

Recruitment



Introduction

Effective recruitment is crucial to the successful day-to-day running of any organisation. It is one of the most important tasks for a manager, as recruiting the best people is shown to increase performance and productivity. Employing people with the right skills, expertise, values and behaviours will help us to deliver our Fairer Westminster objectives.

This guide is to assist managers attract high quality staff in a very competitive labour market and ensure that candidates have a positive first impression of the Council. It will give recruiting managers a better understanding of what to consider when recruiting and selecting the best talent and ensures that the selection process is free from bias.

The recruitment process is not just about us finding suitable employees, it is also about candidates finding out more about Westminster City Council, and considering whether they would like to work for us. It is therefore essential that you ensure the process is transparent, timely and creates a good impression of WCC, regardless of whether the candidate is successful or not.

Online guidance is available to help you use the recruitment system itself– [recruitment guide](#).

Scope

This policy applies to all hiring managers responsible for recruiting employees into Westminster City Council. Please see the [Temporary Agency Contractors Policy](#), for guidance on agency recruitment.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Council recognises the value of a diverse workforce and is committed to employing staff who reflect the community at large. Our recruitment procedures are designed to promote employment opportunities to all sections of the community, encourage applications from all suitable candidates, and ensure the selection process is based on the ability of the applicant to perform the job advertised.

We are aspiring to increase the number of staff from underrepresented groups. We are taking positive action to increase the number of staff that represent the Global Majority in senior roles. What does Global Majority mean? The term Global Majority replaces the previously named B.A.ME Network within the council and is being used on the basis that Black, Asian and multiple ethnic people make up 85% of the world's population.

All hiring managers must ensure that for every band 4 and above vacancy, there must be at least one GLOBAL MAJORITY candidate (where they self-declare and meet the person specification), per shortlist. If you have candidates that have self-declared as Global Majority, and you do not shortlist any, you must contact Stuart Love to discuss your decision making before proceeding further. Where no candidates self-declare as Global Majority then you should contact the Recruitment and Resourcing Lead in People Services for further guidance. To support this process and ensure that we have diverse decision making, all hiring managers must ensure that they have diverse shortlisting and interview panels, with a minimum of gender diversity and Global Majority representation, you should have Global Majority/gender diversity right at the very beginning stages of the recruitment campaign right up to the appointment stage. If you cannot find a suitably diverse panel within your team (band 4 and above), then contact inclusion@westminster.gov.uk / the Organisational Development Team, who will put you in touch with trained members of staff.

Job applicants will be shortlisted and appointed on merit and selected based on objective criteria, including the required skills and experience, values and behaviours for the position.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that the criteria does not indirectly discriminate against any section of the community.

To better show our commitment to working the Westminster Way and each of its three pillars, we have decided to make the [Unconscious Bias Training](#) and the [Inclusive Recruitment Training](#) mandatory for all managers, staff with hiring responsibilities or are looking to hire.

Positive Action Policy Hiring Managers Guidelines

To further support and give guidance to our hiring managers please see [PowerPoint](#) explaining the Positive Action Policy in the recruitment process. Please make sure you and your recruitment panel are made fully aware of your responsibilities under this policy. Should you wish further advice speak with your HRBP or your Strategic Resourcing & Recruitment Lead in People Services.

Remember to be Disability Confident

When recruiting, as a hiring manager, you will be reminded by automatic email from IBC when the vacancy closes that Westminster are a Disability Confident employer (see [here](#)). This means that, when shortlisting any applicants who classify themselves as having a disability under the Equality Act (2010) and who meet the criteria of the role should be guaranteed an interview. To establish if any candidates have classified themselves under the disability confident scheme please check their application form. This can be found under the heading 'Application Information'.

It is particularly important to be mindful of the above if your recruitment is of a non-standard type (ie it does not have a typical start / close date or if the recruitment is for something other than filling of a normal vacancy) as you may not receive a reminder of your responsibilities under the Disability Confident scheme.

The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our recruitment procedures and practices will reflect this commitment. See our [DBS Policy](#) for more information.

Managers involved in the recruitment and appointment of staff must ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, managers must not be involved in any appointment, or any other decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay and conditions for any other employee, or prospective employee, to whom they are related, or with whom they have a close personal relationship outside work.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equalities Act 2010 says a reasonable adjustment is a change to remove or reduce the effect of an employee's disability so they can do their job or when an individual is applying for a role within the organisation. For more information [click here](#).

