

## Recruitment & Selection Policy

Date of review/revision	Amendments made
01 September 2023	Clarification on item 4.6
	Language updated (in relation candidates) in items 7.13 and 17

Date created:	February 2023
Responsible officer:	Head of HR & Payroll
Date of next review:	February 2025
Date agreed by SMT (if applicable)	

This policy applies to all employees of the Local Government Association and Improvement & Development Agency

## Recruitment & Selection Policy

### Scope

1. This policy applies to all individuals working for the Local Government Association (LGA). It should be used for any appointment of permanent, temporary or fixed-term staff including apprentices.

### Purpose

2. This policy is designed to ensure a fair, transparent, consistent and equality of opportunity recruitment and selection process, promote a proactive approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and meet the needs of the LGA as the national membership body for local authorities ensuring we can support, promote and improve local government.

### Principles

3. This policy will be delivered through the below guiding principles:

#### **Principle 1: Attract the best candidates for the position**

- 3.1 We want to continue to meet the needs of the organisation and the councils we support. To make this a reality, we need to recruit and develop talent from the widest possible pool in a transparent, objective and consistent way.
- 3.2 Our ambition is to work together to promote a more inclusive environment, which attracts all candidates and signals our commitment to celebrate and promote diversity. By ensuring an inclusive approach we are more likely to attract a diverse pool of talent and experience. The LGA will use data to identify potential positive action measures to ensure that we reach and engage with under-represented groups.

#### **Principle 2: Clearly identify the requirements needed to perform the job.**

- 3.3 The LGA recognises that it is crucial to recruit the right people with the right skills and values to the right job.

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3.4 LGA hiring managers, with support from the HR & Payroll Team, will carefully define the role and the skills required before beginning a recruitment process. They will develop a well-designed job description and person specification which is easily understood by anyone who reads it - not only by those familiar with the LGA or the position. When writing a job description, we will always be clear, concise, and complete. The LGA will develop accurate job descriptions and person specifications that will serve as the basis for recruiting free from bias.

**Principle 3: Ensure quality and high standards**

3.5 Following HR and recruitment good practice guidelines will ensure high standards and quality in LGA's recruitment.

3.6 All LGA staff are required to undertake mandatory training in relation to a range of EDI topics and mandatory recruitment training will be rolled out to recruiting staff/Hiring Managers within six months of the implementation of this policy. Mandatory recruitment training will equip managers with the skills to reduce bias in recruitment, conduct interviews and score applications, understand the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, positive action, and the Disability Confident Scheme.

**Principle 4: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

3.7 The LGA has a commitment to promoting diversity and developing a workplace environment where all staff are treated with dignity and respect; this is central to our recruitment process. The LGA values the differences that a diverse workforce can bring and will actively challenge any acts of unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unfair treatment.

3.8 The LGA will not discriminate on the basis of age, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation and against those with caring responsibilities. In addition the LGA will not discriminate on the basis of disability and any reasonable steps will be taken to prevent any disadvantage for a person with a disability.

3.9 We encourage all applicants to complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring form, to support us in delivering upon our EDI strategy.

### Points to note

4. The following provisions apply:
  - 4.1 The policy will be reviewed as necessary, including but not limited to: changes in legislation; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service; changes in government policy; organisational change or changes agreed through trade union consultation.
  - 4.2 Management guidelines on the implementation of this policy are provided in **Appendix A**.
  - 4.3 The Recruitment Policy should be used in conjunction with other LGA Policies as appropriate.
  - 4.4 The HR & Payroll team should be consulted for their insight and expertise on pay, job evaluation and wider HR strategies. HR can provide support with all – or selected – parts of the recruitment process; starting from receipt of a resignation letter to sending out a job offer.
  - 4.5 In instances of organisational change, the vacancy management protocol supersedes this policy.
  - 4.6 (a) LGA staff who have been in an acting position (that is they have a substantive post) into a permanent post (either acting up or temporary assignment) for less than two years, that subsequently becomes vacant, will be required to apply for the position when it is advertised.  
  
