

PERSONNEL SERVICES

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD
Acting Director of Personnel and Related Services



To heads of division, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (ASUC), Chairman of the Continuing Education Board, Registrar, Director of Finance

Ref. EMS/33

16 June 2011

cc. heads of department, chairmen of faculty boards, divisional secretaries, departmental administrators, faculty board secretaries, Ms Braithwaite, Dr Gambles, Mr Harris, Ms Rampton, Mr Shaw, Ms Wintersgill, Dr Walker

Recruitment Protocol

On the recommendation of the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PRAC), Council has agreed that the recruitment protocol should remain in force for a further year, i.e. until May 2012, and that the position be reviewed again in Hilary Term 2012 to decide whether to continue the protocol and whether any further measures are needed.

The payroll forms have been updated to assist in monitoring compliance with the provisions of the protocol.

1. Action required of departments and divisions

- (a) Departments and divisions are asked ensure that the provisions of the protocol are followed. The protocol may be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ps/managers/circular/2010/ps1009-A1.pdf>. Note that the provisions for externally-funded research posts (other than RSIVs) now extend to all externally-funded posts.
- (b) In considering proposals for new posts or the refilling of vacancies, divisions will be required to ensure that nothing is approved that runs counter to what was envisaged in any of the OMIS applications which were approved.
- (c) Divisions and other approving bodies should also now scrutinise all cases in which their departments propose to move existing staff from external to internal funding.
- (d) Divisions and other approving bodies are reminded that under the terms of the existing protocol, the presumption is that posts should be advertised internally-only in the first instance, and advertised externally only if internal advertisement has failed to produce any appointable candidate. Initial internal advertisement is the normal expectation in relation to support staff and administrative staff; it might also be appropriate for some research staff. This is glossed further under 'Background', below.
- (e) Departments and divisions are reminded that all staff registration forms must (where required under the protocol) quote the protocol **approval number**. In brief, an approval number is required for all posts other than professorships, lectureships (ULs, CUFs, and faculty lectureships) and any externally-funded posts. The approval number should take the form:



Code for the approving body, e.g. MPLS, HUM

Unique serial number, i.e. 001, 002, etc.

Capital "I" to indicate that the post is to be advertised internally only, or "E" to indicate that both internal and external advertisement have been approved.

Please note that failure to provide the approval number may result in delay in processing the staff registration form.

The staff registration form is being revised in order to emphasise this requirement, and to aid the monitoring of compliance.

2. Background

The recruitment protocol was introduced in May 2009, with the aim of controlling the number of internally-funded staff. PRAC and the Personnel Committee have received regular reports on the operation of the protocol, and have noted that this aim has broadly been achieved. It has been agreed that controls on internally-funded staff numbers are necessary in current financial circumstances, in addition to budgetary controls, and the protocol also provides an opportunity to ensure that consideration is given to the scope for reorganising activities and for advertising internally.

On the recommendation of PRAC, Council has now agreed that the recruitment protocol should remain in force for a further year, i.e. until May 2012, and the position reviewed again in Hilary Term 2012 to decide whether to continue the protocol and whether any further measures are needed.

As notified to divisions last term, it has also been agreed by PRAC that divisions should scrutinise all cases in which the department proposes to move existing staff from externally to internal funding; and that the presumption under the protocol is that posts will be advertised internally-only in the first instance, and advertised externally only if internal advertisement has failed to produce any appointable candidate. Initial internal advertisement is the normal expectation in relation to support staff and administrative staff; it might also be appropriate for some research staff.

It is recognised that the current culture is not one in which most departments necessarily expect to recruit from within the University, or in which line-managers particularly encourage good staff to consider moving to a new department; or in which existing staff necessarily regard a vacancy in another department as being a more natural career move than moving to another employer.

None the less, the more often internal appointments are made, the more scope there is to make economies through restructuring within the departments from which the internal appointees come; this aspect of the protocol also has significant potential to make better use of the expertise of existing staff across the University and to enhance opportunities for career and personal development through internal promotion.

In reiterating the protocol's presumption about internal advertisement, the Joint Group (which considers requests for approval to fill new internally-funded posts through external advertisement) would not expect to approve new posts being advertised both internally and externally in the first instance simply on the argument that this would enable the widest field to be considered. Before giving such approval, the group would expect to see evidence of urgency to fill, or evidence that no appointable candidates have emerged from internal-only



advertisement of similar posts elsewhere in the division, or both. The group also expects divisions to require such evidence when approving external advertisement of existing vacancies.

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