but it must be relevant to the particular job and necessary to the recruitment process.

It should give the applicants a greater understanding of the context, purpose, duties and responsibilities of the job, either to assist with the decision to apply, or to allow them to focus their applications. An example would be information for Applicants to Roman Catholic Schools **(Appendix 12)**.

Presentation and file size.

If you wish to attach some additional information, it should be in keeping with the rest of the pack. Font should be Arial 12.

Large files, especially those with graphics and pictures, are difficult to download, not printer friendly and costly to post. However, avoid attaching numerous individual files, as applicants will lose interest and fail to open them.

Options

Summarise large documents such as Service plans. Applicants only need an awareness of the aims and objectives, major milestones. The complete document is more suited to the induction programme for the successful candidate. Send detailed information to the short-listed candidates only if it is necessary for any assessment process or to stimulate discussion at the selection stage.

Equality issues

Be very cautious about including hyperlinks to specific information on fife.gov, as not everyone will have easy access to this. If it is essential that applicants read this information, then include it (or a summary) in the packs so that those requesting packs posted to them will also have access

The Instruction Sheet of the application pack already informs applicants that further information is available on fife.gov and that access is available free at all Fife Libraries. Many applicants will seek out such information for themselves.

3.8 Application Forms

The application form ensures compliance with appropriate Council policies e.g. equal opportunities and employment legislation. It also allows written information, the main basis for selection, to be acquired in a consistent manner. The purpose of the information contained on a written application is as follows:

- to contact the applicant
- to match the applicant against the requirement of the post as stated in the job details
- to provide the basis for a contract of employment.

Completed application forms are treated confidentially. Only those involved in the selection process should have access to application forms.

Personal data including age, sex, marital status, dependants, nationality and ethnic origin will not be sought on the application form but are requested on the attached Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. This data is not available to the selection panel but will be used appropriately for equal opportunities monitoring purposes.

Curriculum Vitae will not be considered.

Fife Education & Children's Services currently have two standard forms for teaching posts – Form B for a non-promoted post (**Appendix 13**) and Form C for a promoted post (**Appendix 14**). Application forms are available on the intranet and Fife.gov. If requested, a paper copy will be sent.

Collection and Distribution of Application Forms

After the closing date for any post the following procedures are currently undertaken in the collection and distribution of teaching application forms.

All applications will be sent to the address indicated on the form i.e. presently the Contact Centre. The Contact Centre is responsible for

- Sending out blank application forms
- Receiving and recording completed application forms
- Passing all completed application forms to the Education Recruitment and Payroll Team on the Tuesday following a Friday closing date.

All application forms will be posted first class to the Head of School/Establishment in the last post on the Wednesday after the closing date.

If forms require to be collected urgently, they may be collected on the Wednesday after the closing date from reception, Education Service, Floor 3, Rothesay House between 1000 and 1600.

If application forms are to be sent elsewhere then the Recruitment and Payroll Team should be informed before lunchtime on the Wednesday after the closing date. This preference can be indicated on ECI form.

All applicants will be notified about the outcome of their application – successful and unsuccessful.

4. Equal Opportunities

Fife Council is serious about eliminating unfair discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities. The Council is committed to providing employment opportunities on a fair and equal basis and creating a working environment for all employees that is safe, accessible, and free from harassment or discrimination and which values and respects each individual's identities and cultures.

It is against Council policy and illegal to discriminate against a candidate because of race or ethnicity, gender (including considering, undergoing or having completed gender reassignment), sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, disability, or Trade Union affiliation.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

To achieve this we need to collect information about age, gender, race, religion and disability. This monitoring is required by legislation. The information obtained about applicants and employees enables us to check:

- applications are being received from a broad cross-section of people
- people appointed represent a cross-section of people who apply and are suitably qualified
- our recruitment and selection procedures and working practices are fair
- our policies meet the diverse needs of our employees

The monitoring form must be treated in strict confidence. The form and information note should be sent out with a separate envelope as part of the application pack.

When the application is received the monitoring form should be held separately.

It is not compulsory that applicants return the form. The note issued with the form outlines why we are carrying out monitoring.

Applications administration includes the administrative duties associated with the receipt and logging of applications, handling confidential equal opportunity monitoring information and sending the applications to the relevant manager.

Services are responsible for putting in place appropriate administrative arrangements to carry out these functions.

Administration Procedure

- a) Print email applications.
- b) Acknowledge receipt and successful printing of email application with a return email.
- c) Log applicants details from both email and paper applications.
- d) For each vacancy, count the total applications returned by email.
- e) For each vacancy, count the email applications which have been received with no initial contact.
- f) Record this on the Recruitment Analysis Form.

Separate the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form from the Application Form. Hold the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms confidentially and securely. Staff involved in the selection process must not have access to this information. Send Applications and Recruitment Analysis Form to the appropriate manager.

