Recruitment and Selection Policy

1. Introduction

We recognise the importance of recruitment strategy, processes and practices make to the continued success of our business. Current and future employees are our key resource in the delivery of our services.

This policy is not contractual but aims to set out the way in which Hyde Park Source (HPS) manages its recruitment activities.

2. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all recruitment activity, including internal promotions and secondments, and including roles that are filled on a fixed-term contract basis.

3. Aims of this Policy

We seek to employ the best people to fill our vacancies and to provide the essential skills and attributes to meet the current and future needs of our business.

This approach naturally embraces diversity, to provide expertise, challenge and imagination, and all individuals should be recruited solely based on their ability and in accordance with our Equality and Diversity policy.

4. Legal Considerations

The Equality Act prohibits discrimination on grounds of a protected characteristic (sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy, marital status/civil partnership or gender reassignment). However, care should also be taken to ensure that part-time workers and those on fixed-term contracts are treated fairly. This is broadly interpreted, and unlawful discrimination may take a number of forms: direct, indirect, harassment, victimisation, discrimination by association and discrimination by perception. The candidate does not therefore necessarily have to have the protected characteristic them self in order to bring a claim.

A decision to shortlist, interview or offer employment will not take account of an applicant's trade union membership or non-membership.

It is unlawful to refuse to employ someone purely because they have reached the State Pension Age or over unless this can be objectively justified. It is also unlawful to induce a candidate to give up or opt out of membership of a qualifying pension scheme, or to subject any candidate to a detriment for seeking to enforce their pension rights.

Positive discrimination (selecting a candidate purely on grounds of membership of a particular minority group) is unlawful (with the exception of employees on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave who are at risk of redundancy, where special rules apply). However, employers are permitted to take positive action in favour of under-represented groups in the workforce when choosing between candidates who are otherwise equally qualified.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, unsuccessful candidates can request copies of any notes held on them that are stored in a structured way. Therefore, it is essential to record selection decisions in an objective and non-discriminatory way, i.e., demonstrating where the candidate does/does not measure up as well as other candidates with regards to the skills and knowledge for the job.

Notes of all interviews should be made using our standard documentation and will be kept on file for six months after the selection decision is made.

5. The Recruitment Process

Whenever a vacancy arises, the decision as to whether to recruit a replacement will be carefully considered by the Management Committee of Hyde Park Source, who will evaluate whether the duties of the role should be carried out in a different way. Equally, there may be an internal candidate who could transfer or develop the skills necessary for the role or an existing member of staff who is able to take on some additional duties within their existing role.

Prior to any recruitment activity commencing, authorisation to recruit must be obtained from the Management Committee.

The recruitment team/panel must ensure they undertake any recruitment in a clear, consistent and professional manner and in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy. Selection will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements.

To ensure objectivity, the duties and the skills required of the post will be reviewed and any existing documentation updated so that candidates are assessed against the same framework. Person specifications will be carefully considered to minimise the risk of direct or indirect discrimination and to ensure they do not impose any condition or requirement, which cannot be justified by the demands of the post, especially with regard to qualifications and previous experience. Shortlisting and interviews will, where possible, normally be conducted by two or more people to minimise the risk of inadvertent bias.

We use standard documents and forms for all recruitment and selection to ensure a professional and consistent approach. All candidates (including internal applicants) will be required to complete a standard application form to ensure better comparability of information.

6. Internal Applicants

With very few exceptions (see below) all vacancies will be advertised internally to ensure that existing employees are given the opportunity to apply and thus develop their skills and careers. This approach also gives us the following additional benefits: staff are made generally aware of career opportunities available to them; an internal candidate will already be familiar with our organisation, our policies, procedures, internal structure and systems; an internal candidate may be able to take up the post earlier than an external one and we save on the cost and time involved in external recruitment.

However, vacancies will not be advertised internally if a funder specifies it must be advertised externally, where there is a reorganisation and we have employees "at risk" of redundancy for whom we will seek posts in the new structure, or where we have an obligation to place somebody in another post (e.g. for an employee returning from maternity/adoption/shared parental leave whose original job is no longer available).

Copies of all adverts will be sent out to all staff informing them that they are welcome to apply.

7. Attracting candidates

To ensure that the best candidate is attracted and appointed we may use any or all of the following methods: advertising the vacancy on the Internet; external advertisement in an appropriate newspaper or journal; using networks, etc.

Since the way that we recruit reveals much about our organisation to external candidates and contacts, in addition to describing the role well, it is also essential to convey the culture and environment within which we work.

All applications will be handled in confidence and circulated only to those involved in the recruitment process.

8. Assessment Methods

Care will be taken to use selection methods and techniques that are relevant to the job. These will be reviewed regularly to ensure their fairness and consistency of application.

Interviews where possible should be conducted by two staff members, a Management Committee member and a volunteer. Ideally, interview panels will comprise two or more people, and will include both men and women on the panel. Where possible, the same people will be involved in the whole recruitment process including shortlisting and interviewing and if interviews take place on separate days the same people should interview on both occasions.

