



Recruitment Protocol

Background

1. In response to the challenging and uncertain economic environment, the University is adopting a series of measures to strengthen its financial position and plan carefully for the possibility of a tougher funding environment. These measures cover three areas of cost: pay, non-pay and capital.
2. In relation to non-pay costs, all those with budgetary responsibility across the University are reminded of the Financial Regulations relating to the commitment of expenditure and budgetary control, and the importance of obtaining value for money at all times. Similarly, capital plans are being reviewed to ensure that investment is focused on those projects that are essential to protect the current income base, satisfy regulatory requirements, or that will contribute directly to strengthening the University's near-term financial position.
3. In relation to pay costs, the aim is to ensure the University adopts a responsible and precautionary approach to managing the salary budget. Following the period of significantly increased investment in staff ahead of the Research Assessment Exercise, measures are now being put in place to consolidate staff numbers at the current level, whilst maintaining some flexibility where required. These measures include: the introduction of a new recruitment protocol; the reintroduction of the Oxford Mobility Incentive Scheme (OMIS), which will run for a fixed-term period to 31 October 2010; and a reminder to departments of opportunities for cost-saving, such as approving requests for flexible working.

Protocol

4. The recruitment protocol is being introduced with effect from Thursday 7 May 2009 for a period of one year. At the end of this period, the position will be reviewed.
5. This protocol applies to recruitment across the University, including:
 - (a) all departments of the University, other than OUP;
 - (b) all administrative and service sections within the University, including UAS, the Finance Division, the Development Office, and ASUC;
 - (c) all the University's subsidiary companies.

The protocol does not apply to colleges (including the societies, St Cross College and Kellogg College) or to the Permanent Private Halls.

6. Under this protocol, all recruitment to new and existing posts will be subject to a rigorous approval process designed to challenge constructively the affordability of recruiting to the post. The nature of that approval process differs according to the type of post under consideration.
 - 6.1 Some categories of post within the University – those focused on teaching and research – have the potential to contribute directly to the University's strategic and financial position and the procedures to be followed for recruitment to these types of post have been drawn up with this in mind.
 - 6.2 For other types of post, for example administrative posts, the primary aim is to consolidate staff numbers at the current level by carefully scrutinising the case for refilling vacancies and particularly the case for creating new posts. A distinction has therefore been made

between recruitment to new posts and recruitment to existing posts: the criteria to be met for a new post (which would increase staff numbers) are therefore more stringent than those for an existing post.

- 6.3 Details of the procedures for each type of post can be found in the Procedures section below. A summary is available at Annex A.
7. Many departments will have recruitment exercises already in train.
 - (a) Where an advertisement for the post has already been placed, that recruitment exercise may continue to completion. If the post remains unfilled at the end of the current exercise, any re-advertising will require approval under this protocol.
 - (b) Where an advertisement has not yet been placed, the recruitment exercise must be suspended and approval sought under the terms of this protocol.
8. This protocol is not designed to preclude restructuring initiatives as a means by which to increase efficiency. If departments wish to explore restructuring opportunities, they are encouraged to contact Personnel Services as early in the process as possible. Contact details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/contacts/.

Procedures

9. The basic procedures to be followed for different types of post are set out below. Each division will advise its departments of the details of its local procedures.
10. **Statutory professorships:** cases for the refilling of a vacancy or for the creation of a new chair will be considered by PRAC, on the basis of a recommendation from the relevant Divisional Board. The case to PRAC must include a detailed funding proposal that makes provision for any start-up funds. Posts approved by PRAC will be externally advertised.
11. **University/Faculty/CUF lecturerships:** cases for the refilling of a vacancy or for the creation of a new lecturership will be considered by the relevant Divisional Board, following consultation with the relevant college(s). The case to the Divisional Board must include a detailed funding proposal. Posts approved by the Divisional Board will be externally advertised.
12. **RSIV posts:** cases for the refilling of a vacancy or for the creation of a new post will be considered by the Senior Appointments Panel of the Personnel Committee, on the basis of a recommendation from the relevant Divisional Board. The case to the Panel must include a detailed funding proposal. Posts approved by the Panel will usually be externally advertised.
13. **Externally funded research posts (other than RSIVs):** cases for the refilling of a vacancy or for the creation of a new post will be considered at departmental level. Approval is subject to confirmation that the post is externally funded in full. Posts approved may be internally and/or externally advertised as the department considers appropriate.
14. **All other posts (including fixed-term appointments, such as those to cover existing staff on leave, casual staff, agency 'temps' and consultants):** cases for the refilling of a vacancy or for the creation of a new post require written approval from the relevant approving body before the recruitment process can begin. The approval body for each recruiting section is set out in the table below.