Further Reading and Assistance

EO01 Equality of Opportunity Policy and EO11 Equality of Opportunity Guidelines (**Appendix 1&2** Or see the council intranet.

5. Application Selection

5.1 Acknowledgement of Applications

Services may wish to acknowledge applications, particularly where there are unlikely to be many applicants. If a decision on who will be short-listed for interview has not been made within the time-scale indicated to the applicants consider writing to all applicants to advise them of the delay. (Please see: Acknowledgement of Application Letter within RS50 Recruitment Letters and Forms. (**Appendix 15**))

5.2 Selection Panels

All vacancies will require a selection panel to both leet and interview.

Guidance relating to the composition of all panels is contained in **Appendix 17**. A list of trained staff will be maintained centrally and staff allocated to relevant selection panels.

In relation to Headteacher posts, the Appointments Committee will comprise parent councils, elected members and Education & Children's Services management, some of whom will have been part of the setting process. Separate guidance will be issued in relation to this process.

5.3 Panel Interviews/Allocation

There will be occasions when the Education & Children's Services will wish to recruit on the above basis, as opposed to a school based selection. Separate training and methodology will apply to staff identified to take part in this procedure.

5.4 Applying Selection Criteria

Short listing is difficult if there are very low or very high numbers of applicants. Low numbers result if the information provided is so tight that potential applicants have ruled themselves out and have not applied. A more serious cause can be if the advert for the job has not reached an adequate pool of potential applicants; for example if it was restricted to internal applicants only. This may conflict with discrimination laws unless the internal population of the organisation mirrors the diversity profile of the general population, which is unlikely. This might mean that people from minority groups are not aware of the vacancies and are denied a chance of applying.

High numbers are likely to be caused by the information supplied being too loose resulting in too many people meeting the advertised minimum requirements of the job.

Taking care when short-listing will help us to ensure that we are fair to applicants, lessen the possibility of inviting unsuitable applicants to interview and reduce the scope for potentially costly claims of discrimination.

Those people who will form the interview panel for the job or a subgroup of the interview panel will usually carry out short-listing.

There are a number of employees who, for a variety of reasons, have conserved pay. The Council is committed to providing assistance to these employees. Any internal applicant who indicates his or her pay is “cash conserved” and who meets the essential criteria for the job **must be short-listed for interview**. If there are too many cash conserved applicants to interview them all, a shortlist should be prepared with the candidates coming from the group. There is a box in the application form where applicants can indicate that their pay is cash conserved.

The following general principles apply to this procedure.

- The selection panel will familiarise themselves with applications prior to any meeting taking place.
- The panel will consider the written evidence provided by each applicant. A decision is made about the extent to which the information provided meets the criteria stated in the job details. Applicants will be judged on this basis and not against each other.
- For each post clear essential and desirable criteria are identified prior to advertising. Failure to meet one or more of the essential criteria means the applicant will not be interviewed.
- Where too many applicants meet the essential criteria then applications will be examined against the extent to which they meet the desirable criteria.

NB In the case of class teacher posts there will be less flexibility over appropriate ‘essential criteria.’ In fact in this context only evidence of GTC registration and appropriate qualification are essential. It is therefore advised that selection is based on a range of ‘desirable criteria.’

- Objective evidence relating to teaching proficiency e.g. lesson planning and delivery, the maintenance of discipline etc., may be used as part of selection for classroom teacher posts. This evidence is likely to come from references, college reports, reports relating to the Standard for Full Registration (SFR).
- New criteria cannot be introduced once the job details have been used as the basis for the job advertisement.
- ***It is the responsibility of the chair of the panel to ensure that no prior knowledge, other than exists on the written application is taken into consideration.***

- Panel agreement will be on the basis of consensus. If the criteria used are sound then consensus should emerge on which applicants should be interviewed.
- The number of applicants leeted is a matter for the selection panel. The minimum size of a short or final leet should normally be 3 but in some circumstances a smaller leet may be agreed. In relation to a long leet (headteacher / depute headteacher posts) a larger number could be agreed.

NB All applicant selection must result from the use of criteria which are legal, fair and are consistently applied. For guidance see **Appendix 8**.

Candidates who are unsuccessful at this stage should be sent a rejection letter. (Please see: Unsuccessful before Interview Letter **Appendix 24**).

Where no applicant satisfactorily meets the stated criteria then it will be necessary to re-advertise the post. It is also advisable to re-evaluate the job details to ensure they have not been written in terms that are excluding possible applicants.

A summary of the leeting process indicating the reasons for the acceptance or rejection of each applicant must be completed at this stage of the selection procedure. A copy of the agreed summary should be used by all panel members. This information is confidential and the form should be signed and dated by panel members. **Appendix 21** provides an example.

