



Isle of Man
Government
Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Public Services Commission
Recruitment Principles and Policy

2016

SECTION 1 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The Public Services Commission recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. The Public Services Commission therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined below, while also meeting the requirements of all relevant employment legislation.

SCOPE

This applies to all staff employed by the Public Services Commission. This policy excludes agency and casual worker, contractors and volunteers.

Please note Department is used throughout this document to refer to Departments, Boards or Offices.

ISLE OF MAN GOVERNMENT RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

The Isle of Man Government Recruitment and Selection Policy was agreed by the Council of Ministers in June 2003. The Isle of Man Government is committed to the recruitment and retention of sufficient staff of the right calibre, skills and experience to provide high quality and cost effective services which meet statutory requirements. In order to achieve this objective it is essential that, subject to the requirements of the Control of Employment legislation, the Government attracts and appoints applicants for vacant public sector posts,

- On the basis of fair and open competition;
- On the basis of merit;
- and without discrimination

PRINCIPLES

Departments must therefore ensure that:-

- Prospective applicants are given equal and reasonable access to adequate information about the post and its requirements, and about the selection process.
- Applicants are considered equally on merit at each stage of the selection process.
- Selection is based on relevant and objective criteria applied consistently to all applicants.
- Selection methods are reliable and free from bias.

PROCEDURE

Departments must operate recruitment and selection procedures which are clear and transparent, which comply with all relevant legislation and which are properly communicated to everyone involved in the recruitment and selection process. The procedures must comply with professional recruitment standards and must support the principles outlined above.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION

The role of the Public Services Commission ('the Commission') in recruitment is to support appointments to the Public Service are on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Annex A provides more detail on how the Commission interprets the requirement.

The Commission exempts certain appointments from the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. These exemptions are described at Annex B.

DEPARTMENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

Departments must comply with the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and these Recruitment Principles, including Annexes A and B.

Overall responsibility for doing so rests with the Chief Executive of each stationed employer.

COMPLAINTS

Any individual may complain that the requirements of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition have not been met.

Complaints should first be raised with the recruiting Department which is responsible for having effective complaints handling procedures.

If, after investigation by the department, the complainant remains dissatisfied they may bring their complaint to the Commission.

Complaints should be lodged with the Commission within 3 months of the recruitment, but the Commission may consider complaints lodged out of time in exceptional circumstances.

Recruiting Departments are responsible for making all applicants aware of their right to complain and referring them to the Commission's complaints procedures.

SECTION 2 - SELECTION PANEL

PANEL MAKE UP

The grade of the panel members should be appropriate to the post being filled. The Recruiting Manager/Chair person should be of a more senior grade than the post being filled. Remaining members should be of at least the same grade as the post being filled and as a minimum first line management, other than in very exceptional circumstances or if the panel member is from within OHR and has had the appropriate training.

Any panel members of the same grade should ideally not be a direct colleague of the post to be filled.

Where possible it is good practice to have a mix of gender on the panel so that male and female candidates not only feel more comfortable but also see equal opportunities at work within the organisation.

In order to avoid potential allegations of bias, no one connected by close friendship, marriage/partnership or blood to an applicant should be involved in the selection process, without the agreement of the Employment Services Manager within The Office of Human Resources.

Where possible all panel members should be involved in:

- The approval of the job description and person specification
- The advertisement
- The shortlisting process
- The method of assessment and associated marking system
- Question areas
- The interview itself

For PSC Civil Service posts at Pay Span 1-3 and PSC Manual Craft Workers Grade 1-4 (or equivalent NTNPS Pay Bands), there is normally a two-person panel. This comprises the following roles:

- Chair/Recruiting Manager
- Departmental Representative

For PSC Civil Service posts at any grade above pay span 1-3, except for Chief Officer, and PSC Manual Craft Workers Grade 5 and above (or equivalent NTNPS Pay Bands) there must be at least a three-person panel. This comprises the following roles:

- Chair/Recruiting Manager
- Departmental Representative; and
- Independent (Officer from a different Government Department)

For Chief Officer posts the panel is made up of:

- Chairman, Civil Service Commission
- Chief Secretary
- Minister responsible for the Department
- Executive Director of OHR (in attendance)

As a general rule the panel should comprise no more than 3 people. In certain cases, for example a specialist posts, it may be considered appropriate for an additional member (usually external to the recruiting department) to join the panel in an advisory capacity. This person has “no vote” as to who should be appointed. Care should be taken when considering suitability as large panel interviews can become overwhelming and can negatively impact candidates’ ability to give their best

THE PANEL

Independent

The Independent panel member must be from outside of the Department which has the vacancy. An independent panel member must be obtained from the central list held in OHR.

If you would like a HR representative to be on the panel, please contact the Employment Services Team on 686300.

SECTION 3 - TRAINING

The Commission will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

The Office of Human Resources will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities in order to meet this core requirement. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy her or himself that she/he is appropriately trained or experienced and can comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure. As a minimum requirement any individual chairing a panel should have gained an appropriate level of recruitment experience or skills development.

