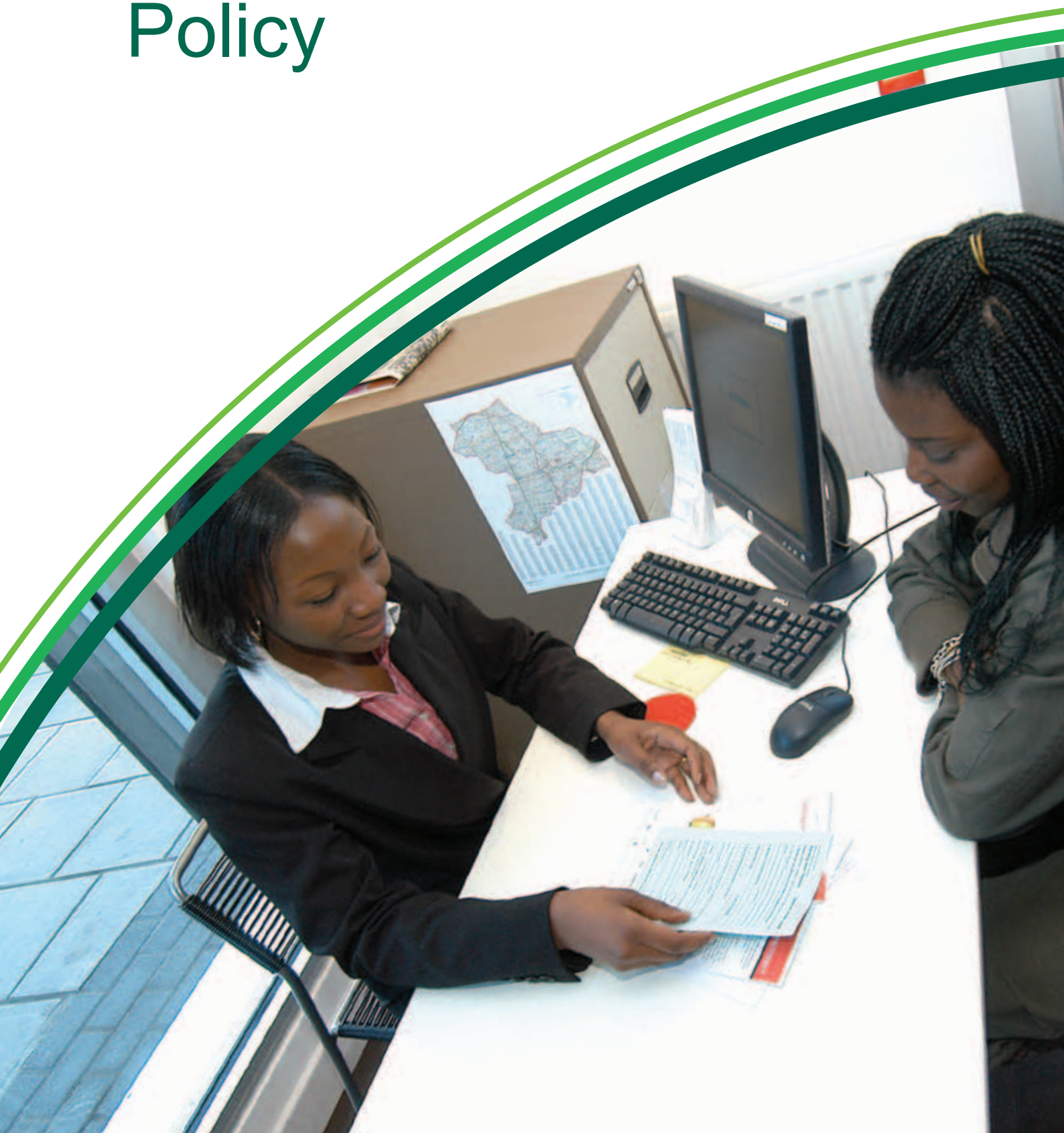
Hackney

Recruitment Policy



RECRUITMENT POLICY

Hackney will encourage diversity and promote talent as part of its commitment to improving services and increasing opportunities for all.

