

Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

Appendix A - Appointment Committee Constitutions

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Policy Statement

Recruitment and selection decisions significantly affect the University's ability to meet its business planning needs and strategic objectives. It is important to invest time and energy into recruiting high calibre staff. The process is two-way; not only are appointment committee members assessing the best person for the position but applicants are also deciding whether the University is an organisation they wish to work in. The costs of a poor selection decision are substantial and often extend over many years.

The University is committed to a systematic approach to recruitment and selection in order to attract, select and appoint the best staff through a fair and merit based process. Senior managers are accountable for ensuring compliance with the University's recruitment and selection policy and processes. It is essential that all staff involved in these processes be given the opportunity to become fully familiar with them. This will maximize their effectiveness and ensure that the University recruits quality staff on a consistent basis. It will also ensure that recruitment and selection practices reflect our Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and the framework of relevant employment legislation.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to continuing appointments and normally to fixed-term appointments in excess of one year, but may be appropriate in other circumstances.

Purpose

- To ensure a consistent, fair and merit based approach in accordance with Equal Opportunity Policy and relevant employment legislation
- To meet or exceed business planning needs and strategic objectives
- To maximise the effectiveness of the University's recruitment and selection practices.

References

The following University of Waikato Policies, Procedures and Guidelines:

Good Practice Guidelines - Recruitment and Selection

Equal Opportunity Policy

Appointment of Near Relatives or Close Friends of Staff Members

Appointment Committee Constitutions (Appendix A)

Appointment Expenses

Accident Insurance Act 1998

Employment Relations Act 2000

Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

Human Rights Act 1993

Privacy Act 1993

Race Relations Act 1977

State Services Act 1988

And any other relevant Acts or Amendments to Acts

PROCESS OVERVIEW

- **Preparing to Recruit**
 - Assess Strategic Requirements
 - Job Analysis - Position Description - Person Specification
 - Approval

- **Recruitment and Selection**
 - Advertise/Search Process
 - Appointment Committee Membership
 - Exchange Information
 - Privacy
 - Shortlist
 - Selection Planning Meeting
 - Reference Checks
 - Whanau or Other Support
 - The Interview and Selection Decision
 - Appointment
 - Unsuccessful Applicants

PROCEDURES

Preparing to Recruit

1. **Assess Strategic Requirements**

Recruitment and selection is primarily a strategic exercise in the context of an overall workforce plan. It provides an opportunity to attract an outstanding appointee who will contribute effectively towards meeting future key objectives. Recruitment and selection decisions are of long-term strategic importance. Needs must be assessed carefully. Is it appropriate to fill the position in a different way, at a higher or lower level, in a full-time or part-time capacity? Lateral thinking about the different ways to achieve objectives is important, as budgets must accommodate any proposals.

2. **Job Analysis/Position Description/Person Specification**

If it is a new position, the Human Resource Advisor will assist the line manager to carry out job analysis processes in consultation with others as appropriate. The component tasks, responsibilities and outcomes of the position will be identified as well as the qualifications, knowledge, skills and personal abilities required for good performance (the selection criteria). This information will be used to develop a position description and person specification. Some generic documents are available to facilitate this process. Position descriptions for existing positions should also be reviewed and updated to reflect current and anticipated needs, including new technology.

Selection criteria are set out in the person specification and are generally described as 'essential' or 'preferred'. The 'essential' requirements should be kept to a minimum to avoid excluding candidates unnecessarily. All identified competencies must be relevant to the performance of the job and must comply with the Equal Opportunity Policy and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Position descriptions and person specifications are important tools in the recruitment and selection process enabling effective matching of potential candidates to the specific requirements of the position. They are helpful in ensuring that selection decisions are valid. They should not be varied significantly once advertising has commenced.

