

Policy: Recruitment and Selection

Equality Statement

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is committed to the principles of equality and diversity. No member of the public, member of staff, contractor, secondee, volunteer or job applicant shall be discriminated against on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation.

Introduction

1. The OPCC aims to recruit and select skilled and experienced employees within a framework of openness and equality. The Commissioner is committed to a diverse workforce and this recruitment policy is explicitly written to support this aim. This policy sets out the principles that will be followed when recruiting staff. This policy applies to all employees of the OPCC, regardless of post, grade or status.
2. These are the general principles for recruitment and selection:
 - The Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, is responsible for the staffing establishment.
 - Recruitment and selection to all positions is based on a role profile.
 - The role profile establishes the main duties of the post and the essential qualifications, experience and skills necessary to undertake the role.
 - The role profile is independently assessed using job evaluation methodologies and compared with other posts in order to determine an appropriate level of remuneration.
 - Selection of employees is based on the individual's ability to perform the role and will not be influenced by gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age or disability.
 - All vacancies will be advertised either internally or externally
 - In the case of external advertisements, we will circulate advertisements as widely as possible amongst community groups and local organisations in order to target individuals from minority groups.
 - Temporary or fixed term contracts will be used for limited periods of time. Recruitment to these positions will follow the same principles as that for permanent positions where appropriate depending on the duration of the contract.
 - Shortlisting and interview will be carried out against the role profile and by more than one person.
 - Written records will be maintained of each stage of the process and will only be used for the purposes of recruitment and selection. Personal information will be disposed of in line with the retention policy
 - Selection tests, if used, will assess key competencies as identified in the role profile.
 - New recruits will be given a comprehensive induction and training programme.
 - New recruits will undergo a 6 month probationary period.

- All recruits will be subject to vetting, medical and reference checks
- Monitoring information relating to recruitment and selection will be published in the annual report and on the website.

Identifying a Vacancy

3. Any changes to the staffing structure will be responsive to the requirements of the PCC. The Chief Executive has ultimate authority to identify the staffing establishment of the OPCC and is responsible for the establishment budget. Decisions to establish a new post or to change or disestablish a post will be made at a meeting of the HR Governance Group. Plans to disestablish posts will be subject to our Organisational Change Policy within the Staff Handbook and will include consultation trade union.
4. For increases to the establishment a business case should be presented to the HR Governance Group which identifies the following: background information, draft role profile with indicative salary and other costs training, identified savings (if any), a revised staffing structure, how the post will contribute to the OPCC's business plan, potential alternatives – eg, re-allocation of work, adjusting the business plan, appointing agency or consultancy staff and impact on other posts in the office.
5. Once approved all new posts should be evaluated for grading by submission to a job evaluation panel, following the agreed job evaluation process.
6. Temporary contracts should be offered for a limited period of time (usually no more than 6 weeks) to cover for permanent staff or to undertake a specific task. UK employment law makes no distinction between 'permanent' and 'temporary' and, although there is a qualifying period for most employment rights, temporary workers may be entitled to some employment rights if they have enough continuous employment.
7. Staff may also be appointed on fixed term contracts for a specific period of time or to complete a specific task. Fixed term employees should have general terms of employment which are no less favourable than permanent members of staff. Fixed term contracts should have a start date, an end date and the reason for ending the contract. Temporary or fixed term positions should be recruited against a role profile. If the role is similar to one already in use, the same grading should be applied. If the role profile is significantly different it should be submitted to the HR Governance Group before formal grading at a Job Evaluation Panel.
8. Where possible roles will be advertised as suitable for part time, job share or flexible working and candidates are encouraged to discuss their specific requirements through the application and interview process, although it must be recognised that not all requests will be able to be accommodated.

Advertising

9. External Posts should be advertised as widely as practicable, using social media and job boards where appropriate. Advertisements should also be circulated amongst community groups and local organisations in order to target individuals from groups which are under-represented in our office.

10. The OPCC has signed up to Ban the Box, and as such has taken care to ensure that information relating to offences is not a feature of the selection process.
11. Posts may be limited to internal applications only or to more restricted advertising in the following circumstances:
 - when a post is being recruited to as part of the change management process. In this case recruitment may be 'ring-fenced' to affected employees only.
 - when the same position has been recruited to, with a wide-reaching advertisement, in the previous 6 months.
 - when it is believed that sufficient skills and experience are available within the office
 - when the position is both temporary and urgent and timescales do not allow for a full external process

Application Process

12. Application must be by completion of the application form found on the PCC website. CVs or covering letters will not be accepted. Applicants may be invited to contact the OPCC to discuss the position in advance of making an application. In this case, they should be directed to an officer who has a good understanding of the role but who is not involved in the selection procedure.

Shortlisting

13. A shortlisting panel should be made up of diverse participants. A minimum of 2 individuals should shortlist and representing the diversity of the office. It may be appropriate to include members of staff who are not line managers in the recruitment process, as a development opportunity, and to ensure a good mix of individuals on a panel, where this takes place a peer from the new recruit's new team will not be used. Ordinarily the Line Manager should chair the shortlisting and interviewing processes and be present for both. The chair should have received selection and recruitment training and has responsibility for ensuring that the selection procedures are carried out strictly in accordance with this policy.
14. Shortlisters should see the application form but without vetting forms or equal opportunities forms.
15. Shortlisting should be carried out against up to 10 criteria selected from the personal specification of the job description. Shortlisting should be done by each shortlister independently and collated shortlisting scores should be recorded by the chair. Individuals should be invited to interview on the basis of scoring highly in the shortlisting process. In recruitments where we receive a very large number of applications there could be 2 stages of shortlisting. The first to provide a filter of applications and using just one or two criteria, and then shortlist against the full criteria list in the second stage.
16. In addition to this any individual who has a disability will be offered an interview if their application form demonstrates evidence that they meet the essential criteria in the person specification.