Hackney will:-

- Select on merit the people best able to deliver services
- Recruit openly, making opportunities available to all, especially Hackney's local community
- Promote equal and fair treatment. Hackney will not unlawfully discriminate against anyone on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, belief or socio-economic status
- Encourage proactive recruitment of members of underrepresented groups across the organisation and work with partners to achieve this
- Guarantee an interview to disabled candidates who meet all the essential application criteria
- Retain displaced employees where possible and offer redeployment opportunities before posts are advertised for recruitment
- Take a candidate-focussed approach to recruitment, ensuring that candidates experience effective and efficient recruitment practice
- Achieve the full career potential of our employees by developing a skilled workforce that can compete for opportunities in Hackney
- Take a flexible approach that maximises opportunities for all, such as making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and encouraging working practices that help our workforce to achieve a work-life balance

- Only employ people who have the legal right to work in the UK
- Protect service users, in particular by checking the suitability of candidates who apply for work with vulnerable groups
- Support the rehabilitation of offenders and not unfairly discriminate against any person with a conviction
- Take joint rather than individual recruitment decisions (i.e. no one person will take a decision to appoint a candidate). Trained panels will where possible reflect the diversity of the workforce and local community
- Observe confidentiality and data protection principles
- Monitor outcomes at all key stages of the process to eliminate any unfair and unlawful practices.

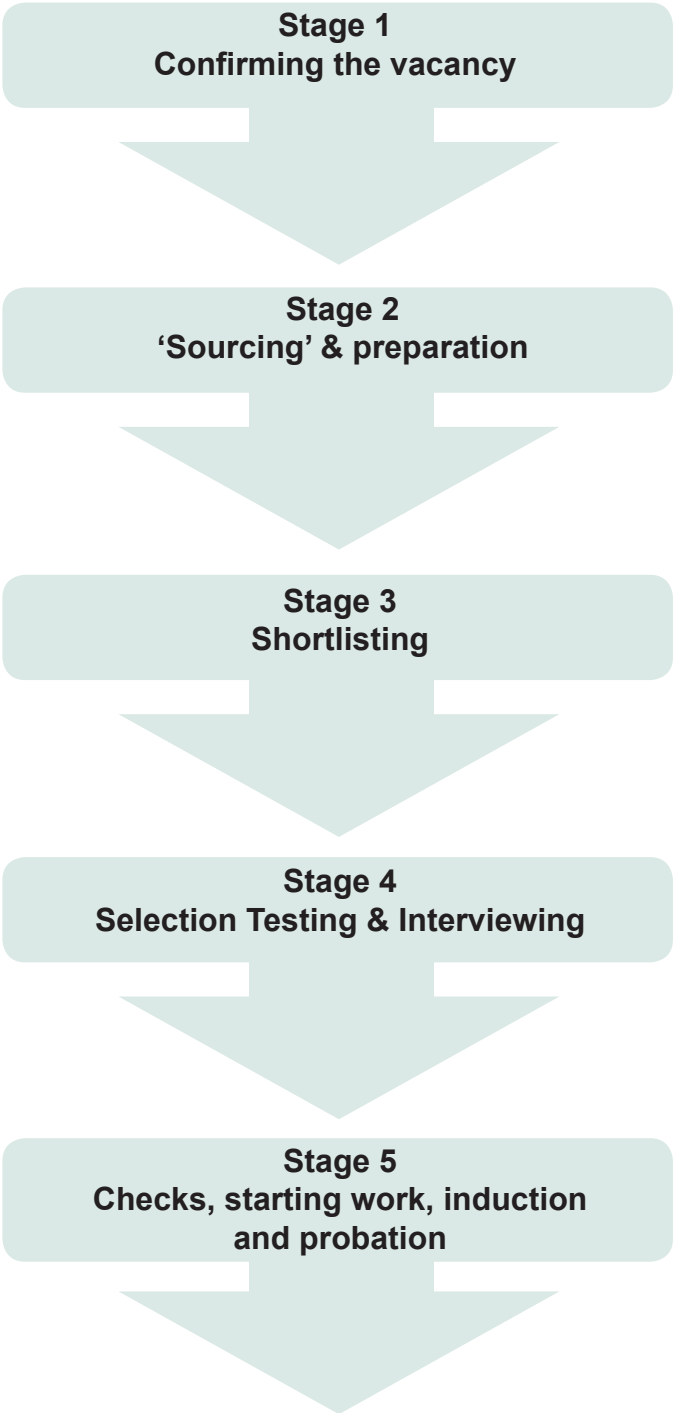
SCOPE

This procedure sets out Hackney's recruitment process. It applies to Council employees on permanent and fixed-term contracts and to those on secondment. It does not apply to agency workers or contractors.

Chief Officers have their own procedures and are not covered by this procedure.

STAGES

The recruitment procedure has five basic stages:-



Stage 1
Confirming the vacancy

1 The ***Recruiting Manager*** must:-

1.1 Look at how the job is being delivered. Are the right outcomes being delivered in the right way? Is the post accountable for the right things?