3. Approval

Formal approval to create a new position or to fill a vacancy must be obtained from the senior manager – Dean/Group Director or other authorised line manager. A completed Recruitment/Appointment Request form must be used to confirm this in writing to the HRM Division with the relevant position description and person specification attached.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

4. Advertise/Search Process

The University's Recruitment Advertising Policy guides advertising processes. While most vacancies are currently advertised in the press, the University may use commercial employment agencies for specialist or hard to fill positions. Other search techniques may also be employed, as appropriate to the position: these include using selective web sites; Māori, industry or professional networks; sending emails to other universities; or liaising with Work and Income New Zealand. It is important to establish realistic timeframes for the recruitment process. Consider lead in times for specialist journals, and the current workloads and availability of proposed members of the appointment committee.

5. Appointment Committee Membership

Appointment committee members should be identified early in the process and listed on the Recruitment/Appointment Request form. Current constitutions (Appendix A) place decision-making with those staff who will work most closely with the appointee. Wherever possible, committee membership should be restricted to those who need to be there.

Staff who are selected to act as appointment committee members must declare any conflict of interest before or during the process and, if appropriate, withdraw from the committee. This is in line with the University's Policy on the Appointment of Near Relatives and Close Friends of Staff Members.

6. Exchange Information

The HRM Division will send the position description, person specification and other relevant information about the Department/Division/School/Faculty and the University (as appropriate to the vacancy) to all enquirers. Chairpersons or other managers may provide additional information as appropriate to the vacancy.

7. Privacy

To meet the requirements of the Privacy Act the University must have clear practices about who will see the application material and know the identity of applicants. People applying for positions are entitled to know what these practices are, and relevant information is sent to candidates. The practices vary depending on the type of vacancy and must be clearly understood by the appointment committee.

In general the identity of applicants (both internal and external) and the contents of applications are strictly confidential and are available only to those staff who formally constitute the appointment committee.

In the case of some academic appointments, application details may also be made available to members of the relevant Department. It is also common for academic vacancies and for some senior management positions to have elements of openness within the selection procedures, perhaps through the presentation of seminars. In such cases the CVs of shortlisted candidates may become available for perusal by other staff with a proper interest in the appointment e.g. those in the Department or Division or those attending the seminar. Referees' reports always remain strictly confidential to the appointment committee.

8. Shortlist

Shortlisting should take place as soon as possible after applications close. All committee members normally have the opportunity to view the applications received and to participate in the shortlisting process. However it may be agreed, for example where there is a large appointment committee or due to time constraints, to use a sub-committee for shortlisting purposes.

Applications should be assessed against the selection criteria. Shortlisted candidates should be restricted to those whose applications clearly meet essential criteria; where large numbers of candidates' applications meet the essential criteria a further shortlisting process should be undertaken based on the preferred criteria. It is recommended that committee members carry out the shortlisting exercise independently and then compare ratings as a consistency check - where ratings are substantially different, the criteria relative to each application should be thoroughly discussed in order to reach a final consensus on shortlisted candidates.

To ensure uniformity a consistent means of scoring each applicant's material may be developed. Undue credit should not be given for qualifications not needed for the position nor should applicants with higher qualifications be arbitrarily excluded. Care should be taken to assess applications in terms of the requirements of the position and to avoid stereotyped assumptions.

9. Selection Planning Meeting

The Committee chairperson will meet with members of the appointment committee, as appropriate, to plan the recruitment and selection process. This may be undertaken as part of a shortlisting meeting above. The relevant Human Resource Advisor is available to provide advice and assistance with this preparation process, if not already a member of the committee.

The group needs to agree on how the key requirements contained in the person specification will be assessed and evaluated. More valid selection decisions will result if specific interview questions are prepared in advance to assess the critical competencies required to perform the position.¹ Questions need to be planned carefully in order to elicit relevant information.

The validity of selection processes is improved by incorporating additional selection techniques such as work sample tasks to test competencies not easily assessed in an interview. Where presentations are involved, the committee will normally receive written feedback from staff and/or students.