5.5 Notifying Candidates for Interview

Those short-listed should be invited to interview by letter. (Please see: the Invitation to Attend Interview letter **Appendix 22**) This letter asks that interviewees contact us to let us know if they have any special requirements to enable them to attend for interview. Some requests may be straightforward, however if you are in any doubt you should contact HR to discuss this.

The following documentation should also be sent with this letter:

- A Pre Employment Health Fit for Work Declaration (**Appendix 26**)
- An Interview Expenses Claim Form (**Appendix 23**)
- The Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act Information Leaflet (**Appendix 32**)
- A Criminal Convictions Declaration form (**Appendix 29**)

The invitation letter can be amended to include any other relevant information.

A copy of paperwork relating to the above should be sent to Education Recruitment and Payroll.

NB All applicants should be notified about the outcome of their application – successful and unsuccessful.

NOTE – For DHT and HT posts, the procedures relating to identifying and notifying candidates is organised in conjunction with the relevant senior education manager/ education officer.

6. Candidate Selection

The following represents the MINIMUM which should be undertaken in this part of the process. Certain aspects of the following process will differ for the Appointment Committee (short leet) for HT/DHT posts, separate guidance will be issued in relation to this.

Interviews should be carried out by at least two people.

At the end of each interview each of the interviewers should complete an Interview Assessment Form (Appendix 34). These forms will assist interviewers to assess the candidates against the criteria set in the person specification.

Interviewers should form their own opinion at the end of each interview then discuss candidates after all interviews are finished to reach a decision.

Once a decision on who to appoint has been reached the Chair should complete the section on the Recruitment Analysis Form (Appendix 38).

Human Resources will not normally attend interviews.

6.1 Assessing Whether Candidates Meet the Requirements

The interview will be one of the main opportunities to assess whether an applicant for a job meets the requirements identified in the person specification. The interview can be complemented by other assessment techniques. These may include presentations, tests, group exercises or in-tray exercises.

If you are considering using, or would like to discuss, any of these techniques contact HR. Badly designed or inappropriate exercises can discriminate unfairly. Exercises must therefore be properly developed.

The guidance below is issued on the basis that an INTERVIEW remains the main method of candidate selection. However, it is the expectation that a PRESENTATION will be part of the interview process for posts of Principal Teacher and at long leet interviews for Depute Headteacher and Headteacher.

6.2 Presentations as part of the interview process

For PT posts and DHT / HT posts at appointment committee, candidates will be given a question and appropriate time to prepare an answer prior to interview. At the start of the interview they will be asked to give a 10 minute presentation to the panel.

The presentation is part of the selection process and candidates should expect to be graded in relation to the quality of their response to the task set and to any questions subsequently asked by the panel.

The chair may clarify with the panel the type of response expected prior to the interview.

6.3 Interviewing - Preparation

Consideration should be given to the physical environment including noise levels, possible disturbance, seating and a waiting area when deciding where to hold the interviews.

If any candidate has indicated special requirements, then these must be addressed by the school or establishment.

It may be appropriate to provide something for candidates to read whilst waiting.

Candidates' application forms will be available to the panel (at least 24 hours) before the interview. The panel should familiarise themselves with the applications.

Members of the panel should prepare, in advance, a list of possible questions. These will be based on the criteria provided in the job details.

Members of the panel should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the first interview taking place, and this time used to agree the following:-

- who will chair the panel
- who will provide feedback, if necessary
- which questions will be asked and by whom
- the criteria indicated on the interview assessment form (see exemplars **Appendix 35**)

Questions should be selected appropriate to the level of the post and information provided to applicants.

Each member of the panel should agree a relevant area of responsibility related to the post and an order of questioning agreed.

Appropriate interview assessment forms should be available to the panel (see **Appendix 34**).

6.4 Interviewing - Conducting the Interview

The interview process should be explained by the Chair to each candidate and panel members introduced.

Each candidate should receive the same 'starter question(s)' from each panel member i.e. relating to the criteria in the job details. However, depending on the answers given, panel members may ask further questions which will be unique to a particular candidate's response.

When candidates have answered a question, other panel members are permitted to ask further questions if this is relevant and related to the candidate's answer.

Prompts may be given as appropriate to the circumstances.

The Chair must make every effort to keep candidates and the panel to the appropriate times.

Notes can be taken during the course of the interview, but this should not be obtrusive or off-putting. This should be explained to candidates at the start of interview.

Do not ask questions relating to the candidate's personal circumstances unless this relates to the criteria in the person specification.

Provide the candidate with the opportunity to ask any questions or make any comments in support of their application.

Indicate when and how candidates will be informed of the result of their interview.

No comments should be made by the panel about the responses of individual candidates or their merits until all the interviews have been completed and summations are being given. However, if interviews are over more than one day, the panel may at the end of one session undertake this process.

