

**THE MORAY COUNCIL**  
**RECRUITMENT & SELECTION**  
**POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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8. Overview of the Selection and Recruitment Process

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of Recruitment and Selection is to match people to work. It is the most important element in any organisation's management of people because it is not possible to optimise the effectiveness of human resources, by whatever method, if there is a less than adequate match.

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 The principles defined in this policy should be adhered to by all employees of the Moray Council and apply to all vacant post. Supplementary guidance is in place for certain posts and this will be referred to where appropriate.

## **3.0 Statement of Policy**

- 3.1 The Council aims to attract, at reasonable cost, as wide a group of suitably qualified and experienced people as possible and to appoint the right person to each job, using a fair and consistent method of Recruitment and Selection.
- 3.2 The Council operates an Equal Opportunities Policy and is committed to appointment based solely upon job-related merit and ability. The procedure has been established to ensure a fair and consistent approach. The only exception to this is where vacancies are to be filled by redeploying existing employees ([see 4.9](#)).
- 3.3 The Moray Council operates a Disability Equality Policy and is committed to equality of opportunity in regard to all aspects of the employment of people with disabilities.

The Council has agreed to the commitments associated with the use of the disability symbol and, therefore, all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy must be included on the shortlist.

## **4. Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Designated Officers in Departments are responsible for leading the recruitment process. The term Designated Officer refers to appropriately trained employees who have been delegated responsibility by their Head of Service for the organisation of the Recruitment and Selection process within their area of operation. Designated Officers in Departments are responsible for:

- completing the Termination of Employment form \*
- undertaking a review of the vacant post
- entering the details of the vacancy on myjobscotland \*
- preparing a Job Description and a Person Specification
- indicating if a post is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- preparing a draft advertisement for larger press publications
- viewing and shortlisting applications from myjobscotland
- calling up references \*
- inviting candidates to interview/selection proceedings \*
- applying appropriate selection procedures
- interviewing/selecting
- preventing illegal working by checking and copying relevant documents
- informing successful and unsuccessful candidates \*
- keeping records of interview/selection proceedings

- ensuring that the Council's commitment to equal opportunities is observed
- completing the Notification of Appointment form \*
- issuing contracts in accordance with agreed formats (in certain depts/sections only) \*

\* These administrative responsibilities may be undertaken by someone other than a Designated Officer under supervision.

4.2 The Personnel Services Section are responsible for:

- checking and approving vacancy details on myjobscotland to ensure relevant standards and regulations are complied with
- publishing the vacancy
- forwarding approved advertisements to ICT/Printing
- ensuring details of vacant posts are forwarded to the Contact Centre and the Job Centre
- processing Notification of Appointment forms and issuing contracts
- providing guidance, training and assistance on all stages of the Recruitment and Selection process

4.3 The Contact Centre are responsible for:

- Sending application packs to potential candidates
- Scanning completed paper application forms on to myjobscotland

4.4 The ICT/Printing Section is responsible for:

- the placement of approved advertisements.

## **5.0 The Recruitment and Selection Procedure**

### **5.1 Preparation**

#### **5.1.1 Termination form**

The department must complete a Termination Form and forward copies to Personnel Services before recruitment of replacement staff can commence.

#### **5.1.2 Vacancy review**

Before advertising a vacant post, the department should review the need for the vacancy and identify any existing or forthcoming developments that may affect the post. This should include a review of the Job Description and Person Specification. (see guidelines on Preparing a Job Description and Person Specification).

### **5.2 Advertising**

#### **5.2.1 myjobscotland**

The department should enter the position details on to myjobscotland and upload the appropriate documentation (see guidelines on Creating a Position available on the myjobscotland section of the Personnel intranet section). The

justification for filling the vacancy and the implications of not filling it should be made clear. The vacancy must be fully authorised by the appropriate officers within each department.

### 5.2.2 Press Advertisements

Depending on the nature of the position and the circumstances around recruitment, departments may choose to advertise a vacancy in the press. Requests for this should be included with the position details on myjobscotland. In addition an Advert Booking Form must be completed and authorised within the department and forwarded to Personnel Services. Advertisements in the Northern Scot and the Press and Journal will be in corporate composite format and prepared by Personnel Services. Advertisements in other publications should be prepared by the department in accordance with guidelines on Preparing a Recruitment Advertisement ([insert link](#)) and forwarded to Personnel Services. Arrangements for press advertisements will then be made by Personnel Services in conjunction with the ICT/Printing Section.

### 5.2.3 Internal Vacancies

Some vacancies may require to be advertised internally to existing employees only, where there is a specialist skill required, the department can cover via a secondment opportunity or for efficiency reasons.

If unsure whether a vacancy meets these criteria then contact the Personnel Advice Line for further guidance.

## 5.3 Short-listing

Departments are able to view and short-list all candidates from myjobscotland after the closing date has passed. This includes paper applications which will have been scanned on to the system by the Contact Centre.

Shortlisting is undertaken by a methodical comparison of application forms with the Job Description and the Person Specification, and under normal circumstances, within 10 working days of the closing date.

