



| Recruitment and Selection Policy | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Policy Number | HR-5.5 Version 1.0 |
| Prepared by | Clare Ruxton |
| Date of Last Review | July 2021 |
| Date of Next Review | July 2024 |
| Reviewed & Approved by | Joint Corporate Services Committee |
| Date | 28 July 2021 |

OSPREY HOUSING RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Osprey Housing believes that effective and efficient people management is vital to the success of maintaining good quality services for all our tenants and providing value for money.

We embrace good people management and this is encompassed in our Core Values:

- **Ambition and Achievement** – we are a high performing organisation delivering through innovation and challenge
- **Equality and Respect** – we recognise and celebrate the unique value in everyone
- **Quality and Professionalism** – we strive to deliver high standards
- **Agile and Responsive** – we are flexible and quick to deal with change without diminishing our delivery

1. Introduction

We believe that effective recruitment is central and crucial to the successful functioning of the organisation. We understand that we will only operate efficiently and effectively if we have the right people in the right place at the right time. To achieve this, we will recruit people on a fair and equitable basis and will appoint those who evidence the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver our objectives and with the ability to make a positive contribution to the values and aims of the organisation.

2. General Principles

- All new positions or changes to existing positions, excluding changes within existing agreed budgets, must obtain approval as per Recruitment Authorities/Responsibilities Form (HR-F-006A Rev 0).
- The Corporate Services team will process all vacancies. Each vacancy will be supported by Vacancy Request Form, a Person Specification and a Job Description.
- All vacancies will be open to existing team members (this will include agency and temporary workers).
- The internet and/or relevant agreed publications will be used as per the attached procedure (Appendix A).
- The content of the recruitment pack will be agreed by the relevant Manager prior to the vacancy being advertised.
- Where appropriate, skill tests may form part of the interview process and may include a PC skills test, presentation, group discussion and/or written exercise.
- We welcome diversity amongst our team and we will aim for a workforce that is reflective of the population from which it is drawn and the geographical area in which our service is delivered.
- In accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy, all reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of any prospective candidate who may require support and assistance.
- All correspondence, application forms, references and information obtained during the interview process will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- All appointments will be subject to satisfactory references, qualification check and if appropriate, a Disclosure Scotland Check.

3. Volunteers

On occasions, volunteers may be used to support individuals/departments. All volunteers will be subject to 2 satisfactory references. Upon commencement a full induction will be carried out by Corporate Services to the Volunteer.

Volunteers may end their activities without giving or receiving notice. This cessation may be initiated by either party.

4. Procedures

Detailed Procedures on the recruitment and selection cycle are attached to this policy for information and guidance.

5. Equal Opportunities

We shall strive to ensure equality of opportunity, and by definition, that all individuals are treated fairly regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We oppose, and shall adopt a zero tolerance stance towards, all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

In this regard, Osprey acknowledge the protected characteristics and types of unlawful behaviour defined within the Equality Act 2010. As a minimum all practices shall aim to ensure compliance with the legislative provisions therein.

6. Monitoring & Reporting

We will monitor this policy in conjunction with our other policies and procedures to ensure that it is being adhered to.

7. Review

This policy is reviewed every three years unless an early review is required due to:

1. Changes to applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance, both those which affect Osprey directly and those which affect the resources available to significant numbers of our customers to enable them to sustain tenancies.
2. changes in the organisation
3. continued best practice.

Appendix 1

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURE

1 Advertising Procedures

The Corporate Services Team will process all vacancies and agree costs on behalf of Osprey upon receipt of a completed Vacancy Request Form. This will be completed by the relevant manager, and will incorporate hyperlinks to required Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

All **internal vacancies** will have a minimum of one week closing date from the date of advertisement. All **external vacancies** will have a minimum of two weeks closing date from the date of advertisement.

All Recruitment packs will consist of the following:

- a Job Description
- b Person Specification
- c Application Form
- d Summary of Terms and Conditions
- e Departmental Information
- f Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Additional information may be included as required.

2 Selection/Interviewing Procedures

Applications for short-listing shall be forwarded to the relevant Manager within 3 working days after the closing date.

Late applications will not be accepted except in extenuating circumstances agreed by the CEO.

The short-listing process should take place within 5 working days of the post closing. All members of the interview panel will be involved in the short-listing process. The Short-listing form must be completed, signed and returned to the Corporate Services Team within the specified 5 working day timescale.

The Interview Arrangements must be submitted to the Corporate Services Team, together with person specification. In order to give all candidates sufficient notice to attend for interview, a minimum period of 10 days in advance must be given to the Corporate Services Team for all relevant paperwork and correspondence to be processed.

Upon receipt of a completed Interview Arrangements, the Corporate Services Team will send out letters to all candidates informing them of the date, time and format of the interview, including details of any additional test/exercises.

In addition to the individual interview and as part of the selection process, a range of further exercises may be used. Where these are deemed appropriate, details of the exercise/s to be undertaken the responsible manager should clearly state their requirements when advising of the interview arrangements.

Interviews should be conducted as per the Guidance outlined in Appendix 2.

Panel members should be aware of and guard against unconscious bias. (See Appendix 3).

Once the preferred candidate has been identified, two satisfactory written references will be sought by the Corporate Services Team. One reference must be from a current or most recent employer, i.e. line manager. Preferred candidates, who have been recruited internally will only be required to give their current line manager as a referee. All references received must be to a satisfactory standard. Should this condition not be met, an alternative candidate may be selected.

