

Code of Practice on Staff Recruitment and Selection

The University welcomes diversity amongst its staff and seeks to ensure that all candidates for employment are treated fairly, and that selection is based solely on the individual merits of candidates and on selection criteria relevant to the post. In pursuance of this aim and of its statutory duties, the University of Oxford, as an employer committed to the principle of equality of opportunity, will adhere to the following procedure in the conduct of the recruitment and selection process for all advertised posts.

Selection criteria

Selection criteria will be clearly defined and reflected in the further particulars sent to candidates, which will also include details of the University's commitment to equality of opportunity. Job qualifications or requirements which would have the effect of inhibiting applications from individuals possessing one or more protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation) will not be demanded or imposed except where they are justifiable in terms of the job to be done, and this will be made clear in the advertisement and/or further particulars.

(For the purposes of this code, 'racial group' means a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origins.)

Advertising

Job advertisements will normally be widely publicised so as to encourage applications from a broad range of suitable candidates from all backgrounds. The University website includes guidance on how to apply for jobs at the University.

All job advertisements placed on behalf of the University will state the University's commitment to equality of opportunity by including a footnote or final note indicating this. Further particulars for posts will quote the following summary of the University's Equality Policy and will make reference to the University's family leave provisions and the availability of university childcare. They should also state that further particulars will be made available in large print, audio, or other formats on request by a disabled applicant.

Summary of the University's Equal Opportunities Policy

The policy and practice of the University of Oxford require that all staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment. Entry into employment with the University and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure. In all cases, ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration. Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than another because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Selection of candidates

The ability of each candidate to perform the job description will be compared objectively against the selection criteria for that job, and all applications for a post will be processed in the same way. Information sought from candidates and passed to those responsible for appointments will relate only to the qualifications for or requirements of the job. The University recognises its statutory obligation to make such adjustments to the workplace and to working arrangements as are reasonable to accommodate suitably qualified disabled applicants.

Wherever suitably qualified persons are available, there will be at least one member of each gender on the selection committee. All members of the selection committee will be aware of this code and training and advice will be available in furtherance of its principles.

Interview questions will relate to the selection criteria. No questions will be based on assumptions for example about roles in the home and the family. In particular, questions about private personal relationships, children, or domestic obligations will not be asked at interview, although candidates may request information on relevant staff benefits and policies. Where it is necessary to obtain information on personal circumstances (for example, in relation to a selection criterion such as flexibility to work irregular hours), questions about this will be asked equally of all candidates and, like other questions, will relate only to the job requirements.

In the case of disabled applicants who identify themselves at the application stage, appropriate interview arrangements (such as accessible interview rooms or the assistance of a sign language interpreter) will be offered to enable such candidates to compete on an equal basis.

Record-keeping

Details of candidates and of selection decisions (including the rationale for selection or rejection) will be kept for six months after an appointment has been made. The University will supply reasonable feedback to unsuccessful candidates on request during that period.

The University will request details of the gender, ethnicity, and any disability of its staff and of all candidates and of those shortlisted and appointed. Recruitment monitoring is done anonymously in the central Equality and Diversity Unit and details of candidates are not provided to any member of the selection panel. The gender composition of selection panels will also be monitored.

Records may be used to determine whether members of one gender or persons of a certain racial group or those with a disability do not apply for employment, or apply in smaller numbers than might be expected, or are shortlisted or appointed in a lower proportion than their application rate, or are concentrated for example in certain jobs, faculties, or sub-faculties. Where such under-representation is identified, positive action initiatives will be developed in accordance with relevant national legislation.

Review of recruitment practice

Recruitment procedures and practices will be kept under review so as to ensure that this code is operating effectively