

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

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Document control

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1.0	July 2018	Kelly Sooben	Update to Recruitment and Selection Procedure re KCSIE 2018
1.1	February 2020	Karen Parry	Procedure review and update
1.2	May 2022	Karen Parry	Changes to interview panel requirements
1.3	October 2022	Karen Parry	Overall update and changes relating to online searches of shortlisted candidates in response to the KCSiE guidance 2022

Owner	SMT Lead	Author	Frequency of review	Next review date	Approval Committee	Next approval Committee	Date of Next EIA
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1. Purpose and Scope

The College seeks to employ the best individuals to fill our vacancies and to provide the essential skills and attributes to meet the current and future needs of our business.

This approach naturally embraces diversity, to provide expertise, challenge and imagination, and all individuals should be recruited solely based on their ability and in accordance with our Single Equality Scheme and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

We will ensure that all information collected during the recruitment process will be processed in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy and Employee Privacy Notice. Data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively. All applicant and successful candidates' data will be treated as confidential and will be stored and controlled in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

South Devon College has a statutory and moral duty to ensure that the College functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults receiving education and training at the College. This procedure has been written incorporating legislation and best practice from "Keeping Children safe in education" and "Working together to safeguard children".

This policy applies to all recruitment activity, including apprenticeships, internal promotions and secondments, and including roles that are filled on a fixed-term contract basis.

1.1 External Applicants

Where applications are sought from an external source these will be either through press advertisement, specialist publications or recruitment websites. When a position is advertised externally College employees are still eligible to apply.

1.2 Internal Applicants

The College encourages internal applications to ensure opportunity for employee progression and development. All vacancies will be advertised internally to ensure that existing employees are given the opportunity to apply, and thus develop their skills and careers. This approach also gives us the following additional benefits: staff are made generally aware of career opportunities available to them; an internal candidate will already be familiar with our business, its policies, procedures, internal structure and systems; an internal candidate may be able to take up the post earlier than an external one and we save on the cost and time involved in external recruitment.

However, vacancies will not be advertised internally where there is a reorganisation within a department and we have employees "at risk" of redundancy for whom we will seek posts of similar employment in the new structure. In these instances, the needs of the employee to be redeployed will take priority. Please refer to the Redeployment Procedure for more information.

In some instances where the required skills, qualifications and experience exist within a team - a vacancy may be 'ring-fenced' for employees within that section to apply.

If an employee is applying for an internal vacancy they should inform their line manager of their intentions.

1.3 Equal Opportunities

The College is committed to applying equal its Single Equality Scheme at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to gender, transgender status, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion/belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave, or union membership.

Reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate the particular needs of any candidate who has notified us of a disability. This may include changing the timing or location of any interview to enable the candidate to attend, providing information in different formats or larger type, etc.

2. Recruitment Authorisation

2.1 Position Authorisation

Every vacancy will be subject to an online recruitment authorisation form being approved via iTrent Recruiting Manager.

Every recruitment authorisation form submitted should justify the details and requirement for the position, including costs associated with the position. A job description must be attached to the authorisation form. Recruiting managers should contact the People Team to obtain the current job description which they can then review and update. To ensure objectivity, the duties and the skills required of the post will be reviewed and any existing documentation updated so that candidates are assessed against the same framework. Person specifications will be carefully considered to minimise the risk of direct or indirect discrimination and to ensure they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post, especially with regards to qualifications and previous experience.

Before any authorisation is given it will be important to identify:

- Whether, if this is not a new position but a replacement position, the workload can be absorbed into the current structure or carried out in a different way
- Whether there are any internal candidates who could transfer or develop the necessary skills
- Whether the College's needs have changed and whether the role will still meet business needs
- Staff utilisation levels of staff in the same area or cross college staff of similar skills.
- Whether the role could be suitable for an apprentice subject to discussion and agreement with Principalship and the Apprenticeship team.

All on-costs that will apply to this position, such as pension, training, computer equipment, specific software and licences, etc. must be considered.