6.5 Interviewing - Reaching a Decision

At the end of all interviews each candidate's performance is then discussed fully. During this discussion panel members may give an indication of their personal preference, stating evidence for this. At this stage application forms and references can be considered again.

Each candidate's performance should be measured in relation to the selection criteria stated in the interview assessment forms (see **Appendix 34**) and not against the other candidates.

There may be circumstances, most likely in relation to class teacher posts, where a clear first and second choice should be identified. This is most likely to happen where several vacancies exist across a number of schools and interviews may well involve candidates in common.

Failure of this procedure to identify a successful candidate will mean further detailed discussion of performance, applications, etc., in relation to the post requirements.

Where there is continued disagreement about the successful candidate then a vote should be taken and the majority decision prevail (process to include Chairs' casting vote if required).

On the identification of a successful candidate each panel member's assessment form should be completed, signed and dated and retained by the Headteacher.

In relation to class teacher and principal teacher posts the panel will offer the successful candidate the post. The chair should indicate that final appointment will be subject to the recruitment checks detailed below.

The post may be offered on the basis of a telephone call following the completion of all interviews. However, panels should be aware that although the chosen candidate can be asked if they now accept the post, they are entitled to attend other interviews. Where a candidate declines a post then 'reserve' candidates can be approached. It is reasonable to give candidates 24 hours to come to a decision. Panels should also be aware that any approaches made in this way might cut across the selection procedures of other schools.

See Appendix 36 – Interview Checklist

If no one is suitable consider re-advertising.

7. Recruitment Checks

7.1 References

References are a tool for confirming what an applicant has written or said during the selection process. Unless the reference indicates that the applicant has been dishonest in his or her application it should not be the sole reason for an interviewee to be selected or rejected.

If an employment reference cast doubt on the suitability of the job applicant the selection panel should rigorously re-examine all the evidence available to them.

Although references can be sought either before or after interview, it is advisable to take up references after the interview for the preferred candidate only. However, references can be obtained before interview for posts to be assessed by an appointment panel that includes councillors.

The reference report used should be specific to the post applied for. Using a reference held on file from a previous application would usually be unacceptable. References must be directly received from the referee. It is unsafe to accept a reference submitted via the candidate. It is difficult to ensure that a reference received in this way has not been forged or altered.

Testimonials must not be accepted instead of a reference. Testimonials are letters purporting to have been written by a previous employer. They are usually addressed to "whom it may concern."

No appointment should be confirmed without taking up written references. If an offer is conditional upon satisfactory references, it is advisable to specify that the reference must be satisfactory to Fife Council. There is no legal requirement for organisations or individuals to provide us with a reference for a potential employee.

We rely on goodwill and therefore we must make it as easy as possible for people to respond to a reference request.

Except where agreed with employee representatives, the Council's normal approach is to ask for confidential references. Managers may instead request open references. If management intend to let the applicant read the reference without seeking additional permission from the reference provider, the open reference letter must be used (**Appendix 16**).

A reference should normally be sought from a current or most recent headteacher/manager and/or someone who can comment in an informed way on the applicant in a work capacity. The information provided by referees should be factual and should relate to an applicant's employment and/or relevant experience and skills. As the Service has a policy of open references, applicants will have the opportunity to see the reference. The reference would not therefore be used to reveal previously unknown opinions to the applicant. It should be noted that there is no legal obligation for anyone to provide a reference.

Fife Council's Insurer requires a minimum level of reference checking as a condition of policy cover. The following outlines the minimum level of reference checking that must be carried out:

- Written references must be obtained from employers within the past 3 years, one of which must be from the immediately preceding employer.
- A minimum of 2 references are required.
- References must be in written format, either in hard copy or via email. Verbal references, even when documented, are not suitable.
- The Council's insurer has confirmed that Services may identify certain categories of employees who can be excluded from the policy; however Services will incur the costs if an act of fraud or dishonesty is committed. A risk assessment must be carried out for these groups before a decision to exclude them from the policy is taken. Authorisation to exclude a group of employees must be obtained from an appropriate senior manager. Any group of employees that have financial responsibilities must not be excluded (e.g. those who handle money or order goods). Where Services do not identify categories of employees to be excluded, references should be obtained for all staff, including temporary, seasonal and casual. The same procedures are expected of both internal and external applicants. One reference should be from the last supervisor or manager.
- Where a reference request has been sent but not returned, Services should send a reminder to the referee. If a response is still not received, Services should approach the successful candidate and request details of an alternative referee.

- If the employer referee no longer exists (e.g. the company has closed down), Services are advised to contact the Risk Management team for guidance based on the candidate's particular circumstances.
- Where the prospective employee is coming straight from education, one reference should be from the Head Teacher or College Tutor.
- For prospective employees that have been out of work for sometime, e.g., due to caring or parenting commitments, references should still be sought from previous employers or course tutor as appropriate.
- Where the candidate has been a long term employee in the previous organisation, say for 15 years, we need only obtain one reference as others will be irrelevant and out of date.
- Teachers using the "open reference" procedure within Education & Children's Services must still comply with all of the reference requirements above.