If necessary, review the job description and person specification.

1.2 Make sure that the vacancy is an established post and that there is funding available.

1.3 Draft an advert (see **Advertising** in Step 2 below).

1.4 Complete the **Vacancy Request Form** (including establishment number and cost code) attaching:-

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Job summary
- Draft Advert

Stage 2
'Sourcing' & preparation

2.1 The **Recruitment Team** will:-

(i) Check the **Redeployment Pool** for suitably qualified Redeployees
(ii) Contact the **Recruiting Manager** to agree:-

- Sourcing options (e.g. on-line media);
- The final advert;
- Branching questions/'Sifting' questions and criteria;
- An appropriately trained interview panel Chair and panel members;
- Selection methods (e.g. interview/testing options);
- Recruitment timetable, including closing date and interview / testing date(s);
- The recruitment 'pack' (i.e. the information that will be made available to applicants). The information in the pack will be posted online and general recruitment information relating to the candidate will be displayed on the on-line Recruitment Management System;
- The use of Genuine Occupational Qualifications (should a GOQ be proposed);
- Finally, the Recruitment Officer will give the Recruiting Manager their login details and password so that they can access the on-line recruitment management system

2.2 The **Recruiting Manager** is responsible for:-

- Progress in the recruitment exercise (against the timetable);
- Liaising with the panel members;
- Booking rooms and equipment for interviews and tests,
- Organising support required on the day (such as greeting candidates) etc.

2.3 Advertising

2.3.1 Following a check of the redeployment pool, all Council jobs will be advertised internally and externally in parallel. In exceptional circumstances and where there is a good case, managers may advertise internally only. Recruiting managers must consult with HR and get their Assistant Director's permission before recruiting internally only.

2.3.2 The Council has introduced an online recruitment system and jobs will normally be advertised on the Council's website and other highly visible websites such as:-
www.hackney.gov.uk
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
www.fish4jobs.co.uk
www.totaljobs.com
www.guardianonline.co.uk
www.jobsgopublic.com
www.monster.co.uk

2.3.3 All external vacancies will be advertised at the job centre to specifically target members of the local community. Jobs that are entry-level and/or jobs that may be of particular interest to local people will also be highlighted in Hackney Today and the local press. Readers will be informed that the Council advertises all vacancies on the Council's website.

2.4 Applying for jobs

2.4.1 Applicants are encouraged to apply online. However, candidates may, on request, be sent hard copies of all information by the Recruitment Team and submit a hard copy application form if they prefer.

2.4.2 The Recruitment Team will scan hard copy application forms (together with monitoring information) so that information is available to managers on-line.

2.4.3 Candidates will be asked to either upload a CV or an Application Form – depending on the chosen method of application at the start of the recruitment exercise. In both scenarios, candidates will be required to fully address the criteria in the Application/Branching Questions* as they work through the application process on the online recruitment management system.

* 'Branching questions' are questions asked of candidates before they complete the application form. If they are not 'qualified' to do the job, then they are advised not to proceed with the application.

2.5 **Internal Adverts**

2.5.1 Internal adverts will be posted only on the Council's intranet. Workers not directly employed by Hackney such as agency workers and consultants, are not eligible to apply for 'internal only' vacancies. Temporary workers directly employed (on fixed term contracts) may apply.

Stage 3
Shortlisting

3.1 The **Recruiting Manager** is responsible for setting up a recruitment shortlisting panel. The panel should:-

- consist of at least two, but preferably three, officers (including the Recruiting Manager); and
- where possible, be reflective of the Council's diverse workforce

3.2 Where the **Recruiting Manager** is not a direct employee of the Council (e.g. an agency worker):-

- they must have authorisation from the relevant Head of Service to recruit; and
- the panel must include at least one Council employee

3.3 The **Panel Chair** must have attended training in recruitment practice within 2 years before shortlisting and subsequent interviewing takes place.

3.4 The **Recruiting Manager** and panel members will shortlist against the criteria set out in the person specification.

The **essential criteria** must be used for shortlisting purposes. If a candidate does not meet any of the essential criteria then they cannot be shortlisted. The desirable criteria will be used to rank the applicants and the panel will agree a cut-off point depending on the number of suitable applications. All disabled applicants applying under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme and who meet the essential criteria must be automatically selected for an interview.

3.5 The **Recruiting Manager** is responsible for compiling the final shortlist; and the other panel members should forward their shortlists to him/her. The shortlisting panel may:-

(i) Compile their shortlist individually as applications are received; or

(ii) Compile their shortlists individually after the closing date; or

(iii) Meet as a panel to jointly consider the applications

The Recruiting manager must make sure that there is final agreement on the shortlist.

