

Date: 07/03/2024
Your Ref:
Our Ref: 8379

Enquiries to : Richard Mutch
Extension: 35687
Direct Line: 0131 465 5687
foi@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
richard.mutch@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – RECRUITMENT PROCESS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to the recruitment process within NHS Lothian.

Question:

- *As such I'm interested in the standard recruitment process for non clinical staff at NHS Lothian. I'd like the Board SOP on recruitment, description of standard shortlisting process and to know what measures you take to ensure fair recruitment. I'd also like to know the makeup of your recruitment panels for these roles and how often HR has been absent on these panels.*

Answer:

NHS Lothian does not have a single Standard Operating Procedure that can be shared. All information relating to recruitment and selection within NHS Lothian is held on HR online and readily available to all managers and staff. This provides guidance and advice for the complete recruitment process starting from advertising the vacancy through to the appointment. In terms of ensuring fairness in our recruitment practices, all staff involved in the recruitment process are required to be up to date with their Equality and Diversity Learnpro Module and also as part of their Personal Development Plan complete the online training module - Recruiting with Fairness and Equality. We also have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and this includes a section on recruiting fairly. You specifically ask about the shortlisting process and also the make-up of the interview panels and therefore attached is the information we currently provide to our managers and staff on these two areas. I can also advise that HR do not routinely sit on interview panels in NHS Lothian.

Question:

- *I'd also like to know in the last 5 years out of all non clinical staff recruited, how many have a relative or friend already in NHS Lothian.*

Answer:

We are unable to provide this information as this is not information that is requested from candidates who are recruited. As per Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 formally I must advise that we do not hold this information.

Question:

- *If you also have numbers on number of applicants per job advert at different bandings that would be ideal.*

Answer:

Given the number of vacancies that are recruited on a monthly and annual basis in NHS Lothian, please be more specific in the information that you are requesting - e.g which job adverts, what band, what roles. Please narrow down your request if possible.

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs
Cc: Chief Executive
Enc below.

Interview Panel

It is important to identify your interviewers early on as advance notice will make it easier to agree meeting and interview dates.

For general recruitment purposes a minimum of 2 people should be on the interview panel. Though for some senior and professional posts (e.g. clinical scientists, senior pharmacists) an external assessor may be required to join the interview panel. Under normal circumstances, all of the panel members should have attended the Recruit with Fairness and Equality training course, before participating. However, if this is not the case, then the minimum is that the chair of the panel will have attended the course.

Some general points to consider:

- All panel members should offer specialist knowledge relevant to the role.
- The interview panel should have continuity of membership to ensure consistency within the selection process e.g. make sure that all members will be available for both shortlisting and interviewing.
- Encourage individuals to familiarise themselves with the equality and diversity issues relevant to the recruitment process.
- Where possible, make your panel diverse with respect to age, gender, disability and race.

Personal Relationships during the recruitment and selection process

When participating in the NHS Lothian recruitment process, managers will be expected to work within the requirements of the Recruitment Policy and Procedure as well as within the Standards of Business Conduct and Guidance. As such, members of staff should not be involved in the selection or appointment of any candidates with whom they have a personal relationship. This means that in certain circumstances alternative arrangements may require to be made.

Any such known interest should be declared at the earliest possible opportunity by staff involved in the recruitment process.

A personal relationship is defined as any personal or business relationship out with the workplace which could generate circumstances of conflict of interest or inappropriate advantage over other staff if brought into the workplace. Examples are:

Personal Relationships

- Husband or wife or civil partner or cohabitee (someone living with you in a relationship similar to husband or wife or civil partner) **Note:** This does not include

anyone whom you were formally in a relationship with or who does not live with you anymore but it is worth declaring this to the chair of the panel to reduce the likelihood of a discrimination claim.

- A close personal friend **Note:** This relates to friendships that are deeper than the friendly relationships which naturally evolve between colleagues. If a candidate is an existing work colleague there is no need to declare this. A work relationship becomes a close personal one when the relationship is socialising on private/non-work personal basis out with work.
- Grandparent or Parent
- Children or step-children of yourself or your husband or wife or civil partner or cohabitee.
- Uncle or Aunt or Cousin
- Any other step-relative or in-law

Other Relationships

- A person with whom you or someone whom you have a personal relationship with has a business relationship with, e.g. a partner in a firm, a director of a company that you are a shareholder or director of, a fellow Board member of another organisation
- A person who provides you or someone whom you have a personal relationship with remuneration (either as an employee or a contractor)
- A person who is a trustee of a trust of which you or someone whom you have a personal relationship with is a beneficiary of
- Any other relationship which you think is appropriate to declare so as to avoid a conflict of interest with regard to the appointment of any of the candidates.

Shortlisting

All shortlisting should be completed at least 10 days prior to the interview date to ensure that candidates have notice of their interview.

It is important that panel members maintain an objective, consistent and professional focus as you need to be able to provide a justifiable reason for the selection choices.

In advance of shortlisting you should:

- Ensure the panel has a clear understanding of the post and the key criteria being measured.
- Avoid assumption or presumption

- Agree the shortlisting criteria

Using the person specification, agree shortlisting criteria in advance with the panel. Do not introduce new criteria beyond those advertised.

If the post has changed, pause the selection process and re-evaluate whether or not you need to halt proceedings and re-advertise a different job to meet your new needs.

- **Shortlist using the person specification**

1. Measure each applicant against the person specification and not against each other.
2. All candidates must meet all the essential criteria to be considered for shortlisting. Use the desirable criteria when there are too many applicants demonstrating they meet the essential criteria. Decide before you begin to shortlist which desirable criteria is the most important. Use this first.
3. If you still need to reduce the number of applications to a manageable number, move on to the next most important desirable criteria and so on.
4. When recording your decision for not shortlisting an applicant use the criteria from the person specification (e.g. Did not meet the essential criteria or did not demonstrate the knowledge required for the post).
5. Use the essential criteria in your person specification to set your interview questions.

Using JobTrain

The panel should use JobTrain to shortlist and record your decision / reasons for or not shortlisting a candidate.

Shortlisting can begin once the post has been advertised. However, you can only complete the shortlisting online once the post has closed.

Once the shortlisting has been completed and the calendar completed you should email recruitment.

Candidates with disabilities

NHS Lothian is committed to equal opportunities. We work under the Job Interview Guarantee Scheme (JIG) and guarantee an interview for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of the job description (candidates who do not meet all of the essential criteria do not need to be interviewed).

Recruiting departments should ensure that all shortlisted applicants, whether or not they have disclosed a disability or health concern, have the opportunity to request any special adjustments or equipment that they would need to attend interview/selection tests.

If an applicant requests special adjustments or equipment to enable them to attend interview, consider this a priority action and contact the recruitment team for further advice on how to facilitate this.