

Wootton Academy Trust



Appointment of Staff Policy

- a) This policy applies to all Trusts managed by Wootton Academy Trust
- b) This policy was adopted by Wootton Academy Trust in December 2012
- c) This policy was reviewed by Wootton Academy Trust in December 2013

PROCEDURES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

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1. Interview Guidelines

1. PREAMBLE

This document has been produced in order to give clear guidelines for the appointment of all staff employed by Wootton Academy Trust.

The aims of this document are:

- to provide detailed and structured procedures for the appointment of staff
- to encourage good practice
- to provide interview panel members with appropriate guidance to help them meet their responsibilities in the recruitment of staff
- to ensure that interviews are conducted consistently in a planned and systematic manner

The appointment of staff is one of the most important functions in which any of us become involved. Selecting staff is a skill and like most skills can be developed and improved upon through experience and thought. In thinking about a post prior to selection, we are not only matching the right person to the right job in relation to qualities and skills, but, also to be borne in mind are relationships within the team. The value of making the right appointments cannot be over-emphasised; a mistake made at this point can have adverse effects for years to come. In drawing up this policy, reference has been made to the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment Education document (DCSF January 2007).

2. POLICY

The Trust's policy on recruitment is to appoint the best person for the job based on sound fair and legitimate selection procedures. There should be no discrimination (either positive or negative) against candidates on grounds of age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or disability. Recruitment, as with all aspects of school life, must adhere to current legislation.

The recruitment of staff of the highest calibre must be a paramount objective for the Directors and their senior management teams in the Trust's schools, for ultimately the success of these schools is dependent on the qualities of the people working in it.

If a suitable candidate is not forthcoming at the first round of interviews, the position will be re-advertised until a suitable candidate emerges.

3. PRINCIPLES

The Directors will take steps to ensure that:

- all recruitment advertisements carry a statement “reflecting the commitment to equal opportunities”;
- all recruitment advertisements carry a statement about the Trust’s commitment to safeguarding children
- the criteria for selection and promotion will be determined solely on the basis of objective, job-related criteria;
- documentation relating to recruitment, promotion and selection will avoid unfair and unlawful discrimination;
- all posts will be open to all applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification (GOQ) for the posts being restricted to a particular group.
- all posts will be advertised internally and/or externally where appropriate taking into account the promotion of equal opportunities unless there is good reason to do otherwise (e.g. in cases of potential redundancy or restructuring, or where the post is intended to be offered on a short term temporary or casual basis) □ full information relating to vacant posts (e.g. allowances, enhancements applying to those posts) will be made available to staff on application.

4. VACANCIES

Vacancies may arise as a result of members of staff leaving the employment of the Trust, having an internal promotion which leaves another vacancy to be filled, or as a result of a new post being offered. When vacancies arise as a result of the first two scenarios, it is good practice to make this an opportunity to review whether the post needs to be filled and if so whether the job description and responsibilities need to be amended.

5. PROCEDURES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF TEACHING STAFF

The administrative arrangements involved in the recruiting process shall be the responsibility of the Principal of the school.

5.1 Advertisements

Vacancies will be advertised in the local and/or national press and/or their web equivalents) where appropriate and on the websites of Wootton Academy Trust schools. Advertisements will indicate title, grading, salary, date for return of application, and the name and address to

be contacted for details. Where applicable minimum qualifications and / or experience required should be stated.

A vacancy for a Principal or Vice Principal must be advertised nationally.

5.2 The following information is made available on the websites of Wootton Academy Trust schools or following contact with the school: application forms, post and departmental descriptions, person specification, the Academy's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and any other information specific to the post. The school prospectus will be made available on request and will be sent to all candidates invited to interview and we would expect information in the prospectus to be known by all candidates invited for interview. It will also be made clear to applicants that job descriptions may be reviewed from time to time.

The following will be included on the application form and/or further particulars for each post:-

"This post is exempt from the provisions of section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986. Owing to the nature of the work, you are advised that, if offered the post for which you are now making application, the offer will be subject to the School being satisfied as to your suitability following a check on any record of convictions, bindovers or cautions held by the Police. A record with the Police will not automatically result in the withdrawal of the offer, but will be taken into account by Wootton Academy Trust in deciding whether the appointment should be confirmed."