Wherever possible all panel members should have undergone the requisite training in recruitment and selection interviewing, but a minimum of two panel members should be trained.

SECTION 4 - ADVERTISING

PRIOR TO ADVERTISING

The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role has been completed.

An up to date job description and person specification must be provided for any vacant post that is to be filled. The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post. The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of qualifications, skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience required for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used do not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.

METHOD OF ADVERTISING

The decision regarding where to advertise a post should be influenced by the potential employment market for the post concerned and the potential availability of Manx workers. The Recruitment Manager must specify how the vacancy is to be advertised.

The Council of Ministers have agreed that vacancies should be advertised within the IOM public service only unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the required specialist skills and experience are not available within Government.

As a minimum all positions will normally be advertised initially within the Isle of Man Public Service. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide existing staff with opportunities for career development, thus developing their skills and expertise. In exceptional circumstances this requirement may be waived in respect of appointments laid out in Annex B.

LENGTH OF ADVERTISEMENT PLACEMENT

All vacancies should be advertised for a minimum of **10** working days.

REDEPLOYMENT

All details of the posts to be advertised must be circulated across the Isle of Man Government for two working days prior to advertisement.

SECTION 5 - APPLICATIONS AND SHORTLISTING

APPLICATIONS

Candidates will be considered as internal to government for the purposes of responding to internal adverts if they are directly employed within a government Department, Board or Office and are paid by Isle of Man Government payroll.

Local Authority employees and temporary staff members employed through an agency are not considered to be internal applicants.

SHORTLISTING

The recruiting manager will arrange for a shortlisting meeting to take place at which all panel members should be present to avoid the potential of bias. In some cases the panel may wish to shortlist individually using the e-recruitment system and agreeing the shortlist.

Shortlisting **must be** based only on the information contained in the Application Form and CV using the Job Description and Person Specification as the criteria. This must be consistently applied to all applicants who should be assessed against the criteria and **not** against each other.

During Shortlisting only criteria marked as being assessed by application/CV/interview can be used by the panel. Candidates should be short-listed on the basis of the criteria defined in the job description and person specification. The reasons given by the panel and recorded on the Shortlisting Form should refer to the criteria on the Person Specification and should not be biased, in breach of equal opportunities or subjective.

If a large number of applicants meet the essential criteria, the panel can then use the desirable criteria to assist in shortlisting further. If the panel still find that they have a large pool of candidates who fulfil all of the essential and desirable criteria that are to be measured against the CV then they should look at the essential criteria that are being considered/measured at interview.

Note: Applicants who do not meet all of the essential criteria cannot be shortlisted, unless the criteria can be further explored and assessed during interview.

There are no restrictions on the number of applicants to include on the shortlist but it is not typical to interview more than six candidates for one position. Where the number of applicants meeting the shortlist criteria is perceived to be unwieldy, the Recruitment Panel should review and, if necessary, tighten the selection criteria to enable the shortlisting of a more manageable number.

Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including any tests or assessment centre, giving as much prior notice as possible and a minimum of **5** working days before the interview.

SECTION 6 - INTERVIEW

The panel and grades of panel members should be constituted in accordance with the provision outlined in Section 2.

It is recommended that a range of selection methods, that are suitable for assessing both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification are established as this will facilitate objective decision making which is difficult to achieve through interview alone.

Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.

Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken, ideally by the panel members, so that they can refer back to these when assessing candidates against the person specification and when making decisions.

The Chair should lead a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate based on performance at interview **and** on documentation available – it is good practice to **ask the Independent** for their views first.

Panel members should reveal their individual assessment or marking for each candidate and agreement should be gained on the selected candidate based on a joint assessment or marking. Where possible all three panel members should agree on the successful candidate.

If two panel members agree and the other disagrees, the Chair is responsible for leading an objective evidence based discussion towards reconciling this situation. Once a person is appointed all panel members should support this decision. If a panel can not agree then the Chair of the panel will hold the casting vote.

The Chair should inform candidates of the outcome of the interview. Good practice is to let the successful candidate know first.

In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the Chair of the panel or the Recruiting Manager, although he or she may delegate this to another member of the panel where appropriate.

Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will, as a minimum, receive telephone and written notification of the outcome of the selection process, ideally on the same day the decision is made.

ASSESSMENT CENTRES AND TESTS

An assessment centre is an evaluation of a candidate's behaviour, performance and aptitude. Assessors observe and evaluate the candidates performing a variety of tasks including job related simulation, interviews and/or psychometric tests. The exercises can be designed to meet the specific role requirements and each exercise will simulate aspects of the job description and working environment.

The judgements about behaviour are made and recorded and evaluated in a meeting among the assessors.

The assessment centre allows candidates to demonstrate how they hold the skills, abilities and behaviours required to perform the role.