3.6 The **Recruiting Manager** will enter the shortlisting results into the e-recruitment system. The manager can do this directly or email the results to their dedicated Recruitment Officer once the shortlisting has been completed and within the agreed timeframes as outlined in the Recruitment SLA. This data is uploaded into the recruitment matrix to form the overall candidate assessment.

3.7 The final shortlist should be completed within **5 working days** of the closing date and the **Recruiting Manager** must upload the final shortlist on to the online system.

3.8 The online system will automatically generate a response to the successful and unsuccessful candidates, using the method they indicated suited them best – normally, by email, text or hardcopy letter.

3.9 External candidates are not normally given feedback on the reasons they were not selected for interview.

Stage 4
Selection Testing & Interviewing

4.1 The **successful candidates** will be invited to book an interview/testing slot on-line for a time that suits them or to contact the **Recruitment Team** who will book an interview/test time for them. The **Recruitment Team** will monitor the timetable and chase candidates who are slow to respond. The Online system will confirm the time of the interview/test and confirm any documents they need to bring with them.

4.2 Candidates will be asked if they need any adjustments and where they do, **reasonable adjustments** will be made. Adjustments should be specific to the needs of the individual and may include:-

- overcoming access issues (e.g. using a ground floor room);
- changing the format of the interview itself (e.g. allowing written responses from candidates with problems expressing themselves verbally)

4.3 **Interviews**

4.3.1 The interview process must be agreed in advance and structured around a set of questions that focus on the requirements of the job (as specified in the job description and the person specification) and must be non-discriminatory. All candidates must be interviewed in the same way (except for where reasonable adjustments have been made).

4.3.2 **Interview notes** must be kept and panel members must remember that nothing is 'off the record'. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, candidates have the right to access this information. Candidates who make a valid written request must be given a copy of their notes within 40 calendar days.

4.3.3 **Interview Expenses** are payable providing: -

a) the expenses are reasonable; and,
b) are supported by receipts; and,
c) the candidate does not refuse the job offer.

Stage 5
Checks, starting work, induction and probation

5.1 **Pre-employment Checks**

5.1.1 The Recruitment Team will issue the successful candidate with a conditional offer letter. The offer is conditional on the appropriate checks:

5.1.2 Checks for **external candidates** will consist of:-

(i) Two independent references; one of which must be from their current/most recent employer. Where jobs involve working with children or vulnerable adults, references must cover an uninterrupted period of at least the last two years
(ii) Proof of identify and right to work in the UK
(iii) Pre-employment Health Questionnaire
(iv) Secondary Employment Declaration
(v) Declaration of Interests & Political Restrictions (PO1 & above)
(vi) Declaration of unspent criminal convictions
(vii) Continuous Service Declaration – if applicable

In addition, the following checks are also required for jobs that involve working with children or vulnerable adults:-

(viii) Declaration of Spent and Unspent criminal convictions
(ix) Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure
(x) Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) registration from October 2009

Other checks that may also be required:-

b) Work Permits/Visas/Worker Registration
c) Social Worker Registration (GSCC)
d) Occupational Therapist Registration (HPC)
e) Professional and academic qualifications (evidenced)

5.1.3 Checks for **internal candidates** will consist of:-

(i) One reference from the appropriate line manager;

(ii) Any other checks (as for external candidates) that may have become relevant (e.g. the nature of the job may make a pre-employment health check necessary;
or a Declaration of Interest may now apply; or the job may require them to work with children or vulnerable adults; etc.)

5.2 Candidates may not start work until the appropriate checks have been made. This is particularly important if they will work with children or vulnerable adults. The candidate must be advised not to give notice to their current employer until the offer is confirmed.

5.3 A signed **Statement of Particulars** is also a condition of employment. However, this should only be issued after all checks are cleared and a formal offer of appointment is being made.

5.4 The **Recruitment Team** must obtain details about the applicant's most recent employment and will ask the previous employer to state how many days and occasions the applicant was absent due to sickness in the past 12 months.

If the sickness record meets the Council's sickness absence triggers then the **Recruitment Team** may be asked to investigate further. The applicant will be told there is concern and asked to provide further information. The applicant may be referred to Occupational Health for an opinion before a final decision is made.

All references are sent to the Recruiting Manager for approval.

5.5 **Withdrawing an offer of Appointment**

5.5.1 If for any reason, the Recruiting Manger wishes to withdraw the offer of appointment, then this should be discussed first with the Senior Recruitment Officer.