If invited to interview, candidates will be asked to provide original evidence of the following:

- identity and their right to work in the UK,
- academic or professional qualifications including evidence of QTS status for teaching staff
- proof of address

5.3 Shortlisting

Shortlisting (*except for Principal and Deputy Principal*) will be carried out by the Principal, Line Manager for the department and, where appropriate, the Head of Department. The reason(s) for not selecting a candidate for interview should be entered on each application form as specified below.

(a) Failure to meet the specified requirements such as qualifications (under or over qualified); experience - incomplete/inappropriate.

(b) Information provided by the applicant suggests that he/she is unsuitable e.g. lack of sufficient understanding about the job.

(c) Application deficiencies i.e. late application, incomplete application form, poorly presented form (where this is a relevant consideration).

(d) Although meeting basic requirements, not considered to be one of the better qualified and/or experienced candidates who applied for the post.

5.4 References

All references for teaching posts will be taken up prior to interview.

Requests for references will be specific to the post and be structured to elicit information of relevance to the appointment. They will be accompanied by a copy of the job description and job details and request the referee to relate his/her comments to these. It will be made clear to the referees by which date references are required. Referees will be asked to comment on the candidate's suitability for the post as well as being asked to mention any disciplinary, performance, safeguarding or conduct issues.

All candidates will be asked to give the names of at least two referees of whom one should be their present employer (or last employer, if currently unemployed). When references are requested by the school the following paragraph will be included:-

"In writing your reference, please note that, in order to protect children, the post for which application is made is exempt from section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986. It is not, therefore, in any way contrary to the Act to reveal any information you may have concerning convictions/bindovers/cautions which would otherwise be considered as "spent" in relation to this application and which you consider relevant to the applicant's suitability for employment. Any such information will be kept in strict confidence and used only in consideration of the suitability of this applicant for a position for which such exemption is appropriate."

5.5 Interview Panels

The interview panel will usually comprise the Principal acting as chairperson, the Line Manager for the department, the Head of the relevant department and a governor or a Director where appropriate and possible. One of the above must have had recent safer recruitment training. If necessary an expert in a specialist subject may attend to advise the panel. For posts of Head of Department/Year and above, a governor or a Director should be

on the interview panel. The Principal will provide a set of sample/suggested questions for the panel to use with all applicants.

5.6 For conduct of interviews see Appendix 1.

5.7 Offer of Appointment

An applicant may only be offered appointment subject to:-

i) The candidate being declared medically fit by the Occupational Health Consultant to undertake the role. Each successful candidate will complete a Pre-Employment Medical Questionnaire which is then passed to the Occupational Health Provider who will then advise the school.

ii) Wootton Academy Trust's receipt of the appropriate disclosure form, duly completed, which does not contain anything which prima facie might cause doubt as to the suitability of the person to work with children AND the person concerned understanding that he/she is liable to summary dismissal if, in the event, the police check discloses information which in the opinion of Wootton Academy Trust renders him/her unsuitable to work with children.

iii) Verification of qualifications.

The unsuccessful candidates will be notified as soon as possible and an opportunity for debriefing at a mutually convenient time will be offered.

The verbal offer of the appointment will then be followed by the written version.

6. SUPPLY TEACHERS

Only persons who are known to Wootton Academy Trust schools as already having clearance (e.g. former members of staff) or people appointed and CRB checked by Wootton Academy Trust or staff coming from recognised Supply Agencies will be employed by the Wootton Academy Trust schools.

7. APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL

The procedures for the appointment of teaching staff apply except as set out below:

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be carried out by the selection panel appointed by the Board of Directors. An education personnel expert may be called in to assist. The Panel will also decide the assessment methods and other selection tests to be used.

The Interview Panel(s)

The Interview Panel(s) shall consist of a minimum of three directors. An education personnel expert may be present for the purpose of advising the panel.

8. APPOINTMENT OF VICE AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL(S)

The procedures for the appointment of teaching staff apply except as set out below.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be carried out by the selection panel appointed by the Board of Directors and this would include the Principal. The Principal will advise the panel on the assessment methods to be used and other selection tests. The Principal will also provide the Interview Panel(s) with sample/suggested questions to use with all applicants.