References – Safer Recruitment

All teaching staff have access to children and adults at risk, therefore require additional reference checking. References should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee should be telephoned and asked to provide written answers or amplification as appropriate.

The information given should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his/her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form.

Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are less likely to cause concern than more serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time may be more likely to give cause for concern. Additional references may be sought if, for example:

- there are concerns about a candidate who suggests he or she found him or herself in the wrong job;
- he or she has had difficulties with a former manager;
- the candidate gives an unusual or inconsistent reason for leaving a job;
- he or she claims to have had no recent work record;

- an earlier job is particularly relevant to the current application;
- one referee is unavailable or refuses to provide a reference;
- the applicant has worked for the Council before but has had additional jobs since leaving.

If you decide to request additional references seek the permission of the candidate. Although refusal will raise suspicions this should not be a reason to automatically reject the candidate without further investigation. There are standard letters for requesting an employment reference and are available at **Appendix 16**.

7.2 Personnel Records Check

There have been cases where employees who have been disciplined for poor practice within an organisation, subsequently apply for similar posts within the same organisation.

One means of ensuring such information comes to light is for every applicant to be checked against existing personnel records and the personnel records of former employees where held.

If the successful candidate has worked for the Council before, obtain the personnel record and check it against the application form and other information obtained. Make sure that the personnel record is for the correct person.

Check the organisations payroll system to discover if the candidate has worked for the Council before and has not mentioned this in the application form.

Discrepancies should be investigated. The investigation should include a discussion with the candidate.

If a file contains disciplinary warnings the normal expiry and retention periods for these should be observed.

Move the contents of the old personnel file into the file for the new employment. If the employee has previously worked for a different Service the full file should be transferred to the new employing Service. It may be prudent to retain a copy of the file in the records of the original employing Service to preserve a source for any future reference or other information requests.

7.3 Qualifications and Certificates

Where a particular qualification has been stipulated as required for the job, or where there is a minimum standard of education expected for the job, you should request that the successful interviewee provides the original documents for inspection. These should then be copied to be held in the personal file.

If no certificate can be provided a check should be made with the awarding institution or examination body. A check can also be carried out if it is suspected

that the certificate is not original, is forged, or has been tampered with. Keep a record of this check.

7.4 Professional Registration – Safer Recruitment

If the candidate is required to be registered with a regulatory body such as the SSSC or the GTCS, obtain and keep a copy of his or her registration certificate or number. This should be verified with the regulatory body as appropriate. In case of dispute or if there is reason to doubt that the claimed registration is genuine clarification should be sought from the regulatory body.

7.5 Eligibility to Work in the UK

Immigration Asylum and Nationality Act 2006

This Act requires us to make sure that anyone we employ is eligible to work in the United Kingdom. People from outside of the European Economic area and Switzerland must have “leave” (permission) to work in the UK. Each candidate should be asked to produce appropriate documentation to confirm that he or she is legally permitted to work in the UK, as listed in the **Immigration Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 leaflet (Appendix 32)**. This leaflet should be sent with the invite to interview letter, so candidates will know what documentation they need to produce.

The documents will either show that the applicant is a national of the European Economic area or Switzerland or will show that he or she is permitted to work in the UK. Note that an individual may have permission to remain in the UK but may not have permission to take up employment. If an applicant from outside of the European Economic area or Switzerland is allowed to take up employment there will be written evidence indicating this.

Such checks must be done for every applicant, to ensure that everyone is treated equally and to prevent possible discrimination claims. Just checking people who “look foreign” would be race discrimination. This is illegal. These checks should also be done for internal candidates.

Carrying out the checks below listed in the three steps below establishes an “excuse” if we employ a person who does not have the right to work in the UK. In all cases, the excuse must be established **before the employment begins**. An excuse is not established if we suspect the person does not have the right to work in the UK but do not investigate this properly, for example if we suspect a document is forged but choose to “turn a blind eye” in order to employ the person anyway.

Step 1

The job applicant must provide:

- one of the original documents alone, or two of the original documents in the specified combinations given in List A, or
- one of the original documents alone, or two of the original documents in the specified combinations given in List B.

These lists can be found in **The Immigration Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 leaflet (Appendix 32)** or from the Border & Immigration Agency.

Step 2

To establish the excuse and, if List B statutory documents have been presented, to retain the excuse, you are required to check the validity of the document and satisfy yourself that the applicant, is the person named in the documents presented to you. These documents should also allow the person to do the work in question.