(b) For LGA staff that have been appointed on a fixed term contract against a role that subsequently becomes permanent the following will apply – either – (1) where the role is unique (i.e. there is only one person in the organisation who performs that role) OR no other staff are impacted – the contract of the individual will move from fixed term to permanent. (2) where there are multiple people on fixed term contracts performing the same role and one role becomes permanent, an internal recruitment exercise will take place which is ring-fenced to those in the role. HR will advise on the

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appropriate course of action in these instances.

- 4.7 Recruitment to new posts must have SMT approval prior to the recruitment process commencing.
- 4.8 The LGA will consider incoming secondments where a vacancy is for a fixed term.
- 4.9 The LGA complies with the requirements of relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the Parttime Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment), Regulations 2000 and the Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.
- 4.10 Hiring Managers who intentionally do not adhere to the requirements of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.11 The LGA reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to vary the manner in which the procedure is applied if factors related to a particular case appear to necessitate this. Any variation must be approved in advance by the Head of HR and Payroll and the relevant SMT lead. However, where variation is necessary, this will not compromise the principles of good practice on which the procedure is based.
- 4.12 In some instances, the LGA may conduct recruitment with a partner organisation. It is therefore possible that not all panel members will have completed LGA training (as they are not LGA employees). Where the LGA is the employer, the chair of the panel should be a representative of the LGA, have completed relevant training and ensure adherence to this policy where possible.
- 4.13 The LGA's Chair and group leaders (Vice Chairs of the LGA), or their designated representatives, will be invited to take part in the recruitment of the Chief Executive. The appropriate group leader will be invited to take part in the recruitment of their head of group office. All other staff appointments are the responsibility of the relevant recruiting manager, who may seek member involvement in the process

## Responsibilities

### 5. **Hiring Managers** are responsible for:

- 5.1 familiarising themselves with, and adhering to, the LGA's recruitment and selection policy, processes and guidance
- 5.2 having a broad understanding of the current legislation relating to recruitment and selection and maintaining their technical knowledge and skill levels by undertaking recruitment and selection training, including refresher courses, as required
- 5.3 managing the recruitment process from its inception to candidate appointment. This includes the induction of the successful appointee.
- 5.4 working in partnership with the HR & Payroll team to uphold the LGA's commitments in relation to EDI and best practice.
- 5.5 ensuring that the interview panel is diverse, where possible. The hiring manager should consider bringing together a panel made up of individuals from varying backgrounds and experiences, including ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation and skills.
- 5.6 ensuring all relevant approvals have been sought prior to commencement of any recruitment campaign. This includes ensuring the budget has been allocated by the LGA's finance team.

### 6. **The HR & Payroll Team** is responsible for:

- 6.1 facilitating the recruitment process, in line with the LGA's recruitment and selection policy, following instruction from the Hiring Manager
- 6.2 processing recruitment requests and campaigns in a timely manner as set out in the recruitment guidance (Appendix A)
- 6.3 maintaining and updating templates and guidance in line with current legislation and best practice
- 6.4 role modelling inclusive behaviour, challenging bias, and enforcing policy compliance
- 6.5 working with the Hiring Manager to

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- manage any queries, including complex recruitment issues, that may arise
  - manage timescales, including communications with candidates
  - support requests for feedback.
- 6.6 ensuring that all interview panels are diverse and where possible, made up of individuals from varying backgrounds and experiences, including ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation and skills.
- 6.7 supporting candidates with any required reasonable adjustment requests throughout the recruitment process
- 6.8 ensuring anonymised sifting occurs consistently - reviewing and assessing all applications once anonymised, therefore reducing the possibility of bias.
- 6.9 maintaining an inclusive approach to recruitment, including ensuring that staff on long-term absence are made aware of new vacancies if they have requested to be notified
- 6.10 conducting job evaluation of new and existing posts (where significant change has occurred), before advertising takes place

## **Recruitment & Selection Procedure**

7. There are several key stages in the recruitment and selection process. This policy outlines the key stages, but for further specific guidance please see the Recruitment & Selection Guidance & Toolkit (Appendix a)

### **Job Description & Person Specification**

- 7.1 All roles within the LGA must have an up-to-date, accurate job description and person specification.
- 7.2 All new job descriptions must be submitted to HR & Payroll for evaluation before advertising any vacancy.
- 7.3 Any existing job description that has had amendments made must be reviewed by the HR & Payroll team, who will determine whether re-evaluation is required.