The Interview Panel(s)

The interview panel(s) shall consist of the Principal and two or more directors. An education personnel expert may be present for the purpose of advising the panel.

9. APPOINTMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

The procedures for the appointment of teaching staff apply except as set out below.

References

All candidates will be asked to give the names of at least two referees of whom one should be their present employer (or last employer, if currently unemployed). The application form for support staff gives them the opportunity to indicate whether the school may approach referees prior to an offer of a post being made. Wootton Academy Trust will respect their wishes and references for support staff posts will be taken up according to the preference of the applicant.

Requests for references should be specific to the post and be structured to elicit information of relevance to the appointment. They should be accompanied by a copy of the job description and person specification and request the referee to relate his/her comments to these. It should be made clear to the referees by which date references are required.

When references are requested by the school the following paragraph should be included:-
“In writing your reference, please note that, in order to protect children, the post for which application is made is exempt from section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986. It is not, therefore, in any way contrary to the Act to

reveal any information you may have concerning convictions/bindovers/cautions which would otherwise be considered as "spent" in relation to this application and which you consider relevant to the applicant's suitability for employment. Any such information will be kept in strict confidence and used only in consideration of the suitability of this applicant for a position for which such exemption is appropriate."

(a) Support staff except Cleaning Assistants

The Interview Panel

The interview panel will be comprised of a minimum of 3 persons where possible - the Principal acting as Chairman (or the Business Manager or the Vice Principal), a Governor/Director where possible and appropriate and relevant member(s) of staff appointed by the Principal.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be undertaken by the Principal and the immediate Line Manager.

(b) Appointment of Cleaning Staff

The appointment of the Site Agents shall be the responsibility of the Business Manager assisted by two other members of the Leadership Team. A Director/Governor will attend if requested.

The appointment of cleaning assistants shall be the responsibility of the Business Manager assisted by the Site Agent.

Note

When a practical skill, e.g. word processing is a requirement of the position candidates will be required to undertake a proficiency test. All candidates should be allowed the same amount of time and given identical tests.

10. THE JOB DESCRIPTION

The job description is a key element in the appointment process for both teaching and support staff. It should convey a sense of the overall purpose as well as the detailed responsibilities of the post; should establish the context within which the postholder will be operating; and should indicate to whom and for whom he/she will be responsible. It should also indicate any future planned changes in the duties of the postholder.

For teaching posts, job descriptions should conform to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document and the advice given by the Trust's legal/HR/personnel advisors.

Support staff job descriptions should be accompanied by job details which give full and relevant information about the post. These will normally include (dependent upon the position) a statement about the locality, a description of the establishment, a summary of the organisation, and/or financial information, and possibly an indication of future developments.

The job description should be specific to the post and be revised whenever the post falls vacant.

It should be made clear to potential applicants that the job description may be subject to review from time to time.

Associated with the job description should be a person specification.

11. THE PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person specification should indicate the qualifications and experience which are sought and any personal qualities and skills which will be required of the candidate. The job description should form the draft on which to base the person specification. It should be possible to focus on the "essential" aspects of the job, that is to say, the areas of work where it is essential that any appointee will possess certain skills, specialist knowledge or particular attitudes if he/she is to succeed in the post and to tackle the essential aspects in an effective manner. Similarly it will be possible to draw up a list of "desirable" characteristics where it is advantageous but not essential the candidate possesses such attributes.

It should then be possible to produce a definitive person specification detailing essential and desirable characteristics for the satisfactory performance of the job.

12. CONDITIONAL OFFER

The offer of appointment is typically conditional. Confirmation of the appointment may be conditional on receipt of:

- i) Satisfactory references
- ii) Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure
- iii) Proof of qualifications

A conditional offer will state clearly that it is conditional, indicating the information on which the offer is dependent.

13. CRIMINAL RECORDS DISCLOSURE

13.1 All appointments are conditional upon the disclosure process operated through the Criminal Records Bureau. This process is a legal requirement with respect to all employees who have regular contact with children.