If recruiting an apprentice, the additional Apprenticeship Recruitment Authorisation form (HR25) must be completed. This can be found on the People Hub under 'useful forms and information'.

All internal and external candidates will be required to complete an online application form to ensure better comparability of information. The College does not accept CVs, or hold them on file.

On occasions, internal employees may be asked to submit a letter of application outlining how their skills, qualifications and experience match those outlined in the job description and person specification (e.g. for remitted posts), rather than completing an application form.

Where a member of staff is employed on a fixed term basis, and hours subsequently become permanent for that position, their contract may be made permanent where they are the only individual with the skills/specialism to undertake the position. A Changes to Terms and Conditions Form will need completing for approval to change the contract from fixed term to permanent.

Where the role is more generic (e.g. Lecturer – English), the opportunity for the permanent hours may be advertised internally, and a competitive interview process will be followed, and the permanent hours offered to the successful candidate. A requisition via iTrent Recruiting Manager will need raising where the permanent hours will be advertised.

3. Advertising

The College's Careers webpage and individual job adverts outlines the College's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and makes it clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken.

To ensure that the best candidate is attracted and appointed the College may use any or all the following methods: advertising the vacancy on the College vacancies webpage, advertising via recruitment websites, including TES for all academic vacancies, LinkedIn and other social media and other external advertisement such as in an appropriate newspaper, industry related publication or journal and using networks including our friends and family referral scheme. All apprentice vacancies will need to be advertised on the government's 'Find an apprenticeship' web page. The People team will instruct the Apprenticeship Team to advertise all apprenticeship vacancies, and applications via Gov.uk will be considered during the shortlisting process.

Employees will be informed of all internal vacancies and external vacancies via the SDCentral.

The closing date, and interview date wherever possible, will be available on each advert. Ordinarily, adverts close at midnight on a Sunday evening.

The application form includes a safeguarding declaration, including a statement outlining that it is an offence to apply for a role which involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity.

4. Shortlisting

A shortlisting process will be undertaken for all positions. Once an advert has closed, applications are shared via the People Base to the shortlisting panel (usually the recruiting manager and one other who understands the requirements of the role) who will decide whom to interview purely based on the information provided in the application form measured against the job description and the essential and desirable criteria outlined in the person specification. 'Essential' means the applicants should have those attributes to carry out the role effectively. Only applicants that 'match' all the essential criteria should be shortlisted for interview. If there are a significant number of applicants the 'Desirable' criteria should be used to shortlist to a manageable number for interview purposes.

At least two people must shortlist for parity and fairness using the 'Candidate Shortlisting Sheet' The candidate shortlisting form should also provide details of the interview process. This sheet must be shared with the People team when the shortlisting process has been completed. This shortlisting form is available on the People Hub under 'useful forms and information'.

When only internal applicants apply for external vacancies, a vacancy will be readvertised as follows:

- for non CLT posts, if we have only one internal candidate, for an externally advertised role, then we would readvertise on one more occasion. If after two advertising rounds, we still only have one internal applicant, we would interview.
- for CLT posts, if we only have internal candidates apply, for an externally advertised role, then we would readvertise on one more occasion. If after two advertising rounds, we still only have internal applicants, we would interview.

4.1 Informing applicants on whether their application was shortlisted

Internal applicants will be advised in person by the recruiting manager with feedback as to why they have not been shortlisted and offered feedback at a mutually convenient time where appropriate.

Applicants invited for interview will be notified by email (or letter where an email address has not been provided). A more detailed schedule of interview activities will also be provided to shortlisted candidates. Shortlisted candidates will be asked about any requirements or special arrangements which may need to be accommodated at the selection process.

4.2 Online searches

The Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance 2022, recommends that schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. In recognition of this guidance, an online search on shortlisted candidates will be undertaken by the People Business Partner following shortlisting being undertaken. Details that online searches of public information will be carried out on shortlisted candidates will be stated on the College's Careers webpage.