Growing Talent - Our Graduates & Apprentices

WCC is committed to supporting, developing and encouraging our graduates and apprentices in their career at Westminster. Therefore as part of 'growing our talent', any graduate or apprentice that is coming to the end of their programme will now be able to apply for our internal vacancies up to band 4 with a guarantee of an interview if they 'meet the job requirements'.

As a Hiring Manager please ensure that you check application forms at screening stage and provide opportunities to these individuals that we have invested in.

Changes to Secondments

As of the 1st of August, **all** job opportunities that are expected to be 3 months or longer and **at all bands levels must** now be posted on our internal job board via the IBC.

This supports our pay gap agenda and our Westminster Ways of working ensuring that all our staff are valued, have talent, and encourage staff development.

For opportunities at band 4 and above, please ensure that you follow the Positive Action Policy.

"**Acting Up**" opportunities are for roles that are intended to be less than 3 months and are only short-term operational needs. E.g., Parental leave (**not** maternity cover) long term sick etc. These do not require advertising on the internal job board; however, you should follow a fair and robust recruitment process as standard good practice. In both cases you can further promote these opportunities via the staff networks, Yammer and locally within your teams.

For further advise, please speak to your HRPB or your Strategic Resourcing and Recruitment Lead.

Recruitment Process

There will be some people in your area who will have completed Superuser Recruitment training. They will be able to provide you with practical support and hints and tips as they will know the system. If you would like to know who is best to provide this support to you, please contact: Recruitment2@westminster.gov.uk.

Band 5 and above vacancies including secondments

As part of our Pay Gap agenda ALL band 5 and above vacancies **MUST** have your ELT member involved throughout the recruitment process including the recruitment panel.

Please include the diverse recruitment panel names for all band 4 and above they should represent ethnicity, gender and disability Please seek panel members that also self-identify to have a disability or a carer supporting someone with a disability. Contact ABLE network for volunteers and to put you in contact with volunteers.

Job Description

Before recruiting for a new or existing position you need to ensure that there is an up to date job description([WCC Job Description Template](#)). The job description is a key part of the recruitment process as it explains the requirements of the job to potential candidates and sets the expectations for the position. Therefore, it is important to review and update this every time you recruit to a role.

If you have a new position or substantial changes have been made to an existing job description, you will need to have the job evaluated. Please see our [Job Evaluation Policy and Process](#) for more information

As a hiring manager, it is your responsibility to ensure there is adequate budget and that relevant discussions have taken place before recruitment begins.

You will be responsible for determining the level of criminal record/DBS check required, for further guidance please see the [DBS Policy](#). Please remember that the recheck period is 36 months, and you will be prompted to insert this as well as the level of check, in 'vetting requirements'.

Adverts

All adverts should be written by TMP, our recruitment advertising partner (westminster@tmpw.co.uk). This includes both internal and external adverts. TMP can also offer further media advice and where best to advertise your vacancy in the external market.

Note that the following can apply to vacancies advertised internally only:

- Existing WCC employees
- Existing RBKC employees
- RBKC or WCC Apprentices and Interns
- Agency workers after a 12 week qualifying period. This excludes those working as contractors

Agency / TAC staff will be entitled to information on job vacancies from day 1 of their assignments. This means that they should know where and how they can access all advertised vacancies and so will have the right to have access to our Recruitment Portal/ vacancy bulletins and to apply for any jobs advertised. This right will not apply to posts

in redeployment situations where existing staff are ringfenced to a reduced number of posts.

Redeployees

Employees affected by organisational change who are declared at risk of redundancy will be given priority for suitable vacant positions.

When shortlisting, you must interview any applicant that has identified themselves as a redeployee and that meets the relevant criteria **first**. For further information on the redeployment process see our Managing Organisational Change [Policy](#).

Shortlisting

You will have access to the system to review your applications. Once your advert has closed, you can use the offline shortlisting grid ([Recruitment- Shortlist Grid.xlsm](#)) in order to shortlist. Please make sure you:

Only move people to shortlist on the system after the closing date

Shortlist with more than one person, ideally with a full diverse balanced panel

Keep a copy of the shortlisting form in a secure place in accordance with GDPR for 6 months

Check the applications for anyone who has identified themselves as a redeployee, and ensure they are given a priority interview **first** if they meet the requirements of the role

Shortlist all applicants who have flagged that they want to be considered under 'Disability Confident' and meet the requirements of the role.

Ensure that you follow positive action for all roles which are band 4 and above.