Expanded procedures provide the appointment committee with additional relevant information on which to base the selection decision. They also provide a good opportunity for candidates to form a realistic impression of the position, colleagues, students and the University before accepting an employment contract.

Telephone interviews will not normally be used as the only basis for a selection decision as they do not provide candidates with an opportunity to learn about the University nor for the University to use wider assessment processes outlined above. They can therefore lead to costly mistakes.

In summary, the following areas will be discussed in preparation for the selection process, as applicable to the position:

- Specific interview questions focused on the selection criteria
- Identify other selection techniques or presentations to supplement the interview e.g. a keyboard test; a writing task; submission of research publications; a teaching presentation.
- The selection timetable
- Reference checking processes
- Occupational health and safety issues
- Whanau support or any special needs required by candidates
- Arrangements for applicants coming from distant locations

HRM Division staff will arrange travel and accommodation for shortlisted applicants in consultation with the line manager. Where selection processes are extensive, an itinerary for the visit will be prepared in advance ensuring appropriate support for candidates attending the University. This may include both formal and informal processes.

¹ Taylor, Paul, *Personnel Selection What the Researchers Tell Us, Human Resource Management*, February 1998, p.7-15.

10. Reference Checks

The Human Resource Advisor coordinates the reference checking process. References are sought only for those candidates who are shortlisted or likely to be shortlisted. Checking may be done orally or in writing from those people nominated by the candidate. The Privacy Act 1993 prohibits the collection of evaluative comments about job applicants without their permission. Members of appointment committees must not make enquiries - formal or informal - about applicants in any other circumstances.

Referees' reports are sought, provided and received on the understanding that they will remain confidential to those concerned with considering applications and that they will not be used for any other purpose. The University will not make an appointment offer until a satisfactory reference is received, usually from the candidate's most recent line manager.

Written references are ordinarily sought for academic candidates prior to final shortlisting to provide additional information to the committee. For most other positions reference checking is undertaken orally after interviewing. This reduces the overall timeframes for recruitment processes and provides an opportunity to check or clarify any points that may have arisen during the interview. It also enables the appointment committee to confirm that the applicant has provided suitable contact referees, given the experiences conveyed during the interview. Written reference checks may, in some instances, be followed up orally after interview as a final check.

A member of an appointment committee will not normally also act as a referee for an applicant. In rare circumstances where this is impracticable, the appointment committee chairperson must ensure the two roles are kept entirely separate.

11. Whanau Support

Candidates may opt to bring family members or friends to the interview. This option is made available in advance on the application form so the committee will know in advance and can make appropriate arrangements. A suggested interview structure is as follows:

- The candidate and whanau members will be welcomed appropriately (perhaps with a mihi and/or karakia) and will have the opportunity to respond
- whanau members or support people will be invited to speak about the applicant, either at the beginning or the end of the interview, outlining the person's qualities and suitability for the position
- the committee will interview the applicant, finishing with an opportunity for the applicant to ask questions of the committee
- whanau members or support people may also be invited to ask questions of the committee
- the chairperson will indicate when the interview is complete and the whanau members or support people will be thanked for attending and will have the opportunity to respond.

Applicants and whanau members or support people may speak in either English or Māori.

12. The Interview and Selection Decision

Members of appointment committees will observe high standards of fairness throughout the process. To help eliminate bias, candidates must be treated in a consistent manner. Interview questions and other selection techniques such as seminar presentations should be planned in advance to avoid key factors being overlooked. The chairperson of the appointment committee is responsible for ensuring that interviews take a structured approach using questions focussed on the competencies required for the position.

It is recommended that a five-point rating scale be used to compare candidate competency relative to the position requirements as follows:

- 1 - far below minimum requirements
- 2 - marginally below minimum requirements
- 3 - just meets minimum requirements
- 4 - marginally above minimum requirements
- 5 - far above minimum requirements

To improve validity, the merits of each candidate should be evaluated individually by appointment committee members immediately after each interview and before discussing candidates collectively. This minimizes the potential for one interviewer to influence the views of others. A consensus rating can then be reached for each candidate.