Applications must be compared against the essential factors of the Person Specification. If a candidate does not meet all of these, they should be notified that they have been unsuccessful within two weeks. Decisions, and reasons, should be recorded on myjobscotland so candidates can be given feedback if required. The Shortlist may be refined by reference to the desirable factors.

The shortlisting panel and interviewing panel should remain the same. Where this is not possible the shortlisting panel should comprise of a smaller number of officers who will also be members of the interview panel.

Wherever reasonably practicable, a panel member should not participate in the selection process where he/she is aware that a previous complaint, in respect of recruitment and selection, is unresolved or is pending against him/her.

Under no circumstances should any officer participate in the selection procedure where a relative has applied for the vacancy, unless the relative has been ruled out at an earlier stage in the proceedings.

For single appointments no more than 6-8 candidates should normally be asked to attend. If no applicants fulfil the essential criteria, or the panel considers that there has been insufficient response, the vacancy should be re-advertised. Personnel Services should be contacted before re-advertisement is undertaken.

Candidates who have been shortlisted should be invited for interview using myjobscotland, or a standard letter. Candidates should be advised of the format of the interview and forwarded an Interview Expenses Form if appropriate.

#### Training

Members of the panel must have attended a training course in Recruitment and Selection.

#### 4.9 Redeployment

In a redundancy situation the REDEPLOYMENT PROCEDURES, as set out in the Council's CHANGE MANAGEMENT POLICY, will be followed and every effort will be made to find alternative employment for employees identified as "at risk". This may mean a vacancy is not released for general advertisement until "at risk" employees have been considered.

Redeployment may also be relevant on health grounds and vacancies may also be prioritised for this purpose.

#### 4.10 Disability

The Council operates a Disability Equality in Employment Policy and has agreed to the five commitments associated with the use of the Disability Symbol and, therefore, all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy must be included on the shortlist.

#### 4.12 References

- The purpose of a reference is to obtain factual information about a prospective employee and opinions about their character and suitability for a job. The factual information is straightforward and essential. It is simply necessary to confirm the nature of the position, length of service, reason for leaving, and attendance record. Opinions about character and suitability are less reliable and caution should be exercised when making judgements based on these.
- The employing department must call for two references, at least one of which should be from the most recent or current employer, for shortlisted candidates. The references should be obtained prior to the interview taking place, except where the candidate has expressed the wish that referees should not be contacted prior to interview. References must relate to a minimum period of 3 years prior to the closing date for applications for the post in question.
- A character reference must be obtained for posts which work predominantly with children.

- Verbal references may also be obtained but these must be followed up in writing.
- Any job offer should be subject to satisfactory references where these are not obtained before the interview
- The Request for Reference form should be accompanied with the relevant job description, person specification and covering letter. Additional information may be requested, particularly for more senior or specialist positions.

#### 4.13 Qualifications

Where the post requires possession of a particular professional qualification or registration with a particular body, this should be indicated on the invitation to interview letter or email and original paperwork checked and recorded on the Interview Assessment form at the interview stage.

#### 4.14 Illegal Working

Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 requires all employers in the United Kingdom to make basic document checks on every person they intend to employ. By making these checks, employers can be sure they will not break the law by employing illegal workers. Racial discrimination must be avoided when preventing illegal working. The best way to do this is by treating all candidates the same way. In the invitation to interview letter candidates should be advised to bring their passport with them to the interview to be checked and copied. Candidates without a passport should bring their National Insurance Card and their original birth certificate.

#### 4.15 Salary Placing

All new appointees will commence on the bottom point of the salary scale for the post, unless in exceptional circumstances.

Where a department wishes to place an appointee above the minimum of the salary scale, the views of the Head of Personnel Services must be sought before any formal indication is given to the successful candidate. Placement above the minimum of the salary scale is highly unlikely and only considered in exceptional circumstances.

### 5. Selection Methods

#### 5.1 Interviewing

Interviewing is one of the best-established and popular selection techniques and may be undertaken with other methods or as the sole decision point.

The interview is an effective selection technique if it is properly prepared, has a clear focus and is undertaken by skilled people.

##### 5.1.1 Administrative arrangements

- Candidates who have been shortlisted should be invited to interview within two weeks of the closing date. A delay in the process requires a written acknowledgement of application. This allows adequate notice to the candidate and for references to be requested and returned before interviews take place.
- A reception facility and a waiting area should be organised for candidates.
- The interview panel will normally consist of a designated officer and at least one other appropriate manager/supervisor (i.e. normally an officer who is not graded at the same or lower grade than the vacancy itself).
- A representative of the Personnel Services Section is available for interviews in particular circumstances and, when utilised, will participate, in an advisory capacity, as a full member of the panel. Managers should not normally conduct an interview alone and no officer should be involved in making an appointment where a relative is involved.
- Preparation is crucial for the success of the interview and a prior meeting of the panel should be held to discuss key areas relating to job descriptions, person specifications, questions to be asked and in which order and by whom, post interview arrangements, etc.
- Panel members should have:
  - application forms;
  - job description;
  - person specification;
  - interview assessment form;
  - references;
  - prepared questions or areas for discussion;
  - terms and conditions of the job.