The online search will apply to all shortlisted candidates, and will include an online search in Google using the candidates full name. The first 2 pages of a search will be checked, and the interview schedule will be updated by the People Business Partner to confirm the check has been undertaken. Where any incidents or issues are identified, a more in depth search may take place, and a proforma will be completed and sent to the interview panel to be further discussed at interview. Responses will be captured on the designated part of the interview question response sheet, alongside the safeguarding questions responses (which are unscored). These responses will be discussed with the People Business Partner, and, should it feel necessary, a successful candidate may be required to undertake a risk assessment to ensure suitability for the role.

4.3 Criminal Record Self Declaration

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. The details for this are provided on the interview invite correspondence, via a Microsoft Form that needs completing prior to the date of the interview.

The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance is available on the College's Carers page (Nacro and Unlock websites) about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed to help applicants determine whether a conviction or caution is protected, and whether they are required to disclose it should their application be shortlisted.

As the College is an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), South Devon College complies fully with the DBS code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. South Devon College also ensures that the People Team have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

4.4 Disability Confident Scheme

The Disability Confident Scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace. The College will ensure that candidates who meet the essential criteria as defined on the person specification form will be guaranteed the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at interview. The candidate shortlisting form requires the shortlisting panel to check whether any candidate has applied via the Disability Confident Scheme, and the People team can support the shortlisting panel with these applications.

5. Interview

Prior to the interview managers should fully complete the relevant interview question sheet (available on the People Hub under 'Useful forms and information') detailing the criteria which answers will be scored against to achieve a high score, and pass this to your People Business Partner administrator.

Interview questions must relate to information that will help us to assess the candidates' ability to do the job as per the job description and person specification. **Questions about marriage plans, family intentions, religious or political commitments, caring responsibilities, union membership, or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination should NOT be asked.**

All candidates shortlisted for interview will be provided by the People team with the specific interview arrangements together with location details, map/directions, where relevant, and informed where to report and who to ask for.

Interview panels must comprise of at least two members of staff which must include the recruiting manager, the Assistant Principal or SLT member. At least one of the interview panel members must have received up-to-date Keeping Children Safer in Education training (within the past 24 months), and be responsible for asking the safeguarding questions. They will also determine the candidate's suitability to work with children. This panel member will be responsible for feeding back to their People Partner where any safeguarding concern or past disciplinary action or substantiated allegation is raised during the interview process. Where at least one of the panel members are not Safer Recruitment in Education trained, a member of the People team MUST be present.

The College will ensure that the process will not be discriminatory and attempts will be made to accommodate the particular needs of any person with a disability.

Interviews via MS Teams may take place instead of a face to face interview. This can remove barriers such as travel arrangements for interviews. The recruiting manager will decide the best format for interviewing.

Prior to the interview managers should agree a 'benchmark score' (evidence meets criteria) which is the minimum score required to pass the selection process (to include

the interview and any selection tests). This may be the average score x the number of interview questions, together with the average score for the skills test / lesson observation x the number of criteria.

6. Selection methods

Managers who have responsibility for recruitment must ensure they undertake any recruitment in a clear, consistent and professional manner. Selection will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the job requirements, as outlined in the Job Description reflected in the questions asked and any skills test, presentation or lesson observation required.

For teaching posts, applicants will be asked to undertake an observed micro teach or lesson observation in front of a group of learners (or employees where learners are not available). The topic of the micro teach will be given to applicants when they are invited to attend an interview. A micro teach or lesson observation may not take place in exceptional circumstances during the interview process. In these cases a lesson observation will be undertaken during the probation period for the successful candidate.

Applicants for all posts may be asked to undertake a skills test and/or presentation if this is relevant to the post. The recruiting panel will be seeking evidence on how candidates demonstrate the competencies that are felt to be necessary for successful performance in the advertised role.

All question sheets and micro teach/test result sheets **MUST** be returned to the People team before an offer of employment is made. Once an offer of employment is made, an authorisation to recruit form will be completed by the recruiting manager and returned to the People office to action.