13.2 Teachers and those working closely with children or in sole charge of children must undergo Enhanced Disclosure. All other employees of Wootton Academy Trust must undergo Standard Disclosure.

Standard Disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (i.e. those that happened some time ago and are defined as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). In addition, Standard Disclosure includes details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the police national computer.

Standard Disclosure will also give information contained on government department lists of those unsuitable to work with children. These lists are held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education. The employment within a Wootton Academy Trust School of an individual on such a list is illegal.

Enhanced Disclosure includes the information that would be on a Standard Disclosure but may also contain information that is held locally by the police.

13.3 The advertisement for the post and the details within the Job Information Pack sent to all candidates will state whether the appointment requires Standard or Enhanced Disclosure.

13.4 The disclosure requirement is clearly stated in the contract of employment but should be explicitly stated during the selection process. This gives the candidate the opportunity to raise any known issues themselves during the interview.

13.5 In making a conditional offer of employment, the successful candidate should be invited to sign the Confidential Declaration Form and to return the form under confidential cover to the Principal. This form sets out clearly the legal requirements with regard to Disclosure and ensures that the candidate has the opportunity to declare any cautions, reprimands, warnings or convictions in confidence.

13.6 The disclosure of a current or spent conviction, caution, reprimand or warning does not necessarily mean that the offer of employment cannot be confirmed. The main consideration should be whether the nature or timing of the offence makes the candidate unsuitable for work in a Wootton Academy Trust School.

13.7 Appropriate and secure arrangements for storing disclosure documents during the recruitment process must be made. This information must be stored separately from personnel files and only those senior members of staff directly involved in the recruitment process should have access to the documents. The disclosure documents of unsuccessful applicants should be destroyed as soon as the appointment decision has been made.

13.8 Wootton Academy Trust will retain a record that disclosure has been requested and received for every employee. This record will include for each employee:

- i) Date of Disclosure
- ii) Name of the person to whom Disclosure applies
- iii) Type of Disclosure

- iv) The position in question
- v) The unique identification number of the Disclosure
- vi) The recruitment decision taken

13.9 Disclosure will be requested for every new appointment to Wootton Academy Trust Schools and also where there is a significant change of role impacting on the level or nature of contact with children causing an Enhanced Disclosure to be necessary for an employee who has only been subject to Standard Disclosure.

14 POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

As its policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, the Wootton Academy Trust has adopted the general practice guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development on the employment of people with criminal records.

15 PROOF OF QUALIFICATIONS

All appointments are conditional upon documentary proof of the applicant's qualifications (if applicable). This condition is clearly stated in the contract of employment and should be explicitly stated during the selection process.

The Principal should ask for sight of original documentation from the successful candidate.

16 PAY DECISIONS

The Principal is responsible for deciding the salary level of the successful candidate. The pay decision will be made in line with the published pay policy, the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate and the previously approved salary band agreed when the proposed position was authorised.

17 DISCRIMINATION

17.1 Wootton Academy Trust will not discriminate against applicants for employment on grounds of ethnicity, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital status or age. Very considerable care will be taken with respect to discrimination at all stages of the recruitment and selection process.

17.2 All applicants will be asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. The applicants' Equal Opportunities Monitoring forms must not be made available to those taking short-listing or selection decisions.

17.3 Race Discrimination

Direct discrimination arises where the Wootton Academy Trust treats an employee or prospective employee less favourably on the grounds of race or ethnic origins than it treats (or would treat) someone else.

Indirect discrimination involves treatment which, although it applies to all employees and prospective employees, has a disproportionate effect on a particular group such as certain ethnic groups. Care will be taken where there may be an overlap between race and religion.

17.4 Sex Discrimination

Direct sex discrimination arises where Wootton Academy Trust treats an employee less favourably, on the grounds of gender, than it treats (or would treat) someone else.

Indirect sex discrimination involves treatment which, although it applies to all employees and prospective employees, has a disproportionate effect on a particular group, such as women. Care will be taken to avoid indirect discrimination which arises where the recruitment policies, selection criteria and/or conditions of employment make it more difficult for members of one sex to comply. Such policies may appear to be right in principle but are not permissible if they are discriminatory in effect.