Interviews and Selection Tests

17. When being invited to interview candidates should be asked to advise the office in advance of any particular arrangements needed to accommodate them on arrival or during the interview, eg, induction loop, disabled parking facilities.
18. Interviews will be undertaken with a minimum of two interviewers, which should include the post's line manager as Chair. Again the interview panel should include a variety of personnel and follow the same criteria as section 12, usually the same people. A series of questions, which have been designed to test and verify the candidate's competencies and skills in relation to the role profile should be agreed by the interviewing panel. Notes of the interview should be sufficiently detailed as to support the decision to select one candidate. Notes of interviews may be disclosed to candidates seeking feedback afterwards. The chair of the panel should co-ordinate the interview and ensure that clear records are kept. Any member of the interview panel who knows an external candidate should declare this.
19. Selection tests may be used in recruitment to certain posts and there is evidence that this reduces bias in recruitment processes. When used, the tests will be designed to assess the candidate's competency or skill in a particular area which is specific and integral to the role, for example, minute taking for business support officers or writing concise reports for research staff.
20. Interviews will be scored using a 4 point scale of 1-4. Each candidate will be asked each question in the same order and interviewers will score each question against the standard of the question, rather than as a comparison between candidates. The Interview Chair (usually the line manager) will moderate the scores of each candidate once scored after the interview, and agree a moderated score for each question, resulting a moderated total. Where a selection test is used the scores will be weighted 30% in the overall scoring, unless another weighting is agreed in advance of the interview day.
21. The recruitment panel will choose the successful candidate based on the performance against each interview question, selection tests where used, panel discussions during and following the interviews and the scores allocated and agreed for each candidate.. Where more than one candidate is found to be suitable for the role we will maintain a reserve list, and if a similar role becomes available again within 6 months, the next most suitable candidate will be contacted to offer them the role, without going out to advert once more. We will seek consent from applicants to add them to the reserve list.
22. Feedback may be given to unsuccessful candidates. This will normally be given by a member of the interview panel either by telephone or in writing. Feedback will be based on a summary of the notes made during and after the interview.
23. Expenses relating to interviews can be reimbursed at the discretion of the Chief Executive. Reimbursement will be in accordance with the PCC Expenses Policy

Pre-Employment Checks

24. All applicants will be vetted before being offered a position. The Force carry out our vetting on our behalf and follow the vetting code of practice. The [Vetting Code of Practice](#) states that the Police and Crime Commissioner and Deputy do not have to be vetted. Any issues raised in the vetting process will be referred to the Chief Executive.

25. References may be taken up before interviews are held, if the applicant has given permission, otherwise references will be taken up before an unconditional offer is made. The references should be made available to the interviewing panel after all the interviews have ended. References should be submitted in writing.
26. A medical declaration will need to be completed for all new staff members. In addition to this absence history of applicants should be checked in relation to the attendance standard. Where an applicant's medical condition gives cause for concern the OPCC may ask the applicant to undergo a medical examination and assessment before an offer of employment is made. An applicant may be asked to undergo a drugs test as part of the recruitment process.
27. The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for an employer to employ those who do not have permission to live or to work in the UK. In order to comply all interviewees should be asked to bring a copy of one of the following to the interview (a copy will be taken and retained):
 - A document issued by a previous employer, the Inland Revenue, the Benefits Agency, the Contributions Agency or the Employment Service showing the applicant's NI number
 - A passport detailing the holder as a British Citizen
 - A passport containing a Certificate of Entitlement certifying that the holder has a right of abode in the UK
 - A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British Citizen
 - A birth certificate issued in the UK or Republic of Ireland
 - A passport or national identity card issued by a State which is part of the European Economic Area Agreement and which describes the holder as a national of that state
28. For some roles applicants will need to have DBS checks in order to carry out their role. Where this is the case, and an individual has not had to be vetted the details of the Appendix A on DBS checks and recruitment of ex-offenders will apply.
29. Prospective applicants will be asked to disclose any business interests (as per the Policy in the Staff Handbook) in advance of taking up employment.

Job Offers

30. Job offers should only be made after satisfactory vetting and should be made in writing. A verbal job offer is legally binding so care should be taken to make it clear where conditions are attached to the offer, for example, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.
31. Continuous service will be recognised as per the guidelines in the Police Staff Council Handbook.

Induction and Training

32. Induction and training is the responsibility of the line manager. A comprehensive induction programme will be drawn up for all new recruits which introduces them to the OPCC and Force and identifies the main tasks in the role profile, any initial training requirements, regular review dates and initial targets.

Probation

33. All newly appointed staff are subject to the probationary procedure unless agreed otherwise, for example, for staff with temporary or short fixed term contracts. The details of this are in the Staff Handbook

Version Control

Version No	Date	Author	Post	Reason for issue	Date agreed by PCC	Review Schedule
1.0	May 2020	Polly Reed	Head of Business Services	New Policy		Biennial

Appendix A: DBS Checks: Handling of information and recruitment of ex offenders:

General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, we comply fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

We also comply fully with our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and access

Certificate information is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Recruitment of Ex-offenders

We will assess applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we complies fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed

We can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended). We can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position

We ensure that all those in OPCC who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment

We make every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the [code of practice](#) and makes a copy available on request. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.