6. Post interview

After each interview a review will be taken of each candidate's performance both at the interview, as well as any additional selection tests undertaken (e.g. micro teach, skills test, presentation etc.).

Interviewers should aim to reach consensus on the decision as to which candidate(s) is / are successful. Firstly, the candidate must have demonstrated they are suitable to work with children and achieved the 'benchmark score' and then the highest scoring candidate offered the position. In exceptional cases where this is not possible, the senior member of the interview panel will have ultimate responsibility for making the final decision. In this instance the decision and rationale must be documented.

All unsuccessful external candidates at this stage will be informed by the recruiting manager via phone, or email where it has not been possible to contact a candidate by telephone.

Internal applicants will be advised via a phone call or in person with feedback by the

recruiting manager.

Where a candidate was not offered the position, but it was felt that they were able to perform the duties and scored well during the selection process, they may be retained on a reserve list, and should a similar role come up within a period of 6 months they may be contacted and invited to an interview.

Where an employee has undergone a recruitment process to fulfill a temporary position and that position subsequently becomes available then the College may, at its discretion take the decision to appoint that individual into the vacant position without the need for a re-interview.

7. Employment offers

Offers of employment may initially be made verbally but will always be confirmed in writing, and specify a timescale in which the successful candidate should confirm his/her acceptance or rejection of the offer.

All appointments will be made subject to completion of a satisfactory probationary period, usually six months (this can be extended to up to 12 months which, where applies, would be communicated in writing following a 6 month review).

For internal promotions, the employee will be offered the position verbally, with the conditions being outlined. This will then be confirmed in writing.

From 6th April 2020, an offer letter and Contract of Employment (written statement of employment particulars) will be provided before or on the day of employment.

8. Employment checks

The College will undertake the following mandatory pre-employment checks on prospective staff as part of its safer recruitment and selection process. These checks should be satisfied wherever possible prior to the new employee starting in post.

All successful candidates will be required to provide:

- proof of their entitlement to work in the UK prior to starting work at the College i.e. passport or birth certificate.
- original certificates of relevant qualifications and current memberships.
- It is the College's policy that the successful applicant on appointment, will be required to satisfy the College's occupational health check as to their medical suitability for the position by completing a medical questionnaire which will be reviewed confidentially by the Head of People or Deputy Head of People and sent to occupational health with the individual's consent. A medical examination may be necessary. If employees inform us of any special requirements they

have in relation to their working environment the College will endeavour to make these reasonable adjustments.

- All offers of employment are made subject to the receipt of references that are satisfactory to the College. Candidates will be asked to provide the details of two referees, one of whom must be their current or most recent employer, where applicable. Where an applicant has previously worked in education, they must include the previous employer as one of their references. References will always be taken up on external candidates, once an offer of employment has been made and accepted.

Where possible, references should be received prior to any new employee starting work and it may be that we delay the start date of a new employee until the references are received and checked. In the event of a reference being unsatisfactory to the College, we may withdraw the offer of employment but will usually discuss this with the candidate, and if appropriate the referee, before making this decision.

- The College will also require successful candidates to undertake an Enhanced DBS application (including children's barred list information), or have sight of an original enhanced DBS certificate which is less than 12 months old, or when registered on the Update Service. Where the successful candidate does not possess an Enhanced DBS certificate less than 12 months old, the College will send the successful candidate a link to complete a DBS application prior to commencing employment. The online form must be completed and original proof of ID brought in to the People office without delay. The DBS privacy policy statement is made available on the website.

The College will always obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual is already in possession of an enhanced DBS certificate which is less than 12 months old. The children's barred list check will also take place if a new employee will be starting work before the DBS certificate is available.

When a person is commencing employment in an academic role, the College will also check that the new employee is not subject to a Teacher Prohibition order.

Staff who are appointed to the College Leadership Team will also be checked to ensure they are not prohibited under section 128 provisions.

9. Related Documents and Policies

Keeping Children safe in education working together to safeguard children
Child Protection/Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy
Data Protection Policy
Employee Privacy Notice
Single Equality Scheme
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Redeployment Procedure
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Procedure