When making a final decision, the appointment committee should take into account any additional information gathered from the supplementary selection techniques that may have been used. Work samples have a high validity in the selection process. It is also important to consider all of the selection criteria including personal qualities and overall team fit. Decisions must be based on facts rather than impressions. Remember also that the top-performing candidate must meet the minimum requirements for the position. Human Resource Advisors can facilitate final decision-making processes on request if not already a full member of the committee.

If more than one candidate is appointable, the committee should rank them in order of merit. If none of the applicants meets the essential selection criteria then no appointment should be made and the situation reviewed.

If two applicants are judged to be of equal merit, consider whether either of the candidates is a member of one of the University's Equal Opportunity target groups.

13. Appointment

When the Appointment Committee has agreed on a recommendation, the Appointment Committee Chairperson will complete Section B of the Staff Appointment Record confirming the Committee's business and that University policy and procedures have been followed. The University may use this document in the event of any subsequent dispute or litigation.

At the end of the appointment committee meeting, the Appointment Committee Chairperson may be authorised to convey an outline offer informally. However, only the Director, Human Resource Management (or nominee) has the authority to commit the University on employment matters, and all commitments will be made in writing.

Where candidates do not have the right to work in New Zealand, all offers of employment will be subject to immigration approval.

The Human Resource Advisor will consult with the senior manager and line manager (and the Director HRM or Pro Vice-Chancellor Staff and Students if appropriate) on the level of appointment and other appointment details prior to making the formal offer of employment in writing. Members of the appointment committee will be informed, either by the Committee Chairperson or the Human Resource Advisor, once an offer of appointment has been accepted.

14. Unsuccessful Applicants

The HRM Division will advise non-shortlisted candidates that their application has been unsuccessful once a shortlisting decision has been made.

The HRM Division advises candidates who are interviewed but unsuccessful as soon as an appointment has been accepted. Internal candidates (and some local candidates) are normally advised verbally; other candidates receive notification in writing.

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Feedback from participants in the recruitment and selection process
- Feedback from clients as part of a regular review process
- Performance of appointees
- Length of service/resignations of appointees.

APPOINTMENT COMMITTEES

RATIONALE

Appointment Committees are advisory committees to the Vice-Chancellor; they consider applications for appointment to University vacancies, shortlist applicants, conduct interviews, consider referees' reports and recommend appointments to the Vice-Chancellor.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To consider applications from candidates for appointment to University vacancies (other than casual appointments), and in particular:
 - to determine the most suitable candidates for interview, or consider the recommendations of a shortlisting sub-committee, having regard to the position requirements in terms of qualifications, training, relevant experience, skills, knowledge, personal qualities, and equal employment opportunity policy;
 - to interview shortlisted candidates, consider referees' reports, and (where appropriate) receive submissions;
 - to select the most suitable candidate in terms of the criteria, and make an appointment recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor or his or her delegate.
2. To observe the confidentiality of applicants' identity, the content of applications, referees' reports, and Appointment Committee proceedings.

NOTES:

1. Appointment committees are concerned with the **selection** of appointees. Recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor regarding salary levels are the responsibility of the senior manager and chairperson/other manager in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Staff and Students) or Director, Human Resource Management (or nominee).
2. **Only the Human Resource Management Division may commit the University to an appointment.**

CONSTITUTIONS

The constitutions of appointment committees are set out in the attached Appendix.