In order to acquire the excuse, you must carry out the following specified steps when checking all of the documents presented to you by the applicant:

- check any photographs, where available, contained in the documentation are consistent with the appearance of the employee when carrying out checks on your prospective or current employee; and
- check the dates of birth listed, where available, to ensure that these are consistent across documents and that you are satisfied that these correspond with the appearance of your prospective or current employee; and
- check that the expiry dates of any limited leave to enter or remain in the UK have not passed; and
- check any UK Government endorsements (stamps, visas, etc.) to see if your prospective or current employee is able to do the type of work you are offering; and
- satisfy yourself that the documents are genuine and have not been tampered with and belong to the holder; and
- if the applicant gives you two documents which have different names, ask him or her for a further document to explain the reason for this (the further document could be a marriage certificate, a divorce decree, a deed poll document or statutory declaration).

Step 3

You need to make a copy of the relevant page or pages of the document, in a format which can not be subsequently altered, for example, a photocopy or scan. In the case of a passport or other travel document, the following parts must be photocopied or scanned:

- for passports and travel documents, a copy should be taken of the document's front cover and any page containing the holder's personal details. In particular, you should copy any page that provides details of nationality, his or her photograph, date of birth, signature, date of expiry or biometric details; and

- any page containing UK Government endorsements, noting the date of expiry and any relevant UK immigration endorsement which allows the applicant to do the type of work you are offering.

Other documents should be copied in their entirety.

You should then keep a record of every document you have copied. The copies of the documents should be kept securely for the duration of the individual's employment and for a further two years after their employment has ceased.

Annual Repeat Checking – List B

Employees who have presented a document on List B must have eligibility to work in the UK checked annually.

On each occasion that a follow-up document check is undertaken, you should repeat the specified steps given above within the given time period and record the date of each subsequent check that has been carried out. If we have not made the required follow-up checks we may be liable if the person is found to be working illegally.

Penalties

If we do not do these checks, or repeat the checks for employees with a List B document or documents, then we may be liable for payment of a civil penalty if that employee is found to be working illegally in the UK.

Documents That Do Not Demonstrate Eligibility

The following documents will not provide a statutory excuse under the 2006 Act:

- a Home Office Standard Acknowledgement Letter or Immigration Service Letter (IS96W) which states that an asylum seeker can work in the UK. If you are presented with these documents then you should advise the applicant to call the Border and Immigration Agency on 0151 237 6375 for information about how they can apply for an Application Registration Card;
- a temporary National Insurance Number beginning with TN, or any number which ends with the letters from E to Z inclusive;
- a permanent National Insurance number when presented in isolation;
- a driving licence issued by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency;
- a bill issued by a financial institution or a utility company;
- a passport describing the holder as a British Dependent Territories Citizen which states that the holder has a connection with Gibraltar;
- a short (abbreviated) birth certificate issued in the UK which does not have details of at least one of the holder's parents;

- a licence provided by the Security Industry Authority;
- a document check by the Criminal Records Bureau or Disclosure Scotland;
- a card or certificate issued by the Inland Revenue under the Construction Industry Scheme.

Further Advice

Advice for employers about complying with the law on preventing illegal migrant working is available from the Border and Immigration Agency **Employers' Helpline** on **0845 010 6677**.

Bulgaria and Romania

On 1 January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU; their citizens consequently acquired the same right to live in the UK as those from other EU countries.

However, they do not have an automatic right to work in the UK (unless he or she is exempt from work authorisation requirements). Instead, he or she is only allowed to work in various 'authorised categories of employment'. Specifically, a number of low-skilled Bulgarian and Romanian workers per year (up to 20,000 under existing quota schemes) are allowed to work in the food-processing and agricultural sectors for a maximum of six months at a time.

National Insurance Numbers

The Social Security (Crediting and Treatment of Contributions and National Insurance Numbers) Regulations 2001

The Regulations are the law which states who must or may apply to register for National Insurance (NI) purposes.

Currently, all adults seeking a NI Number are required to visit a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Office to establish their identity before issuing a NI number. This includes all successful Work Permit applicants in the Business and Commercial Sector and European Union (EU) Nationals in equivalent jobs.

The DWP and the Home Office Work Permit Unit have developed a fast path postal service for Work Permit holders in the Business and Commercial Sector and EU Nationals in equivalent jobs who are liable for United Kingdom (UK) National Insurance Contributions (NICs). Applicants will be able to complete a postal application form for a NI number rather than having to attend a DWP Office.

Applications for a Fast Path NI Number will be taken from;

1. All successful Tier 1 and Tier 2 Business and Commercial Work Permit holders. Tier 1 and Tier 2 applications include;

- Intra Company Transfers (ICT) where the employee of a multinational company is transferred to a skilled post in a UK-based branch.