All short-listed candidates will be offered a face-to-face interview. This will be structured to follow an agreed set of questions which will be asked of all candidates and which reflect the person specification. Questions will relate to information that will help us to assess the candidates' ability to do the job. Questions about marriage plans, family intentions, religious or political commitments, caring responsibilities, or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should not be asked. Candidates will not be asked whether they plan to opt-out of auto-enrolment, nor will any statements be made (whether written or verbal) that either state or imply that the offer of a post could depend on whether or not they opt-out of an automatic enrolment pension scheme.

The information provided by applicants will be thoroughly considered. Candidates should also be given the opportunity to ask questions.

Selection tests will be specifically related to the job and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the job.

If any tests are to be given (e.g. presentations, etc.), the candidates will be informed of this in advance. Any presentations must be relevant to the post and measure an individual's actual, or

inherent, ability to do or train for the job and, if necessary, guidance from appropriate professionals will be given.

9. Disabled Candidates

At all stages of the recruitment procedure, reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate the particular needs of any candidate who has notified us of a disability.

This may include changing the timing or location of any interview to enable the candidate to attend, providing information in different formats or larger type, etc.

10. Offers of employment

Offers of employment may initially be made verbally but should always be confirmed in writing and specify a timescale in which the successful candidate should confirm their acceptance or rejection of the offer.

Where practicable, a copy of a draft contract of employment should be sent with the offer.

All appointments will be made subject to a satisfactory probationary period, usually of six months' duration.

11. References

All offers of employment are made subject to the receipt of references that are satisfactory to us, unless the candidate has previously worked for us.

Candidates will be asked to provide the details of two referees, one of whom should be their current or most recent employer, where applicable. References will always be taken up on external candidates, once an offer of employment has been made and accepted.

Where possible, references should be received prior to any new employee starting work for us and it may be that we delay the start date of a new employee until the references are received and checked. In the event of a reference being unsatisfactory to us, we may withdraw the offer of employment but will usually discuss this with the candidate, and if appropriate the referee, before making this decision.

12. Pre-employment Checks

Following the offer and acceptance of employment, employees should not normally commence working for us until all appropriate checks have been completed to our satisfaction. All successful candidates will be required to provide proof of their entitlement to work in the UK prior to starting work with us. In addition, and depending on the requirements of the post, we may also require proof of qualifications and driving licence.

Where the duties of the post holder will involve working with children or vulnerable adults, any appointment will be subject to a satisfactory check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). If the position for which the post holder has applied (as stated above) is subject to a DBS check, they will be required to complete and sign an agreement to complete a disclosure and Barring check.

13. Appointing Freelance Workers and Contractors

We recognise there are times when it may be more suitable to appoint a freelance worker or contractor to deliver a specific project or services. This is usually for work that is short-term, time-sensitive and/or when there is a specific skills or knowledge gap in the staff team, and for which it would be impractical to recruit a new employee. There may also be work that has few or variable weekly/monthly hours associated with it and be more suited to an individual or company who already operates or chooses to operate as a freelance worker or contractor.
For any freelance worker or contractor appointment that is for more than one week of work, approval must be obtained from the CMT prior to any appointment activity commencing. Justification and purpose of the work, focusing on organisational needs and/or benefit, alongside financial information, should be provided.

All considerations and principles of the process outlined above should be followed for any appointment of a freelance worker or contractor when possible. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where, due to the need for a fast solution or the time-sensitive nature of some work, a freelance worker or contractor may be appointed without a full and open recruitment and selection process being followed. On these occasions, the suitability of any appointment must always be considered and assessed by at least two individuals, ideally one staff member and one Committee member, and the appointment should last no longer than 6 months. If the need for the worker continues beyond 6 months, an open recruitment and selection process should be followed including consideration of whether a new employee role should be created.

Prior to any freelance worker or contractor appointment, the off payroll working (IR35) rules should be checked and a status determination carried out to ensure the correct employment status of the worker for tax purposes.

14. Recruitment and DBS disclosure

Prior to advertising, the Core Management Team should identify the level of DBS check, if any, required for the post. The job advert and selection criteria will highlight the checks as an essential requirement of the job role.

All applications for any post are required to complete an application form, there will be an additional form to disclose any unspent convictions.

Applicants for posts subject to a DBS check will also be required to provide details of spent convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not ‘protected’. Any gaps in employment histories will be explored prior to and at the interview, by the selection panel.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring original identity documents, including those required by the DBS, to their interview.

A member of the selection panel will reiterate the need for a criminal records check (and barred list check if relevant) to each candidate at the interview and may clarify any details regarding the information provided by a candidate on their application form at this stage. However, any conviction information disclosed must be treated confidentially within the interview process and no decision will be taken at this stage.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Last reviewed and approved by the Management Committee	November 2024
Next review date	November 2025