APPROVED/REVISED

The Vice-Chancellor – June 1999

SERVICED BY

Human Resource Management

APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE CONSTITUTIONS

1. All staff should be selected by the committees set out below, irrespective of the source of funding.
2. A minimum of two interviewers is an overriding requirement for any University appointment except where specific delegations have been made to approve short term appointments (up to one year in length) without advertising and without the need for interviews or appointment committees. Where possible, appointment committees should include at least one woman. At least one Māori member should be included whenever a position has a Māori focus or an interviewee has indicated they are bringing whanau support, and at other times if possible.
3. Memberships cannot generally be delegated or added to, nor is attendance a matter of personal discretion. The Vice-Chancellor alone has authority to nominate extra members to Appointment Committees for special purposes.
4. No staff member who is leaving their position may be involved in the selection of a successor.
5. Appointment committees should be kept as small and relevant as possible.

CONSTITUTIONS

The following arrangements cover appointments that are for periods of more than one year.

Academic Staff other than Lecturer to Professor

1. Dean or nominee (chairperson).
2. Chairperson of Department or equivalent (or nominee).
3. One other member of the department appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Chairperson.
4. (optional) One other member appointed by the Dean.

Academic Staff at Lecturer Level and Above (Except Professors)

1. Dean or nominee (chairperson).
2. The Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Staff and Students) or nominee.
3. Chairperson of Department or equivalent (or nominee).
4. One other member of the department appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Chairperson.
5. (Optional) One other member appointed by the Dean.

Professors

1. The Vice-Chancellor (chairperson).
2. Dean.
3. Dean (or nominee) of any Faculty or School to which the Chair will be important. (Normally a professor, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Dean).
4. Chairperson of the department (or another member appointed by the Vice-Chancellor if the Chairperson is an applicant).
5. A member of the department appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Dean in consultation with the chairperson (unless the latter is an applicant).
6. One outside expert appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from names suggested by the Dean in consultation with the Chairperson (unless the latter is an applicant).
7. (Optional) One other member appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to meet the needs of the particular appointment.

Notes

1. When the University advertises for a Professor and it is contemplated that the appointee will also become Chairperson of Department, then the two appointment processes will be merged and will be carried out by the Appointment Committee for Professors.
2. On a case-by-case basis the Vice-Chancellor as Chairperson may appoint a committee member to consult departmental staff or undertake other arrangements before shortlisting. (All staff will have the opportunity to see CVs of shortlisted candidates before interviews.)

DEANSHIPS

Constitution

1. Vice-Chancellor
2. Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor on Equal Opportunity matters
3. Such other membership as may be decided by the Vice-Chancellor for particular circumstances, commonly:
A professor with relevant experience from another University
A Dean
Three members of the School, including at least one professor and one chairperson
A Director
(Optional) Up to two other members

Notes

1. The Appointment Committee is convened to give advice to the Vice-Chancellor when a deanship is advertised externally. On occasions an Appointment Committee will also be needed where internal University processes are involved; however, the Vice-Chancellor may decide to act without a Committee in renewing an appointment.

2. Generic role descriptions for deans are available from the Human Resource Management Division.
3. When considering the renewal of a Dean's appointment, the Vice-Chancellor will normally appoint a delegate to consult staff in the School and report back on their views.

DIRECTORS OF DIVISIONS

1. The Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
2. A Director appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.
3. A Dean appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.
4. The Director of the Human Resource Management Division.
5. A member of staff from the relevant Division or Library appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Director of Human Resource Management.
6. One outside expert appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.
7. (Optional) Up to two other members appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

GENERAL STAFF MANAGERIAL OR OTHER KEY POSITIONS WITH HIGH LEVELS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. The relevant senior manager or nominee.
2. The direct manager (if not included above).
3. The Director Human Resource Management Division or nominee.
4. A member of staff from the relevant area nominated by the Director of HRM (on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor) in consultation with the Dean/Director/Librarian.
5. (Optional) One other member nominated by the Director of HRM (on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor) in consultation with the Dean/Director/Librarian.

ALL OTHER GENERAL STAFF POSITIONS

1. (Optional) The relevant senior manager or nominee.
2. The direct manager.
3. The direct supervisor (if not included above).
4. (Optional) Director, HRM or nominee.

Approved/Revised

The Vice-Chancellor July 1999