1. **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to enable the University to recruit the best individual for a role at the right time. The University is committed to recruiting staff in a fair, consistent, effective and efficient way.

We aim to:

- Attract, select and appoint the best candidates for all positions, at all levels, in a timely manner.
- Use a range of approaches to attract and appoint the highest calibre staff.
- Create a working and learning environment that reflects and celebrates diversity and allows all staff to fulfil their potential.
- Recruit a diverse and representative workforce.
- Develop and promote existing University staff wherever possible.

2. **Principles**

Each Faculty/Professional Service holds the budget for recruitment and is therefore accountable for using the most appropriate approach for their recruitment.

Recruitment should be according to:

- **Merit** – Selection is competitive. We use fair and robust role-related criteria to appoint candidates to positions.
- **Fairness** – Processes reflect the University’s commitment to equality and diversity. They are fair, consistent and accessible to all.
- **Transparency** – Recruitment is transparent, balanced against the need for confidentiality and privacy.
- **Responsiveness** – We are agile and flexible, able to make timely decisions to secure the best candidates.
- **Business need** – Our decision-making aligns with the University’s strategic and operational priorities.

3. **Responsibilities**

Recruitment at the University is the responsibility of line management within Faculty/Professional Service, supported by Human Resources (HR).

The Faculty/Professional Service hiring manager:

- Has overall responsibility for recruitment and selection.
- Undertakes appropriate training before any recruitment activity begins.
- Has a thorough understanding of University policies, procedures and fair employment practices.
- Develops and delivers the recruitment plan.
- Works in partnership with HR to achieve recruitment objectives.
Human Resources:

- Offers support to the hiring manager as a consultant to develop the recruitment plan.
- Works with the hiring manager to clarify the requirements of the role, review possible options, and advise on methods and media for recruitment.
- Works with the hiring manager to deliver the recruitment plan.
- Offers support and guidance through each stage of the recruitment process to completion.
- Oversees the administration of the e-Recruit system where vacancies are published, selection and interview arrangements can be made, and from where the employee contract is produced.

4. **Job description**

Before starting the recruitment process:

1. The hiring manager clarifies the role requirements and key criteria the role-holder should have (essential and desirable).
2. This information is captured in a job description and person specification.
   - Job description – describes the duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the role.
   - Person specification – describes the type of qualifications, training, knowledge, experience, skills, aptitudes and competencies required for effective performance of the job.
3. The role is then evaluated by HR to ensure the recommended grade matches the level of skill, problem solving and accountability required by the role-holder.

More information about [job evaluation](#) is available on the HR website.

5. **Advertising**

All University vacancies are advertised internally online at [www.jobs.soton.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.soton.ac.uk).

Where appropriate, advertising can be restricted to an internal pool of candidates. For example, where a department is undergoing a reorganisation and increases in headcount are limited or not permitted.

Vacancies can also be advertised externally through a number of different media depending on the role and type of candidates being sought.

Where appropriate third party service providers such as recruitment agencies, executive search organisations or head hunters may be used.

Our adverts:

- Align with the University’s employer branding guidelines.
- Contain clear details of the role, grade and salary range.
- Reflect the University’s commitment to fair recruitment and employment practice (eg: Disability Two Ticks and Athena SWAN).

*In some cases it may be appropriate to advertise at a single salary point or the bottom of the range.

6. **Applications**

All University employees are eligible to apply for any vacancy without impact upon their current position.

Applications are made online through the University’s e–Recruit system. It is good practice for employees to inform their line manager of their decision to apply.

The employee’s line manager makes every reasonable effort to facilitate their attendance throughout the process. Candidates who choose not to notify their manager take annual leave or attend in their own time.

Redeployees are given prior consideration over other applicants providing they have the relevant skills and experience.

In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation, the University does not require disclosure of spent convictions, unless the role involves working with children or vulnerable adults. In these cases, the offer of employment is subject to satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service checks (DBS) – formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.
7. **Fair employment**

Shortlisting, interviewing and selection is carried out without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave.

Recruitment and selection processes are accessible to all, in line with the University’s commitment to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates.

All disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements of the job identified in the job description and person specification are guaranteed an interview.

See the University’s [equality and diversity policy](#).

8. **Shortlisting and selection**

When planning shortlisting and selection activity, the hiring manager:

- Takes all possible steps to make the process as fair as possible, countering or removing any bias.
- Involves at least one other person in decision-making.
- Works with HR to decide the most appropriate methods of selection.
- Considers using evidence from a number of sources, eg: application form, CV, assessment/aptitude tests and interview.
- Determines a candidate’s progress through each stage of the process by considering the extent to which their skills, knowledge and experience match the requirements of the role.
- Offers reasonable travel expenses to external candidates who are eligible to claim, depending on individual circumstances. Payment is approved in advance and is at the discretion of the hiring manager.

9. **Feedback**

All internal candidates should be given feedback from the hiring manager (or representative) about their application.

There is no requirement to give feedback to external candidates. Hiring managers recognising good practice may choose to do so, particularly where they wish the applicant to apply for other roles or to retain their interest.

10. **Appointments without competition**

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate or practical to fill a vacancy without a competitive selection process.

The hiring manager rationale for doing this includes an assessment of the potential impact of this decision, supported by consultation with HR and approval from the Head of Academic Unit/Service.

An appointment may be made without competition:

- Where there is a named individual on a research grant, supported by a copy of the grant.
- If there is a suitably qualified employee at risk of redundancy and seeking redeployment, provided this does not involve a promotion. See the University’s [redeployment procedure](#).
- Where Southampton has committed to reinstate an employee on return from a University role overseas, on return from secondment to another organisation, or on return from a career break, provided that this does not involve a promotion.
- Where a similar vacancy has been advertised so recently (usually within 3 months) that the field of candidates has not changed, and is therefore already known to the hiring manager.
- Where there has been no substantial change to the main responsibilities of a role, but it has been recently re-graded as a result of an evaluation process.

11. **Offers of employment**

All formal offers of employment are issued in writing by HR on the instruction of the hiring manager.

Offers are conditional, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. These may include:
• Evidence of right to work in the UK in accordance with UK Home Office regulations
• Satisfactory employment references
• Satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service checks (DBS) – formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks
• Medical clearance for the role
• Evidence of essential qualifications
• Evidence of professional memberships

The successful candidate will be able to start work once the appropriate checks have been satisfied and a signed contract of employment received.

When an internal candidate is appointed, the start date should be agreed between the employee’s current manager and hiring manager. It should be as soon as is practically possible.

12. **More information**

Further guidance about recruitment, selection and associated questions is available on the HR website.

• [Your recruitment plan](#)
• [Defining the role](#)
• [Advertising](#)
• [Shortlisting](#)
• [Interviewing and selection tests](#)
• [Pre-employment checks](#)
• [The offer, appointment and induction](#)
• [Fixed term contracts](#)