



**Moorlands**  
Learning Trust

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## **Recruitment Policy**

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	Position/Committee	Date
Prepared by	CEO	April 2024
Approved by	Trust Board (Delegated to the CEO/CFO)	April 2024
To be Reviewed	CEO	April 2027

# **RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

## **RATIONALE**

Attracting and appointing the right staff are the key to a quality Trust: our priority is to appoint high calibre teachers and associate staff and commit ourselves to their on-going professional development and our on-going school improvement. We are also committed to following Safer Recruitment guidance to ensure the protection and safeguarding of all our children and young people.

We will ensure all staff are included in the induction programme and that they will be given support throughout their induction. No employee, or potential employee, will receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of their age (as an employer – but not applicable to students), disability, sex or sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, colour, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, marital or civil partner status, ethnic or national origin or nationality.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To select the best possible candidate for a post.
2. To conduct the recruitment and selection process in a professional, objective and fair way, in accordance with equal opportunities and child protection legislation.
3. To ensure that all staff have been given a clear outline of job/role requirements and training opportunities.

## **GUIDELINES**

To comply with Safer Recruitment guidance, we will:

1. Comply with the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document.
2. Ensure a statement of commitment regarding the safeguarding of children is included in the school information sent out to applicants:

*'Moorlands Learning Trust is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people in our recruitment procedures and in all our work across and beyond the Trust. The Trust adheres to statutory guidelines in respect to safer recruitment including social media checks on all shortlisted candidates. All persons employed by the Trust, in any capacity, will undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and confirmation of employment is subject to a successful outcome. All teaching staff members recruited by the Trust have their eligibility to teach checked with the DfE.'*

There are named persons for Child Protection in each Trust school and a named governor/trustee to ensure that structures and systems for Child Protection are established and followed for recruitment and as well as all other aspects of school work, and there is responsible accountability.

3. Ensure the job description sets out the role and expectations in relation to contact with children: e.g. 'this post has responsibilities for the protection and safeguarding of children and young people.'

4. Ensure the Person Specification includes reference to behaviours, attitudes and values towards children, for example:
  - has a strong 'moral purpose'
  - ability to maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people
  - displays commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people.
  - good knowledge and understanding of the importance of safeguarding students and the welfare of staff, and of the action to take if necessary
5. Ensure all applicants complete the standard on-line Trust application form, or paper copy if required. The applicant will be required to sign a hard copy of their application if they are shortlisted.
6. Issue the Trust's Confidential Reference pro-forma and ensure one reference is from the current employer.
7. Ensure that decisions for appointment are documented.
8. Contact the Trust or academy's Safeguarding Lead where there are any issues to be raised.
9. At least one member of the Interview Panel should have completed Safer Recruitment training.
10. All shortlisted candidates will be subject to social media checks.
11. All newly appointed staff, with the exception of students who are on our role, will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with barred list check. Students who are no longer on our role but remain in our employment, will at that point be subject to a DBS check.

This Enhanced DBS with barred list check includes where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children, this allows for an additional check to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list. (Refer to the KCSIE Document – Types of Check section).

## Induction

12. After recruitment has taken place, Trust Human Resources will oversee a systematic induction programme to help the new employee adjust to the new social and working environment and to become effective in their role as soon as possible.

Cross reference with:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Document
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## **Appendices:**

Appendix I – A brief guide to good recruitment and selection practice

## Appendix I

### A BRIEF GUIDE TO GOOD RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICE

#### INTRODUCTION

This guide provides all the essential information you need to follow throughout the recruitment and selection process.

By following the guidelines set down in this guide you will be practising approved methods which should lead to effective staff recruitment within the framework of good recruitment and selection practice.

- Selecting the best possible candidate and using the most professional, thorough and objective methods is a paramount management function.