- Board Level Posts where the employee has a daily input into directing the company at a strategic level.
- Inward Investment where a new post is essential to the project which is bringing jobs and money to the UK.
- Shortage Occupations where the employee is suitably qualified for an occupation where it is acknowledged that suitably qualified people are in very short supply in the European Economic Area (EEA).
- Sponsored Research where the employee has a job overseas but has come to the UK to undertake a period of research with another organisation.

2. Any employee taken on under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP).

3. Any EU National who does not currently have a NI Number.

For all Fife Council workers who are eligible to apply under the Fast Path NI Number postal service, you should complete all the sections of the DWP Fast Path “Proforma” and forward to the address below. The application form can be obtained from;

Department for Work and Pensions
CCU
6th Floor
Portcullis House
21 India Street
GLASGOW
G2 4PH
Tel no. 0845 641 5047/5048/5049

7.6 Age

Fife Council employees normally retire no later than age 65. Successful candidates aged 65 or over will be offered a contract of employment for 12 months with an opportunity to request an extension in accordance with Council policy (see [ER13 Working Beyond 65 Guidelines](#)).

The template Application Pack (see **Appendix 10**) has also been amended to inform potential applicants of this.

However, recruiting managers are also advised to highlight the above to the successful candidate when making a verbal conditional offer. After explaining this Council Policy, managers should sensitively ask whether the policy applies to the candidate which can also be verified when candidates confirm their identity (e.g. birth certificate, passport etc.).

Arrangements should then be made to issue the appropriate offer letter (using either standard template letter 11 or 12 from RS50 Recruitment Letters and Forms).

7.7 Criminal Convictions

Criminal convictions will be considered in relation to the job a person is applying for and will bar a person from a job only where the conviction is relevant to the job.

See Appendix 27

Under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, it is now an offence to appoint a person knowingly to a child care post (includes teachers), paid or voluntary, who is on the Disqualified from Working with Children List (DWCL). It is now an offence to have neglected to obtain a Disclosure Certificate at the time of appointment. No applicant should be allowed to start employment without the outcome of a check being known.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003) someone who has been convicted may, with certain exceptions, be rehabilitated and allowed to treat the conviction as if it had never occurred. They do not have to tell us about spent convictions. A conviction will become "spent" where the individual has not, after a period of time, committed another serious offence.

A conviction cannot be spent under the Act if it incurred a sentence of more than 2.5 years in prison or was a life sentence, preventative detention or the equivalent for young offenders.

The Act provides that "spent" convictions are not a "proper ground" for dismissal or exclusion of a job candidate.

The exceptions where spent convictions must be declared include chartered accountants, registered teachers, and those working with children and vulnerable adults in providing accommodation, care, leisure and recreational facilities, schooling, social services, supervision or training (and those working on premises where such provision is made).

Applicants are required to complete a form in a sealed envelope disclosing unspent convictions or charges pending if they are invited to interview (see Section 13 - Invitation to Attend Interview). This form is only opened by the chair of the interview panel if the applicant is to be offered the job.

Forms handed in by other interviewees should be returned unopened.

Jobs exempted from the Act or where a Criminal Records check will be requested should be identified in information sent to applicants.

If you are in any doubt about a particular job or a conviction which is disclosed you should seek advice from HR.

7.8 Pre-Employment Health Screening

This element has not been agreed with the Teaching Trade Unions. Please refer to the Management Guidance note at the end of this document.

8. Appointing a Candidate

8.1 Notifying Candidates

Schools are responsible for the formal offers of appointment at Principal Teacher level and below.

It should be remembered that offers of appointment might need to be provisional pending receipt of written references, production of education certificates, production of a document confirming the person's eligibility to work in the UK or the outcome of the Health Screening Process.

When offering work to a person currently undertaking a Fife Council vocational training programme (e.g. probationer Teachers), include in the offer letter a requirement that the employee continues and completes the qualification specified in his or her training plan.

Sample offer letters can be found at **Appendix 41**. These can be amended to include other relevant information e.g. offer subject to receipt of written references satisfactory to the Council.

- Ensure the correct letter for the contract is used.
- Be careful if modifying the letter – an offer letter forms part of the contract.

Schools are responsible for the issue of all rejection letters. A sample rejection letter following interview can be found at **Appendix 39**. You may wish to include advice on how the applicant can ask for feedback.

8.2 Feedback for Unsuccessful Candidates

Feedback can help applicants identify areas where they can improve their suitability in the future. It may also reassure the applicant that your decision was fair. If you are asked for feedback, do not feel that you have to give it immediately. You should take time to consider what it is that you want to say and ensure that this is related to the job profile and the person specification. The feedback should:

- take a positive approach indicating areas of strengths and weakness in the way the applicant presented her/ himself through the written evidence,
- suggest areas of improvement,
- determine the applicant's own views of his/her application.
- not comment on other applicants.
- be treated in confidence and should not affect the consideration of any future application submitted by the individual.