5.6 **Confirming the offer of Appointment.**

5.6.1 Once the checks have been received and cleared, the Recruitment Team will:-

- Agree a start date with the new recruit (and the Recruiting Manager);
- Issue a letter confirming the offer, salary details and reporting arrangements for the first day;
- Issue a Statement of Particulars (the employment contract);
- Advise the Directorate HR team of the start date;
- Provide HR Induction;
- Organise email accounts and telephone and/or mobile numbers

5.6.2 Where an employee is within 6 months of the Council's normal retirement age (65) or is over 65, the 'extended date of retirement' must be reflected in their employment contract.

5.7 **Welcome Meeting**

5.7.1 On the employee's first day the **Recruiting Manager** will:-

- Meet and greet the new employee;
- Give them the welcome pack;
- Give them an overview of the Council including key services and personnel;
- Arrange for an appropriate ID card (and any 'warrant card' that may be necessary e.g. if the job involves enforcement);
- Run through fire evacuation procedures for their normal place of work

5.7.2 The line manager will ensure that the employee is booked onto the Council's **Corporate Induction** event, run by HR&OD.

5.7.3 The line manager is responsible for local induction (e.g. introduction to the job/service, important information about the workplace, etc).

5.8 **Disabled employees**

5.8.1 If the successful candidate requires an adjustment to the job, the working environment, arrangements or equipment, then this should be in place before the candidate starts work. The Occupational Health Service is available for advice in the first instance.

5.8.2 The employee may also require a personal emergency evacuation plan, and this should be discussed with the Health and Safety Team.

5.9 **Probation**

5.9.1 All new entrants to Hackney Council will be subject to a six month probationary period.

Check list
Responsibilities

	Recruiting Manager	✓	Recruitment Team	✓
Stage 1 – Confirm the vacancy	☐Reviews the Job Description & Person Specification			
	☐Drafts the Advert			
	☐Completes the on line Request to Recruit Form Attach: • Job Description • Person Specification • Job summary (job role) • Advert • Setting 5 'essential' and 2 'desirable' criteria			
Stage 2 – 'Sourcing' and preparation	☐Logs on to the online system to view progress against the timetable		☐Checks • The Redeployment Pool • Sourcing options • Advertising the vacancy (on-line and/or hard copy media) • Sifting questions • An appropriately trained Interview Chair and Panel • Selection methods e.g. interview & testing options • Uploading the application criteria onto the e-recruitment system • The key recruitment messages for candidates • Information the candidates will need to bring with them to the interview.	
	☐Selects and liaises with the Panel members			
	☐Books rooms and equipment for interviews and tests			
	☐Organises any support required on the day (e.g. greeting candidates; administering tests)			
			☐Advertises the vacancy (on line and hard copy media)	
			☐Sends a hardcopy response to people who request it.	
Stage 3 – Shortlisting	☐Compiles the final shortlist within 5 working days			
	☐Uploads the final shortlist outcome/results on to the on-line system			

	Recruiting Manager	✓	Central Recruitment Team	✓
Stage 4 – Selection. Testing & Interviewing	Prepares interview questions / identify the testing method and agreeing them with the Panel			
	Ensures any reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates		Chases candidates who have not to booked an interview/ testing slot – although the system will remind candidates automatically	
	Arranges to meet and greet candidates			
	Ensures that all papers (including interview notes) are returned the Recruitment Team within the time-frames outlined in the SLA		Books an interview slot for candidates if requested.	
	Completes the on-line Results of Interview Form		Conveys the decision to successful and unsuccessful candidates	
	Provides detailed feedback to candidates (if required)		Provides initial feedback to candidates (if required)	
Stage 5 – Checks, starting work, induction and probation.	Takes a decision to withdraw an offer of employment (in consultation with the Recruitment Team)		Issues the successful candidate with a conditional offer letter	
	Ensures the work station is ready for the new starter		Undertakes pre-employment checks and informs the Re-cruiting manager when received	
	Ensures any reasonable adaptations are in place for disabled candidates		Confirms the offer of appointment and issuing contracts; joining instructions etc / withdrawing the offer of appointment.	
	Meets the employee on their first day		Advises the Directorate HR team of the start date	
	Organises local induction – the work and work area.		Organises HR induction – to get the new recruit on payroll etc	
	Implements probation (new entrants to Hackney Council)		Exports the successful candidates details into Hackney Payroll System (ResourceLink) at the end of the recruitment exercise	

Effective from 1st July 2009

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