Panel members should confirm with candidates that all reference details are correct. Furthermore, permission to approach referees should be agreed at the time of the interview. On receipt of the completed Interview Assessment form references will be taken up for the preferred candidate/s. This process will be carried out within 2 working days.

Overnight bed & breakfast accommodation may be arranged where appropriate and if agreed in advance by the Chief Executive.

Due consideration to the appropriate composition of panel members, should be made by the line manager of the Department.

Each member of the interview panel should receive an interview pack in advance of the interview date, this will include:

- a Interview timetable
- b Job description and person specification
- c Job advert
- d Interview Assessment Form – one to be completed for each candidate
- e Summary conditions of service (for the Chair only)

On completion of the interview process, all paperwork must be forwarded to the Corporate Services Team including copies of interview questions, notes and exercises. On receipt of the paperwork, the Corporate Services Team will pursue the named referees for the preferred candidate.

2 Appointment

An offer of employment should only be made following receipt of two satisfactory references. In exceptional circumstances, a verbal reference may be sought by the Corporate Services Team in order to facilitate the appointment process. All offers of employment are conditional upon a satisfactory Disclosure check (where applicable), and references check.

As references and Disclosure/ PVG Checks(where applicable) form part of the selection process, any claims and/or statements which cannot be validated, or a reference or disclosure check containing information which gives cause for concern, the offer to the selected candidate may be withdrawn.

The Chair of the Panel will specify the salary on the scale already agreed for the position, normally the start point of the scale. In exceptional situations, additional placing on the salary scale may be approved, on grounds of special merit, ability, experience and/or market forces. Permission may be sought to contact the candidate's present employer for confirmation of salary placing and continuous service to assist with any additional incremental decisions.

A written offer of employment will be issued to the successful candidate

On the day of commencement of employment, the employee will be issued with a Contract of Employment.

Following the interview process the unsuccessful candidates shall be notified in writing and feedback offered.

Appendix 2

Guidance Notes for Interview Panels

- All panel members must have read and understood the information they have been given.
- Panel members should ensure they are using the agreed set of competency based criteria on the person specification.
- Panel members should ensure that the candidates are measured against the agreed criteria rather than against each other.
- Panel members should, where appropriate have the results of tests or feedback from presentations.
- Panel members should have assigned clear roles and areas of questioning.
- Each panel member should actively participate in every interview.
- Interview questions should be constructed around the criteria of the person specification to ensure that responses can be measured.
- The Chair should always explain the purpose and format of the interview.
- Questions should be rephrased to avoid potential misunderstandings or to elicit additional information.
- Candidates should be encouraged to explain their responses with prompts such as “why” or “why not”.
- Panel members should not be afraid to challenge assertions which cannot be supported by evidence.
- Panel members should keep to the allotted time. This should include sufficient time for the candidate to ask questions.
- Panel members should take notes and record the process using the Interview Assessment pro forma provided by the Corporate Services Team.
- The decision making process should be explained and when the candidate will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 3

Unconscious bias

Unconscious bias can influence decisions in recruitment, promotion and performance management. It could be discriminatory when the unconscious bias relates to a protected characteristic.

What is unconscious bias?

Unconscious bias occurs when people favour others who look like them and/or share their values. For example a person may be drawn to someone with a similar educational background, from the same area, or who is the same colour or ethnicity as them.

A manager who wasn't successful at school may listen to, or be supportive of, an employee who left school without qualifications because, subconsciously, they are reminded of their younger self. The same can be true of a manager who is educated to degree level, favouring employees who have also been to university. This is known as affinity bias, because they feel an affinity with the person as they have similar life experiences.

Another form of unconscious bias is known as the halo effect. This is where a positive trait is transferred onto a person without anything really being known about that person. For example those who dress conservatively are often seen as more capable in an office environment, based purely on their attire.

Behaviour which reinforces the bias is noticed whilst behaviour which does not is ignored. This is how decisions based on unconscious bias are justified.

Everyone has unconscious biases. The brain receives information all the time from our own experiences and what we read, hear or see in the media and from others. The brain uses shortcuts to speed up decision making and unconscious bias is a by-product. There are times when this sort of quick decision making is useful, for example if faced with a dangerous situation, however it is not a good way to make decisions when dealing with recruiting or promoting staff.

Key points

- It's natural.
- It's unintended.
- It can affect decisions.
- It can be mitigated.

Unconscious bias at work can influence decisions in recruitment, promotion, staff development and recognition and can lead to a less diverse workforce. Employers can overlook talented workers and instead favour those who share their own characteristics or views.

Where unconscious bias is against a protected characteristic, it can be discriminatory. For example if during a recruitment process an employer ignores the skills and experience of a candidate who is a different race than them and appoints another candidate who is the same race, this could be discriminatory.

Conscious thoughts are controlled and well-reasoned. Unconscious thoughts can be based on stereotypes and prejudices that we may not even realise we have. Stereotypes surrounding tattoos may subconsciously suggest a person is unlikely to conform and follow rules. Stereotypes surrounding mothers may lead to unconscious bias against women who apply for a role which involves regular travel away from home.

Stress or tiredness may increase the likelihood of decisions based on unconscious bias.

How to overcome unconscious bias

- Be aware of unconscious bias.
- Don't rush decisions rather take your time and consider issues properly.
- Justify decisions by evidence and record the reasons for your decisions, for example during a recruitment exercise.
- Try to work with a wider range of people and get to know them as individuals. This could include working with different teams or colleagues based in a different location.
- Focus on the positive behaviour of people and not negative stereotypes.
- Employers should implement policies and procedures which limit the influence of individual characteristics and preferences.