The following guidelines should also be followed:-

- The member of staff involved in feedback should be trained in this procedure.
- A member of the selection panel will be allocated the task of giving feedback.

The availability of feedback will be indicated on the 'Invitation to Interview' letter and on the letter to unsuccessful candidates

8.3 Starting Salary on Appointment

Successful applicants will normally be appointed at the scale minimum.

Services can exercise discretion when making offers to external candidates, and offer a higher starting salary if either the best person for the job is currently on a higher salary than the scale minimum or has exceptional skills, experience etc. This should only be done to ensure the offer is accepted.

If a salary above scale minimum is offered care must be taken to avoid equal pay challenges: contact HR for advice.

8.4 Formal Job Offer – Written Statements of Terms and Conditions (Contracts)

This will be undertaken by the Education Service Recruitment and Payroll Team. A letter of appointment will normally be sent within 4 working days of receiving information regarding the outcome of the interview. A formal written statement of terms of conditions of employment will be sent soon after commencement of employment (see **Appendix 42**).

8.5 Recruitment Records

Services should hold the Application File, which will include all application forms, references, documentation required under the Asylum and Immigration Act, Interview Assessment Forms and the Recruitment Analysis Form.

A copy of the successful applicant's application should also be placed on this file.

Pre-employment health questionnaires and criminal conviction forms will be returned unopened to unsuccessful applicants.

Relevant information for the successful candidate should be stored in the personnel file.

You must hold all recruitment and selection records for a period of six months. The records for the unsuccessful candidates should then be destroyed.

See: [CC55 Guidelines on Contents of Personnel Files](#)

8.6 Recruitment Analysis

To ensure that the Council can demonstrate that these procedures are fair, it is essential that the short-listing and final selection is well documented. This information could also form part of the evidence where an unsuccessful applicant complains or makes a claim to an Employment Tribunal. In addition the information is essential if our Equal Opportunities monitoring is to produce accurate and meaningful results.

It must be completed and a copy returned to Education Service Recruitment and Payroll Team.

Use the Recruitment Analysis Form for this. (See: **Appendix 38**.)

9. Other Considerations

9.1 Exit Interviews

The Council recognises the importance of examining why employees choose to leave. Our way of doing this is by conducting exit interviews.

See [RS15 Exit Interview Procedure](#).

9.2 Time Off for Interviews

Fife Council employees are allowed paid time off to attend interviews for jobs within the Council. Employees are not allowed paid time off to attend interviews with any other organisation. For purposes of clarity, the NHS, the Civil Service, the Scottish Government, the Police (including Fife Constabulary civilian posts) and other local authorities are external organisations. Employees should use annual leave or flexi-leave to attend interviews with these or other external organisations.

Employees who are working notice of redundancy are allowed reasonable time off with pay to attend interviews regardless of whether the job is internal or external (see [MC01 Managing Change Policy and Guidelines](#)).

9.3 Recruitment and Selection Training

The Council is committed to ensuring that those involved in the recruitment and selection of new employees are trained. It is the responsibility of Services to ensure that every panel must have at least one interviewer who is fully trained.

The corporate training course is now available on a modular basis allowing managers to 'cherry pick' and prioritise which course to attend depending on their particular skills and training needs. Modules include:

Module 1 – Recruitment & Selection legislation (inc. Equality & Diversity)

Module 2 – Preparing to recruit; the essential steps

Module 3 – The selection interview & making appointment decisions

Module 4 – Practical interview skills

Module 5 – Vacancy management & drafting adverts

Module 6 – Post interview administration & procedures

Module 7 – Safer Recruitment

A basic Recruitment & Selection unit is also available on “E-learning” which can be accessed via intranet.

Management Guidance

Pre- Employment Health Checks

There is a pre-employment screening procedure (RS61 Pre Employment Health Screening). This ensures that potential employees are able to do the job without risk to themselves or others while providing equal access to employment.

Managers should read and comply with the instructions in RS61 Pre Employment Health Screening. If the procedures are not followed correctly there is a risk that Health and Safety laws will be broken. A recruiting manager might be personally liable if an injury or illness is caused by a failure to do health screening properly. This can be avoided by following the procedure.

All short-listed applicants should be requested to bring a completed pre-employment health declaration or health questionnaire (depending upon the type of post being filled), in a sealed envelope, to interview. Only the form from the successful candidate is used. The forms for unsuccessful candidates should be returned unopened.

There are four categories of job determining which occupational health assessment procedure is followed. All teaching posts are Category 1 jobs.

At present, the Teaching Trade Unions have not agreed this element of the process. You may, therefore, get some resistance from candidates. If this is the case, please contact the HR Education Team for advice.

Further Reading and Assistance

Appendix 25

HR on First Contact.

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