Your responsibilities as manager are to ensure that:

- > The Trust's policy on Recruitment & Selection is complied with
- > The basis of the contract to be offered has been determined
- > Relevant legislation, e.g. Equality Act 2010, and the Disabled Persons' Employment Acts are complied with
- > All decisions are based on evidence gained through the selection process, and no unverified assumptions enter the process
- In all aspects of your process, you need to encourage a wide range of candidates; ensure your procedures and practices are fair, thorough and free of discrimination; treat all candidates with dignity and respect, giving them the opportunity to present their skills and experiences effectively.

#### The Vacancy

A vacancy is an opportunity to look at the needs of the service and to redefine a post that these needs can be met more effectively. When analysing the vacancy, recruiters should take account of the Trust's employment policies.

- Managers must also give reasonable consideration to making changes to physical conditions, supervision, training or job descriptions which would create better opportunities, for example, for people such as those with disabilities, maternity returners, young people, and people with other special needs.

#### Job Shares

All associate and teaching posts are eligible for job share subject to there being a suitable candidate to facilitate a job share.

#### Job Descriptions and Personnel Specifications

- A job description and the personnel specification are the key documents in any recruitment and selection process. It is good practice that recruitment and selection be based upon properly drawn up job descriptions and personnel specifications. Selectors must therefore use these as an integral part of their procedures.

- The job description must be clear and reasonably concise and should be a fair representation of the post; it is not necessary or desirable to attempt to produce a highly detailed and definitive description of the post concerned.
- The personnel specification describes the standards and requirements accurately and identifies between the necessary (essential) requirements and those which are desirable. Never set unnecessary conditions or standards - take particular care when describing experience, qualification and communication requirements. Be aware of the danger of setting standards which may lead, directly or indirectly, to unfair and unlawful discrimination. At all stages in the preparation of personnel specifications, selectors must be mindful of issues which could be construed as unlawfully discriminating.
- Before the specification is used for recruitment purposes it should be reviewed and agreed by all members of the selection panel or panel lead.

It is recommended that the following standard statement should appear in all personnel specifications. It is an essential requirement and can only be tested at final selection stage:

“Candidates should indicate an acceptance of, and a commitment to, the principles of the Trust’s Equality policies and practices as they relate to employment issues and to the delivery of services to the community”.

### **Selection Panel**

- The selection panel has the responsibility for appointing the person who best matches the personnel specification.

It must also ensure that all relevant employment legislation and Trust policies are followed and that the selection process is managed in an equitable and courteous manner. Each panel should have a Chair acting as a ‘panel lead’ who is normally the person responsible for the management of the whole process.

- It is good practice that selection panels should have a minimum of two selectors and recommended as good practice to have no more than four for all appointments below Senior Leadership Level.
- A varied selection panel composition is highly recommended but should not be tokenistic. However, it is good practice to include people from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, age and, whenever possible, disabled people.
- It is good practice that all members of the selection panel are involved in the whole process from agreeing the job description and personnel specification, the method of recruitment, short-listing and interviewing and selection. In the event of a complaint to Industrial Tribunal this could be a matter that the Tribunal might wish to examine.
- The panel is responsible for agreeing documentation and for producing the ‘recruitment information pack’ which is made available at the time the candidate applies. Before preparing the advertisement it is useful to determine the outline of the selection process and to arrange the dates when shortlisting and interviewing will take place.

### **Other Appointments**

- **Temporary Staff:** Selectors should apply the same high standards of selection to temporary appointments. There must be an assessment against the personnel specification criteria and a proper selection process should take place.

Selectors must be sure that any existing temporary member of staff is the best person available to fill the job and take into account legitimate aspirations of other employees and those needing to be redeployed. Public advertising is recommended as the fairest method of attracting applicants and filling vacancies though the need for this should be assessed for each individual post.