Assessments

To choose the best person for the role, it is important that our assessment process is fair, consistent and rigorous and that we are using the most effective methods of selection. Along with the interview, you may consider using other methods of assessing the applicant's suitability, such as presentations, assessment centres and psychometric tests. Your HRBP can help if you need further advice.

Interviewing

A structured interview can give an indication of a candidate's performance in the job. (Please see our interview template: [interviewtemplate.docx](#)) A structured interview means that:

Questions are planned carefully before the interview

All candidates are asked the same questions

Answers are scored using a rating system

Questions focus on the attributes and behaviours needed in the job only.

However, there is a risk of having an overly rigid approach in which there is little opportunity to ask the candidate supplementary questions and the candidate does not feel at ease. Therefore, there should be a balance of structured and unstructured questions.

It is important that selection interviews are conducted professionally and ideally everyone on the panel, particularly the chair should have undertaken recruitment training. A poor interview experience can undermine our brand as an employer and candidates might share their unfavourable impression with other potential applicants and customers. Following up with candidates in a timely manner, and giving feedback following an interview demonstrates appreciation of their time and interest and enhances the candidate experience.

When interviewing, the panel should consist of at least two people, ideally including the manager the successful applicant will report to.

When interviewing notes should ideally be hand-written (laptops can be distracting/act as a barrier). Notes should be accurate and not contain any personal/inappropriate comments.

You will need to take copies of all applicant's proof of right to work in the UK ([Right to Work in the UK Guide](#)) and documents relevant for the role i.e. qualifications, DBS documents. Further guidance on checking an applicant's right to work can be found [here](#). If your candidate requires sponsorship or if you have questions about their right to work status, contact the [immigration and sponsorship team](#) within People Services.

Interview decisions must be recorded and kept providing feedback to the applicants who are unsuccessful. The successful candidates interview notes should be uploaded onto the system. It is also important to store the unsuccessful interview notes securely for 6 months, in line with GDPR legislation.

Offer Stage and Pre-employment checks

Please note you should only offer salaries within the green zone unless you have discussed and agreed a higher salary with your HR BP.

Once you have offered the applicant the role, agreed their salary (see the [salary bands](#)), and they have accepted, you will need to reject the unsuccessful applicants on the system. Ideally, you should also follow up with the unsuccessful candidates and offer feedback. For guidance on what to do after you have offered a candidate a role, please click [here](#).

You will also need to scan and upload successful applicant documents onto the recruitment system. . The documents that you need to upload online via the offer stage are:

Successful applicant's verified (signed and dated) right to work documents

Successful applicant's interview notes

Successful applicant's qualifications/professional registration (if applicable)

Please note that if you do not upload the appropriate documents this may cause a delay in the recruitment process.

The pre-employment stage will involve the following checks:

- **References** - The IBC recruitment team will complete the necessary reference, two references for external applicants, and normally one reference for internal applicants.. Safer recruitment roles will require more in-depth referencing.
- **Occupational Health Assessment** - the WCC Occupational Health team will assess the applicants' health assessment form against the working conditions in the [job posting template](#) .
- **Continuous Service Form (if required)** - the IBC Recruitment Team will provide the successful applicant with the continuous service form to send to their previous employer's HR Department to confirm service dates. This will need to be emailed back directly to the IBC recruitment team.
- **DBS checks (if required)** - the IBC recruitment team will issue DBS checks to the successful applicant and will record the outcome of the DBS check on SAP.

Overseas Checks (if required) the IBC recruitment team will identify periods of overseas employment over 12 months and will then liaise with you.

Once all the pre-employment checks are completed, the IBC Recruitment Team will contact you to arrange a start date. A new employee should only start if they have successfully completed all the required checks.

Remember to plan their Induction (see our [Induction Checklist.doc](#))

Where the successful candidate requires reasonable adjustments then please put these in place before they start. Where specific IT systems are required /adjustments to existing systems need to be made or other specialist equipment is required it is recommended that you invite the successful candidate in to check these are suitable at least a week prior to their start date. This will then give you the opportunity to make any further changes needed prior to the start date if required.

If the successful applicant does not arrive on their first day, you will need to notify the IBC Recruitment Team to avoid an overpayment.

Recruitment Guides

[Positive Action slides](#)

[Recruitment guide](#)

[Job Description Template](#)

[Job Posting Template](#)

[TMP Media Timeframes.pdf](#)

[Shortlisting Grid.xlsm](#)

[Recruitment- interview template.docx](#)

[Right to work in UK Guide.doc](#)

[Secondment](#)

[Executive Search](#)

[Safer Recruitment Policy](#)

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