To arrange an assessment centre or psychometric test, please contact LEAD on Tel: 685724.

Details of planned supplementary selection methods to be used should be notified to the Employment Services Team for monitoring purposes.

In addition, the Employment Services Team may be able to supply Recruiting Departments with generic skills tests for particular competencies.

SECTION 7 - OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

All offers of appointment should be made verbally subject to pre-employment checks which will be carried out by the Office of Human Resources.

The verbal offer will normally be made by the Chair of the selection panel.

Appointments will usually be made at the minimum of the advertised salary scale, unless directly relevant experience would justify increments, and in line with relevant terms and conditions guidance on salaries on appointment. No appointment can be made above the advertised scale.

Pre-employment checks will be carried out in line with the Office of Human Resources Pre-Employment check guidance.

The HR Officer will contact the Recruiting Manager to confirm when the individual's pre-employment checks are complete. It is the responsibility of the Recruiting Manager to contact the individual to agree a start date.

Start dates should be agreed mutually by the Recruiting Manager and candidate and where an internal candidate has been appointed the candidates current line manager. In relation to Public Service Civil Servants this is subject to a maximum of 6 weeks following receipt of the formal acceptance of the position.

ANNEX A - SELECTION FOR APPOINTMENT ON MERIT ON THE BASIS OF FAIR AND OPEN COMPETITION

This Annex, which Departments must follow, explains in more detail how the Public Services Commission interprets the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

Merit - means the appointment of the best available person: no one should be appointed to a job unless they are competent to do it and the job must be offered to the person who would do it best.

- If several candidates are competent, the job must be offered to the person who would do it best. It will be rare for a candidate to meet all of the selection criteria exceptionally well; the most meritorious candidate will be the one who is best at the job's critical elements.
- In competitions for a single job, the best candidate must be offered the job. If he or she turns it down, it can then be offered to the other appointable candidates in merit order.
- When a department or agency is running a campaign to recruit a large number of staff, it may be impractical to wait until the end of the competition and offer jobs in a strict merit order. Departments may offer jobs out of strict merit order, but in doing so must ensure that the individuals appointed are clearly towards the top of the likely merit list. Candidates who are likely to be further down the list or borderline will have to wait until the end of the process before an appointment can be confirmed. This is to ensure that the most meritorious candidates will be appointed by the end of the competition.

Fair – means there is no bias in the assessment of candidates. Selection processes must be objective, impartial and applied consistently.

- This does not necessarily mean treating everyone exactly the same; rather it is about applying the same general criteria of assessment to everyone while taking account of the different experience and expertise that candidates bring.

Open - means that job opportunities must be advertised publicly and potential candidates given reasonable access to information about the job and its requirements, and about the selection process.

- The media chosen to advertise job opportunities must be suitable for attracting a diverse field of strong potential candidates. Jobs can be advertised in newspaper or national publications and will be placed on the Job Centre and on the gov.im jobs page.
- Advertisements can be job specific or for a number of jobs or for a rolling recruitment programme. Under such a programme, jobs may be advertised continuously and candidates assessed at intervals for particular vacancies.
- Alternatively, expressions of interest may be sought for future vacancies and used to form a competition between the candidates when the vacancy arises.

Use of recruitment agencies and search consultants

Where recruitment agencies and/or search consultants are used, the Department must satisfy itself that the final recommendations arise from a proper application of the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and these Recruitment Principles.

ANNEX B - EXCEPTIONS TO SELECTION FOR APPOINTMENTS ON MERIT ON THE BASIS OF A FAIR AND OPEN COMPETITION

It is for the Recruiting Managers, in accordance with the delegated authority given within their Departments, to determine whether a post should be advertised and to seek Business Partner concurrence for posts which are exempt from the process.

The Commission exempts certain appointments from the requirement to advertise where it believes this is justified by the needs of the Isle of Man Government.

Departments may apply (at the point at which an appointment is made) the exceptions listed below for all staff.

- If there is already a shortlist from a similar/identical vacancy which has been advertised within the previous twelve months
- If the position can be filled by someone returning from maternity leave, assignment, approved career break or secondment
- If the vacancy can be filled by someone being redeployed following disciplinary/capability procedures or where their substantive post is at risk of redundancy
- If the Public Services Commission determines that the post should be filled by a particular person for his or her own development or for a genuine business needs such as planning career progressions.
- If the Public Services Commission determines that the post should be filled from a particular work area to satisfy a genuine business needs by ring fenced recruitment, for example where there is a risk of redundancy.
- If the post is of a limited term duration of no more than 12 months and requires particular specialist skills. (Note – in such cases, temporary staff employed via an Employment Agency cannot be appointed unless the post is advertised in the normal way, as this would breach the agreement in the contract)
- If the post is to be made available only to applicants already within a Department at the same grade on an internal transfer basis.

In any other cases approval must be sought from the Secretary of the Public Services Commission, if it is intended to fill a post without advertisement.