### Advertising and Attracting Candidates

- The aim of recruitment advertising is to attract the right person for the job and to promote the Trust as an interesting and attractive place to work and to project a public image of efficiency and effectiveness.
- When choosing external media and preparing advertisements, take account of the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy and the need to reach disadvantaged groups. Managers should compose advertisements in a way which makes them as attractive as possible to candidates of all ages, sex, ethnic origin, disability etc. Restate your commitment to equal rights/race equality in your advert or information pack.
- Adverts must be non-discriminatory and of a high standard which help enhance the Trust image but need not always be 'conventional'. Descriptions of jobs must reflect accurately the data set out in the job description and the personnel specification and should not be changed.
- > **Informal channels:** Never recruit by using 'word of mouth' or from those whom access to jobs information is by personal association and not 'open' access. Beware that localised advertising may restrict access to the full range of suitable candidates
- > **Responses:** Applicants should be made clearly aware of the contact point for enquiries by telephone and the 'information pack' must show the closing date
- It is lawful to advertise for members from certain racial groups (e.g. African-Caribbean's) or from persons of a particular gender under certain specified circumstances (Genuine Occupational Qualifications).

Contact the Trust Human Resources Team for guidance in this area.

### Other Recruitment Sources

- **Waiting Lists:** No other form of recruitment register or waiting list has been 'approved' by the Trust and these methods of recruitment, along with 'word of mouth' advertising are not recommended, as they are unlikely to comply with the Trust's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- **Casual Staff** It is recommended that where Casual Staff are used, all those people employed in this way should first go through some form of assessment to determine their suitability for the post. The equality aspects of any such arrangements must be very carefully monitored.
- **Employment Agencies:** Employment Agencies can be used for various types of staff.

### Recruitment Information for Candidates

- This information should aim to encourage suitable candidates to apply and help others to decide for themselves whether completing and submitting an application is appropriate (i.e. to self-select). As a minimum, this should include the advertisement, job descriptions, personnel specifications, job information and Equality material.

- It is recommended that selectors inform candidates that they have the right to bring to the attention of the selection panel any concerns they have about the procedures - especially if they felt that discrimination occurred or may have occurred during the process. Candidates may be reminded that selectors are also glad of any positive feedback.

### **Application Forms**

- It is recommended that application forms should be used for all appointments. All 'complete' applications will be considered by the selectors. The panel will be given completed applications for use in the final selection process. Applications by CV will not be accepted as they can make fair comparison at short-listing difficult to achieve.

### **Closing Dates**

- Closing dates and response arrangements should be clearly indicated - on the advertisement and in the 'information pack'.
- Always ensure that applicants are aware and understand what is happening after their application form is received (e.g. timescale/notification of rejection).

### **Short-Listing**

- All members of the selection panel should be equally involved and contribute to the short-listing process - otherwise selectors have advisory status.
- The use of a 'Matrix' system for short-listing will assist recruiters to be systematic when short-listing for vacant posts. It is a relatively simple and objective technique which has been found to be useful and selectors may wish to use it when drawing up a shortlist.

### **Assessment**

When drawing up a short-list, selectors must assess applicants solely against the personnel specification criteria. Only ever shortlist candidates who fully meet essential personnel specification requirements and, from the application form at least, appear to be appointable.

- It is good practice to read all the material presented by candidates – to privately work through your assessment and to then share your view with other selectors in a group session.
- Selectors must draw up their shortlist systematically, measuring candidates' experience and qualities methodically, against the personnel specification. The candidates' experience, qualities, qualifications etc must be carefully assessed against the personnel specification and copies of the selectors' assessment placed on file.
- Test out only those criteria assessable from a screening of the forms at this stage.

### **Consistent Practices**

- Selection criteria must be applied consistently to all candidates.
- All application forms should be processed in exactly the same way.
- Remember the importance of adopting the same criteria for both internal and external applicants.
- Beware of short-listing 'known' candidates - especially those within the workplace - for the sake of 'interview experience' or to meet their 'heightened expectations'.

- Never take account of pressure to shortlist a particular candidate - this can potentially be a discriminatory action which is unlawful.