### **Advertising & Attraction**

- 7.4 The LGA's commitment to EDI includes seeking to recruit the highest possible quality of staff to roles. To achieve this the LGA aims to:
- Secure the widest possible response to employment vacancies.
  - Encourage candidates from all areas of the community to apply for our vacancies.
- 7.5 To meet these aims, all permanent posts and fixed-term contracts of twelve months duration or longer, will be externally advertised. An exception is otherwise made under 4.5, 4.6 and 4.11.
- 7.6 Advertising strategy should be designed to ensure that job opportunities are accessible to as wide and diverse an audience as possible so that they attract the strongest possible field of candidates.
- 7.7 All positions should be advertised for a minimum of 8 calendar days. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide staff with opportunities for career development, thus maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff.
- 7.8 In certain circumstances it may be effective to use a recruitment agency who must act in accordance with this policy and with due regard to our equal opportunities requirements. The use of a recruitment agency should be discussed and agreed with the HR & Payroll team in advance. The use of a recruitment agency will, however, not eliminate the need to advertise the position internally.
- 7.9 For a limited number of senior management positions or hard-to-fill professional posts, it may be appropriate to use external consultancy to assist with finding potentially suitable candidates. This approach may be used to complement advertising on the open market to attract a wide pool of suitable candidates.

### **Application, Interview & Selection**

- 7.10 All candidates should apply via the LGA's Applicant Tracking system, Jobtrain. Those who require assistance using Jobtrain, should contact the



HR & Payroll team (HRandPayroll@local.gov.uk)

- 7.11 Shortlisting should be conducted in line with the guidance (appendix A) and with due consideration to the LGA's Disability Confident scheme. If a campaign receives a high volume of applications, the LGA may use an assessment process to assist with shortlisting.
- 7.12 The recruitment process will always include a formal interview and appropriate assessment which can either be in person or via video call. In all instances, care will be taken to ensure that the interview and assessment process do not unfairly or unlawfully discriminate.
- 7.13 Where a disabled candidate has requested a reasonable adjustment, the panel must make every effort to accommodate the request giving due regard to any assessments that the candidate is required to complete.
- 7.14 The chair of the interview panel should be the Hiring Manager who is responsible for the entire recruitment process. Panel members should remain consistent throughout the process. The chair and all panel members should have attended recruitment and selection training before participating in any part of the process.
- 7.15 If a panel member has a personal relationship with a candidate, for example, as a relative or friend, they should, as soon as they become aware of that, tell the other panel members who will decide if the panel member is impartial. A replacement panel member may be appointed if there is any uncertainty.
- 7.16 Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification and the LGA's values and behaviours. However, variations potentially may be required due to a reasonable adjustment request; please speak to HR and Payroll to advise.
- 7.17 The LGA will not cover interview expenses unless there are exceptional circumstances; for example, to not cover costs would be prohibitive for a candidate to attend. This may be considered through Access to Work.

### **The offer and pre-employment checks**

7.18 The Hiring Manager is responsible for making the verbal offer which will be conditional based upon confirmation of right to work in the UK (if not already confirmed), receipt of two satisfactory references (one from the current employer), and medical clearance (obtained through the completion of an online pre-employment medical questionnaire managed by the LGA's occupational health provider). If one reference is received, it is the anticipated line manager's discretion as to whether they wish to proceed with the existing start date. Further information on the offer process can be found in the guidance (Appendix A).

7.19 As set out in the LGA's Pay Policy, candidates should be appointed on the minimum salary point of the grade for the post. If a candidate is already being paid above the minimum point of the post they are applying for, it might be possible for the offer to be on the next highest increment above their current salary – this will require the approval of the HR & Payroll team and is subject to the maximum of the grade.

7.20 The LGA does not pay relocation expenses.

7.21 Should the pre-employment checks be deemed unsatisfactory, the manager should liaise with HR for advice on how to proceed.

7.22 For existing employees - when agreeing a start date, the Hiring Manager should discuss with the existing line manager. The existing manager reserves the right to ask the employee to work the equivalent of their notice period.