Many women and, in particular, those returning to work after maternity leave express the wish to work on a part-time (or job share) basis and such requests will be received and considered sympathetically. Although there is no specific right to return to part-time employment after a period of maternity leave, an employee could argue that a refusal to allow her to return on a part-time basis is indirect discrimination. Wootton Academy Trust must be able to show good reason why the work has to be done on a full-time basis.

17.5 Disability Discrimination

Employers are required to make reasonable adjustments to their employment arrangements or premises if the existing arrangements substantially disadvantage disabled applicants or employees. This includes making reasonable changes to premises, fixtures and fittings, furniture and stairways. Less favourable treatment can be justified if the reason for it is both material to the circumstances of the individual case and substantial and cannot be reasonably overcome or reduced.

17.6 The Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form asks prospective candidates to indicate whether there is a need for any reasonable adjustment to be made. It is essential that action is taken based on this information. A fuller description of the above is available in the Trust's Equality Policy

18 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Wootton Academy Trust will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Wootton Academy Trust Schools..

December 2012

Reference

"Employing People with Conviction: a good practice guide on the employment of people with criminal records"
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2001)

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

The aims of the interview are:

- (a) to assess the candidates' skills, aptitudes, ability and suitability for the position - judged against lawful criteria and based on information obtained from the application form and at the interview
- (b) to allow opportunity for candidates to make further enquiries concerning the nature and conditions of employment.
- (c) to gain an insight into the applicant's personality.
- (d) to check and confirm the candidate's qualifications

Preparation

The interview programme should allow sufficient time to be thorough and cover the ground systematically. To avoid running late it is better to leave too much time between interviews than too little.

Strategy

It is important to familiarise yourself with the information that will have a bearing on the forthcoming interviews. A read through the job description and person specification together with a detailed study of the application forms should allow you to plan the interviews. It is helpful to note the questions you wish to raise, particularly with regard to vague statements made on the application form.

It is imperative that the interview panel complies with safeguarding practices and that any inconsistencies, error or gaps in a candidates chronological history are answered.

The panel will meet before the timing of the first interview and the panel chairman should arrange for the interview panel members to discuss:

- the format and structure of the interviews
- the conduct of the interviews
- the requirements of the job
- the skills and aptitudes required of the postholder
- the areas of questions by members to avoid repetition and the sequencing of questions.

- the seating arrangements.
- The types of questions generally raised at an interview fall into three categories.
- Job-centred questions, prompted by the special requirements of the job, to be asked of all candidates.
- Person centred questions, prompted by the application form e.g. points where the interviewer suspects a person may not be the right one for the job. These questions vary depending on the applicant's experience.
- Questions raised by the applicant.

The Interview

- The panel chairman is responsible for the conduct of the interview.
- Interviews should always be conducted in a manner that will leave the candidate with a favourable impression.
- All panel members must ensure that they are able to be present throughout all the interviews.
- A selection interview should allow both parties, employer and candidate, to undertake a matching process - to see whether or not they will suit each other and not a means by which to interrogate the candidate!
- The importance of good preparation prior to an interview cannot be over-emphasised.
- One member of the interview panel must have undertaken safer recruitment training.

You must be clear before starting the interview on:

- (a) what job needs to be done (job description)
- (b) what skills and attributes are needed to do the job (person specification)
- (c) what questions you need to ask.
 - Within the preparation process do bear in mind that you will be part of a panel.
 - When a practical skill e.g. word processing is a requirement of the position candidates will be required to undertake a proficiency test. All candidates should be allowed the same amount of time and given identical tests. Information about the outcomes of this task will be fed to the Interview Panel as part of their decision-making process.

- Applicants for teaching posts will be expected to demonstrate their teaching skills in the classroom and the results should be given to the panel and be taken into consideration when the final assessment is made.
- Always be alert

□ **Think:**

- about the answers given
- whether you are getting the information you need to make the decision
- whether you need to follow up answers to get more information
- whether there are still any gaps into which you must delve

At the conclusion of the interview you should have sufficient information to form a complete appraisal of the candidate and their suitability for the position.