### **Disabled Applicants**

- Any candidates shortlisted who indicate in their application that they have a disability, contact will be made with them prior to the interview date to establish any reasonable adjustments that the Trust may need to make to facilitate them at interview.

### **Rejecting Candidates**

- Unsuccessful candidates are advised in the 'information pack' that if they have not heard from the Trust by a set date then they will have been unsuccessful.

### **Declaration of Interest**

- Any member of a selection panel should make a declaration if any applicant is a relative or a friend from outside the work environment.

### **Objectives of the Selection Process**

- The final selection is not just a test of the candidates. It is also the interviewer's ability to listen, probe, assess - and, above all, to be objective and fair. Being an objective measure of the candidate's qualities, it must deal with all the candidates equally, and it must deal only with their ability to carry out the job.
- To determine each candidate's suitability for the job as measured against the Personnel Specification.
- To maintain the image of the Trust as a good employer.
- To select the right person for the job and thus contribute to the effectiveness of the Trust.

### **Selection Methods**

- The role and function of the Chair of the selection process is absolutely crucial to its effective management.
- The interview is the most commonly used method of assessing candidates for appointment but there may be some aspects of the job requirements which cannot be tested in interview and for which different forms of assessment are necessary, e.g. presentations, practical activities, specific skills exercises.
- Inform candidates, in outline, the process they will be expected to undertake.
- Be objective – seek to identify each candidate's abilities and potential contribution. Set exactly the same standards for all candidates and assess against these agreed scoring ratings/criteria. Never make generalised assumptions about individuals based on your perception of their racial or national origin/religion, or gender or disability, age or any other protected characteristics.
- Each individual should be assessed according to his/her personal capability to carry out the particular post. It should not be assumed that certain kinds of candidate are more or less able to perform certain occupations or duties.
- Always focus on question related to the job and to those requirements set out in the Personnel Specification.



- It is important that selectors are aware of cross-cultural communication issues such as language culture and non-verbal behaviour which may affect candidates from varied backgrounds and/or cultures.
- The questions to be asked at the interview should, therefore, be well thought out and decided upon beforehand. As far as possible, the same questions should be put to all the candidates in order to avoid treating one candidate less favourably than another. Do not ask questions which could be constituted as discriminatory.
- It is most important that all those involved in interviewing should be trained in the principles of discrimination law and equal opportunities. Many complaints of discrimination have arisen because of the questions asked, or the attitude taken, by one 'renegade' member of an otherwise properly conducted panel.

### **Testing**

- Certain occupational tests must only ever be used by trained and qualified administrators. Poorly designed tests may leave the Trust open to allegation of unfair procedures and practices where they are not validated against job-related skills and linked to the personnel specification criteria.
- The use of psychometric (or personality profile) tests requires professional expertise within the selection process and they should never be used as a cut-off device to reject candidates.
- Seek advice from Trust Human Resources where you are using practical/vocational or other testing techniques.

### **Decision Making**

- Relevant and objective selection criteria should be used, and it should be clear from the documentation how the final decision was reached. Records will also be useful if the decision is later challenged on the grounds of discrimination.
- The final decision must be based on the job description and personnel specification - using agreed criteria and defining the standards required to perform the job. Each candidate must be measured against these benchmark requirements.
- Selectors must ensure they have sound, and accountable, reasons why all candidates were not selected at any stage and take into account all the evidence they have collected. The selection panel should normally unanimously agree their final selection and formally record this.
- Record reasons for rejection based on the personnel specification requirements. All selection assessment records should be handed to the Chair of the panel.

### **Confidentiality**

- Information obtained within the whole selection process must be treated as confidential. Comments about specific candidates' performance must not be revealed outside the process (except, of course, personal feedback to individual candidates).