Recruiting section	Approval required from
All other departmental posts	Head of Division or Divisional Secretary
All posts in the Department of Continuing Education	Board of Continuing Education
All posts in UAS	Registrar's Recruitment Panel
All posts in the Finance Division	Finance Management Board
All posts in the Development Office	Registrar's Recruitment Panel
All posts in ASUC	The Head of Division
All posts in the Council Departments	Registrar's Recruitment Panel
All posts in subsidiary companies	Subsidiary Company Board

14.1 All recruitment which falls under this category requires the signature of the chair (or equivalent) of the relevant approving body on the Staff Registration Form in order for the appointee to be added to the University payroll.

New Posts

14.2 The approving body may only consent to the creation of a new post if the following conditions have been met:

- (a) the work in question cannot be absorbed within the existing staff complement across the division; and
- (b) one or more of the following conditions is met:
 - (i) there are overwhelming academic or operational imperatives to fill the post;
 - (ii) there are safety or reputational risks to the University if the post is not filled;
 - (iii) there are legal requirements to fill the post;
 - (iv) there is evidence that the post will be fully externally-funded;
 - (v) there is evidence that not to recruit will result in demonstrable financial loss to the University; and/or
 - (vi) the post forms part of a restructuring proposal and recruitment to it is necessary to produce overall savings or to increase income significantly, or is highly desirable for other specified reasons.

14.3 The presumption will be that vacancies for new posts will be advertised internally within the collegiate University in the first instance.

14.4 If the approving body considers that external advertising is justified, approval must be sought from a newly established body comprising members of PRAC and the Personnel Committee (the *Joint Group*). It is not necessary for a post to have been unsuccessfully advertised internally before a request can be made for approval to advertise it externally.

14.5 Approval by the Joint Group is not required for subsidiary companies wishing to advertise new posts externally.

Replacement of Leavers

14.6 The approving body may only consent to the replacement of leavers if the following conditions have been met:

- (a) the work in question cannot be absorbed within the existing staff complement across the division; and
- (b) a convincing operational and financial case has been made.

- 14.7 The presumption will be that vacancies for existing posts will be advertised internally within the collegiate University in the first instance.
- 14.8 External advertising of the vacancy may proceed if the approving body considers that it is justified.

Monitoring the procedures

15. PRAC and Council will receive regular reports of headcount, staff costs, and numbers of new internal and external appointments, broken down by department, to enable the University to assess the effect of these procedures.

Impact of the procedures on staff

16. It is expected that the likely greater use of internal advertisement will enable better use to be made of the expertise of existing staff, enhancing opportunities for career and personal development through internal promotion within the University.
17. The operation of these procedures may mean that some staff are required to assume greater responsibility. It is important to ensure that those staff remain motivated. Departments are reminded of existing schemes which enable the contributions of those staff to be recognised, for example through merit increments, acting-up payments and re-grading. More information about these schemes can be found at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/managers/salaries/.
18. It is anticipated that there will be a need to focus on the development of existing staff and, where it is cost-effective to do so, departments should consider arranging appropriate training. Information about professional and personal development opportunities is available from the Oxford Learning Institute at www.learning.ox.ac.uk/.
19. Departments should remain alert to potential implications of the additional pressures that staff may face, including work-related stress. Guidance about the prevention and management of work-related stress can be found at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/staff/stress/.

Further information

20. Personnel Services will be providing further guidance to departments to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements. Any questions about the operation of these procedures should be directed to local Personnel Services team leaders in the first instance: contact details are available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/contacts/.