### **Candidate feedback**

7.23 The LGA does not provide feedback to external candidates at application stage. Internal candidates are entitled to request verbal feedback on their application to assist with their development.

7.24 To those that request it, the LGA will provide verbal feedback to candidates after interview stage. The LGA does not provide written feedback.

### **Probationary periods**

7.25 All new appointees to the LGA will be subject to the completion of a

satisfactory probationary period as per the LGA's Probationary Procedure.

7.26 The manager should refer to the LGA's Probation Procedure and associated forms to familiarise with the process. Any performance or conduct concerns are to be addressed through the Probation procedure. After six months, subject to successfully completing probation, the LGA's Capability and Disciplinary policies will apply.

7.27 Existing employees who have successfully completed a probationary period will not be subject to a further probationary period should they be appointed to another post following a full recruitment process.

7.28 Existing employees who have not completed their probation and take up a new appointment, the LGA may extend the probation period to allow adequate time to fairly assess skill and suitability for the role.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

8. The LGA is committed to promoting and valuing diversity in every aspect of the work we carry out. We will strive to ensure that:
  - we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect
  - the opportunities we provide are open to all
  - we benefit from the skills, talents and experience offered by a diverse workforce reflecting all sections of our communities
  - we build a working environment based on inclusiveness and merit.
9. The EDI strategy and associated action plan set out the LGA's stance in relation to improving our approach to EDI

### **Anonymous Recruitment**

10. To support the LGA's commitment to inclusive recruitment, the LGA uses anonymised candidate data during the application and shortlisting stages. Anonymous candidate applications have the potential to remove or reduce some barriers facing applicants from disadvantaged groups, by shifting the sole focus towards the skills and qualifications of that application.
11. Managers will only be provided with a candidate ID (in place of a name) during the shortlisting stage and will only be informed of the candidate's name and

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contact details at the point of interview. Where CVs are used as an application method, candidates are encouraged to remove their name. Where candidates do not do this the LGA may be limited in its ability to conduct anonymous recruitment.

### **Accessibility & Reasonable Adjustments**

12. The LGA applicant portal (Jobtrain) has the Recite Toolbar which allows applicants to adjust the advert and application, to make it accessible for them. This includes read aloud, background and text colour changes, screen mask, language changer and more functionality.
13. In addition to accessibility software, accessible word versions of the application form and adjustments to the process can be made available. Any requests should be directed to the HR & Payroll team at [HRandPayroll@local.gov.uk](mailto:HRandPayroll@local.gov.uk)
14. As part of the interview and assessment process, the Hiring Manager is responsible for ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made for candidates. Support is available from the HR & Payroll team if required.
15. For those that are eligible for Access to Work, it may be possible to secure funding to pay for a range of support needs including a support worker and transportation to work costs, which include interview costs. Unemployed or employed disabled people who need help with a communicator at a job interview can also get help from Access to Work.

### **Disability Confident Scheme**

16. The LGA has been assessed as a **level 3 - Disability Confident Leader**.  
Read more about [the disability confident scheme on the government website](#).
17. As a disability confident leader, the LGA are committed to:
  - 17.1.1 providing an inclusive and accessible recruitment process for all disabled candidates
  - 17.1.2 ensuring that all disabled applicants and disabled potential applicants are aware of our disability confident status to encourage application under the scheme where applicable
  - 17.1.3 offering an interview to disabled people, should they meet the minimum

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criteria for a role for which they have applied.

- 17.1.4 making reasonable adjustments to process to support candidates to succeed. Adjustments to the job description, person specification, selection criteria, and hours of work should be considered where reasonable and practicable, and assessed on a case-by-case basis

### **Care Leavers**

18. The LGA is committed to the Care Leaver Covenant which aims to support care leavers to make the transition to independence through our apprenticeships.
19. Under this scheme care leaver applicants (aged 18 – 25) who apply to the LGA's apprenticeships are guaranteed an interview, if they meet the minimum qualifying criteria.