## 5.12 Interviews

Guidance for interviews is provided in HOW TO CONDUCT A SELECTION INTERVIEW.

## 5.2 Other Selection Methods

A number of other selection techniques, generally undertaken in conjunction with interviewing, may be considered. These include:

- Psychological (or psychometric) testing, including:
  - ability tests;
  - personality tests;
  - intelligence tests.

**(Note:** The Council does not currently use these methods and any manager considering these should contact Personnel Services for advice).

- Work situations/samples, including:
  - presentations;
  - reports;
  - practical tasks.

Guidance on the use of these methods is available in HOW TO USE SELECTION TESTS AND ASSESSMENT.

## 6. Post Interview Procedures

### 6.1 Successful Candidate

The successful applicant will initially be offered the appointment by telephone or in writing, using a standard Offer of Position letter, as soon as is practicable after the conclusion of the interviews.

Upon confirmation of acceptance of the offer, a Notification of Appointment form should be completed and signed by a Designated Officer and forwarded to the Personnel Services section. Upon receipt of the Notification of Appointment, Personnel Services will issue a Contract of Employment outlining the main terms and conditions of the appointment.

The Contract should be issued before the commencement of employment (and no later than 8 weeks after the date of appointment).

### 6.2 Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates should be informed, in writing or by email via myjobscotland, as soon as practicable after the interview, via myjobscotland or using a standard **Post Interview Rejection** letter, and no longer than 5 days from the date of interview. Whenever practicable, unsuccessful candidates should be notified on the same day as the successful candidate but may be held until after the successful candidate accepts the position, provided this does not cause undue delay.

6.3/

### 6.3 Records

All documentation relating to the recruitment must be retained for a minimum of six months within the department as it may be required for any subsequent complaint. Records include all application forms and all correspondence relating to the vacancy (e.g. advertisement, job description, person specification, questions asked at interview, responses from candidates, interview assessments, references and notes taken by the interviewing panel).

Application forms for the successful candidate are held in the personal file in Personnel Services.

### 6.4 Expenses for Candidates

Candidates called for interview will be reimbursed travel expenses on the basis of second class travel to the location of interview. Where it is impractical for rail travel, applicants should be paid at the public transport mileage rate.

Details of current allowances can be found in the Relocation Scheme.

### 6.5 Relocation Package

Assistance with relocation should be offered where appropriate in accordance with the provisions of the Relocation Scheme. Employing departments should contact Personnel Services for advice, where the situation is unclear.

## 6.6 Complaints

Applicants are advised of the Complaints Procedure in the Information for Applicants booklet.

Candidates are informed that, in the event of a complaint, they can refer the matter to the Head of Personnel Services, the Commission for Racial Equality or the Equal Opportunities Commission.

## 6.7 Medical Clearance

For appointments requiring medical clearance, departments must seek the advice of the Occupational Health Service in ascertaining the health of prospective appointees.

## 6.8 Disclosure Scotland Checks

### 6.8.1 Basis for Requesting a Disclosure

The Council will seek Standard or Enhanced Disclosures where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a risk assessment of the position, based on the likelihood and consequences of the risk.

In general, the Council will seek a Disclosure where there is access to vulnerable adults or young people through the appointment or where the post is in a position of trust as defined in the Act. These are appointments in respect of which the Council would wish to ask exempt questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA).

Where a Disclosure is deemed necessary for a position, it will be made clear in all relevant documentation, eg person specification, that a Disclosure will be requested in the event that an individual is made a conditional offer of the position.

### 6.8.2 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, the Council will ask all applicants selected for interview to provide details of their criminal record prior to interview. This will use a standard form, Addendum to Application Form (Disclosing Criminal History Information), and will be sent under separate confidential cover to a designated person. This information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

In line with the ROA, we only ask about convictions which are defined as 'unspent' in terms of the Act unless the nature of the position is such that we are entitled to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record.

## 7. Associated Documents

Readers are also referred to:

7.1 Policies and procedures

- Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy
- Disability Equality in Employment Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Guidelines on the Writing of Job Descriptions
- Filling of Vacancies: exemptions from scrutiny
- Redeployment Procedures
- Relocation and Resettlement Scheme: new appointments
- Flexible working

7.2 Standard forms

- Notice of Termination form
- Booking form (for external advertisements)
- Application form
- Job Description form
- Person Specification form
- Request for Reference forms
- Interview Expenses form
- Interview assessment form
- Notification of Employment form

7.3 'How to' guides

- How to draft a Recruitment Advertisement
- How to conduct a Selection Interview
- How to use Selection tests and assessment
- How to prepare a Person Specification

7.4 Recruitment Information Pack

The information pack issued to applicants should comprise the following documentation:

- an application form
- a covering letter
- a confirmation of receipt of application postcard
- the job description
- the person specification
- Working for Moray information for applicants
- any additional information which may be relevant to the job

**8. Overview/**

8. **Overview of the Recruitment and Selection process**