## References

- References should not be sought at an early stage for use as an aid to short-listing.
- Our purpose of seeking references after the shortlisting is to allow us to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. References are requested before interview, where possible, allowing any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview in line with guidance found within the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – Safer Recruitment Guidelines.
- References should be held by the Chair of the selection panel until after the final decision has been made and only at that stage should the reference of the successful candidate be shared with other members of the panel.
- Structured questionnaires are recommended along with job/personnel specification material to assist referees to provide useful responses.
- The use of references is best restricted to the identification of contra-indicators, in other words information as to why a particular candidate might not be suitable for appointment.
- It is not good practice to request references for some of the short-listed candidates (unless they have so requested), and not for others, as this could lead to perceptions that some candidates are being treated more or less favourably than others. It is a breach of the applicant's confidentiality to seek references, or make informal enquiries, from any person other than the applicant's nominated referees.
- Where the reference is unclear or hints at problems it is advisable to telephone the referee in order to clarify the information. Notes of the telephone conversation should be made.
- It is not advisable to make offers of employment until satisfactory references have been received.

## Criminal Convictions

- If the candidate has revealed information about a criminal background the panel must decide whether, in relation to the post in question, the nature of their background is sufficiently serious to justify non-selection for the post. In the event of the panel deciding not to select on the grounds of a declared criminal background advice must be sought from Trust Human Resources before further action is taken.
- It is important to note that the possession of a criminal background does not automatically debar an applicant from employment.
- All information about previous convictions given by applicants must be treated in the strictest confidence.
- The applicant has a right to be informed of the contents of a police report.
- Failure to disclose previous offences or pending legal action for posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act could lead to the offer of employment being withdrawn or dismissal if the successful candidate has already commenced employment in post.

## **Medical**

- Where medical screening does take place, all clinical information is confidential and will not be released to management unless there is a specific need and the consent of the applicant has been obtained. Systems set up for pre-employment screening will protect confidentiality at all times.

## **Notification of Results of Selection Process**

- Inform short-listed candidates as quickly as possible about the outcome. Determine your options concerning salary and terms for the successful candidate(s). Differential terms must be justifiable and any negotiations within normal parameters.
- Ensure you can justify offering different terms and conditions (e.g. salary point) where more than one candidate is appointed.

## **Feedback to Candidates**

- All short-listed candidates must be told of the outcome of their interview, and any unsuccessful applicants seeking information about why they were not selected, should be given honest and thorough feedback about their application.
- To ensure consistency, one member of the interview panel should be designated to give such feedback or, alternatively, the interview panel must reconvene to meet the candidate(s) concerned. There should be an agreed 'message' determined at the end of the selection process final decision.

## **Review and Monitoring**

- At the end of each selection process, those responsible should review the decisions they have made and the procedures used to ensure that they are confident that the approach adopted has reflected the Trust's commitment to equal rights and to positive action. Selectors, should be able to justify every decision taken and the process which has been adopted to arrive at their selection.
- A note of the reason for rejection for each unsuccessful candidate must be made. The reasons should relate to an area or areas of the personnel specification.
- The Recruitment 'master file' must be kept for at least 6 months and should contain key documentation. This should include interviewers' notes.
- It is always important to review the whole process on completion to ensure equality of opportunity has been observed.

## **Contract of Employment/Written Statement of Employment Particulars**

- All employees will be provided with a written statement of employment particulars summarising the main terms of employment on or before their start date and in line with statutory guidelines. A contract of employment will also be issued setting out the terms and conditions of employment which will be clear and appropriate for the category of job. If the contract is temporary the reason for this will be written in the contract.

## **Probationary Period**

- The performance of new support staff will be rigorously monitored during a probationary period of six months with close attention being paid to learning needs and performance issues. The line manager will read and follow the Trust Probationary

Period Guidance for Line Managers document in managing the probationary period of a new member of support staff. New support staff will have a probationary review meeting with their line manager after they commence employment with the Trust. A record of this will be provided to the new member of support staff with a copy held on their personnel record. Advice will be sought at an early stage from Trust HR if there are performance concerns about a new member of the support staff.

### **Induction**

- A systematic induction programme should be prepared to help the new employee adjust to the new social and working environment and to become effective in the job as soon as possible.