### **Flexible Working**

20. As a national membership body with a diverse workforce, the LGA is committed to a culture of flexible working.
21. Flexible working makes good business sense, helping people to manage their work and life commitments whilst continuing to deliver the first-class services that our member councils need and expect. It also helps us to attract diverse talent from across the country. The LGA has invested in technology and an office environment that supports flexible working.
22. However, in a complex business like ours, there is no one size fits all. Different roles have different requirements and face to face interaction is, and will remain, a key part of the work that many of us do.
23. The LGA will be open to discussion on flexible working arrangements, which include part-time working, job share and/or contractual home-working. The LGA does not offer compressed hour contracts for full-time employees. More information is available in the LGA's flexible working policy

### **Positive Action**

- In recruitment, legislation allows positive action in specific situations as defined below. Positive action is a range of measures and initiatives an organisation can lawfully take to:
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- remove barriers
  - actively encourage under-represented groups to bring their talent, experience and expertise to join the organisation
  - help people with protected characteristics to perform to the best of their ability.
24. The Equality Act 2010 (section 158) permits employers to take positive action to:
- enable or encourage people who share a protected characteristic to overcome or minimise a disadvantage connected to that characteristic
  - meet the needs of people who share a protected characteristic where those needs are different to those who do not have that characteristic
  - encourage and enable people from under-represented groups, to help them participate in an activity in which their participation is low.
25. The LGA will use diversity monitoring data to identify opportunities where it may be appropriate to use positive action and will refer to the guidance published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the government's quick start guide to positive action in recruitment and promotion
26. Provisions for positive action are complex and must be handled within the restrictions set out in law to ensure any action taken is proportionate to the organisation's need. Therefore, any manager interested in taking positive action steps must consult the HR & Payroll team before doing so.
27. Excluding any pre-agreed positive action activity, the role will always be offered to a candidate who meets the requirements of the role most closely. Positive action is not positive discrimination: the position is always awarded on merit

### **Data retention**

28. The LGA has a privacy notice in relation to storage of candidate data - <https://lgadigital.sharepoint.com/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2FShared%20Documents%2FPrivacy%20Notice%2Epdf&parent=%2FShared%20Documents>
29. In terms of applicant data, we are committed to closely monitoring what our

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data tells us and taking action to improve.

30. As part of the application and onboarding processes we ask candidates to complete the equal opportunities form which will enable us to monitor the effectiveness of our inclusive practices. Completion of equal opportunities data is voluntary and anonymised, and individuals can choose not to answer any question(s) by selecting prefer not to say.
31. The information gathered will be stored safely and responsibly by the HR & Payroll team, and retained for monitoring purposes only, and will not be linked to an individual's name.
32. We capture the following data: age, disability, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, and caring responsibilities. However, the data we capture may be altered based on best practice recommendations. Tracking this information allows us to:
  - Ensure that we are an age friendly employer (creating a work environment in which people of all ages have the support they need to thrive)
  - Ensure that the needs of individuals in our workforce are met, including - offering support to fulfil religious practices, making reasonable adjustments, providing flexible working and understanding individual's health and wellbeing needs based on different experiences.
  - Support the career progression of staff with protected characteristics
  - Tackle all forms of unlawful discrimination
  - Inform pay gap reporting (including but not limited to gender, ethnicity, disability)
  - Monitor the ability to access opportunities such as training and promotions

Equal opportunities data will be hidden from short listers and the Hiring Manager to ensure our commitment to removing bias.

33. As part of our EDI commitment, the HR & Payroll team will:
  - Utilise data in relation to media and attraction activity to inform recruitment and marketing approaches, linking with advertising agencies and Hiring

Managers.

- Maintain record keeping of recruitment statistics and information for this to be captured in reporting and analysis for senior management
- Ensure monitoring information is kept up to date in line with ONS guidance and other best practice initiatives

### **Complaints Process**

34. Any complaint regarding any stage of the recruitment process should be made, in writing, to **HRandPayroll@local.gov.uk**. Complaints from external candidates will be handled following the **LGA's complaints policy - <https://www.local.gov.uk/about/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/our-policies-and-procedures/lga-complaints-policy>**. Complaints from internal candidates will be handled following the LGA's grievance policy.
35. The complaint will be investigated by the relevant HR Officer in the first instance, in collaboration with an appropriate manager.
36. Where evidence of unfair activity is found, the HR & Payroll team will take appropriate action, in accordance with the LGA's policies and procedures. Complaints that require escalation will be referred to the HR Operations Manager in the first instance.