



GROWTH ANIMALS

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Overview

This policy sets out our general guidelines and approach that we follow when recruiting and selecting employees.

Our recruitment process will enable us to select the most suitable candidate for the job in respect of abilities and experience and ensure we adhere to our equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection.

Job Description and Person Specification

When the need for a new position becomes apparent, the hiring manager will ensure that a job description and person specification is written prior to advertising the role. The job description will focus on the duties, responsibilities and impact of the role. It should avoid gender-biased wording, abbreviations or jargon that may discourage people from particular groups from applying. Consideration should be given to whether the main accountabilities of the role could be satisfactorily met by flexible working, on a part-time or job-sharing basis and this information should be included in the advert.

The person specification describes the essential and desirable criteria (including qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and expertise) required to perform the job. Care should be taken to ensure the criteria is reasonable and does not create unnecessary barriers (e.g. specifying a degree from a Russell Group university when successful performance of the role is not dependent on professional qualifications). The detail set out in the person specification will provide the criteria against which a candidate will be assessed throughout the recruitment process. This criteria will be objectively assessed and not be discriminatory in nature in any way.

Advertising the role

Depending on the position, the role may be advertised on the Company's website, online job boards, paid social media, the Jobcentre, internally or anywhere else that

would attract applicants. For a hard to fill or specialist role, we may also choose to use a recruitment consultancy.

Where vacancies may be filled by promotion, they will be published to all employees and ensure that they do not restrict applications from employees with a particular protected characteristic.

Sometimes vacancies may be advertised to internal employees either before or alongside advertising to external applicants. Internal applications will be measured and scored using the same criteria and process as external applicants.

In certain circumstances, such as redundancy consultations, vacancies may be 'ring fenced' for specific internal employees to apply for prior to inviting other applications for the role. In this situation, the Company would follow selection methods in line with any applicable legislation or best practice, rather than following the sections of this policy.

There may be times where, having regard to the nature and context of the work, having a particular protected characteristic is an occupational requirement and that occupational requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Where this is needed, we will apply that requirement to the job role and this may therefore be specified in the advertisement.

We are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace. To ensure we attract a wide range of talented candidates our approach to advertising job vacancies includes the following principles:

- **Inclusive Encouragement:** We welcome applications from all qualified candidates, regardless of their background or experience and this will be stated on the job advert.
- **Bias-Free Communication:** Our job adverts will be carefully crafted to avoid any language, jargon, imagery, or stereotypes that could discourage anyone from applying. We strive to use gender-neutral and inclusive language throughout.
- **Broad Outreach:** We advertise our vacancies across multiple job boards to reach a diverse audience and ensure that no group is unintentionally excluded or underrepresented.
- **Accessibility:** Job adverts are made available in accessible formats to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to apply, regardless of any protected characteristic.
- **Fair Criteria:** We avoid setting unnecessary requirements or conditions that could unfairly exclude certain groups. We focus on what truly matters for the role.

- **Ongoing Monitoring:** We regularly review the diversity of our applicant pool. If we notice any underrepresentation, we analyse the data to identify areas for improvement.

Applications and Shortlisting

We ensure that every step of our recruitment process is fair, inclusive, and consistent.

We receive applications via email. We request blind CVs which require the removal of any reference to name, gender, age and any other forms of identifiable information including any photographs to ensure no bias during the selection process.

The hiring manager and ideally, a second manager, will objectively assess each applicant against the criteria detailed in the person specification within the advert and the job description to shortlist candidates for interview. They will do this by checking the CV and any other information provided at application stage to ensure they meet the criteria set out in the job advert.

Our usual shortlisting method is to read every CV we receive to check and measure against the set criteria. The measures will be scored and recorded, all applicants meeting the minimum criteria will be invited for interview.

Where we receive a high volume of applicants, we may then impose other certain criteria to reduce the size of the pool of selected candidates; however this criteria will serve the purpose of fulfilling the job role and will not relate directly or indirectly to any protected characteristic. All applications will be re-scored against the adjusted criteria to ensure selection is consistent.

All applications will be handled confidentially, and the hiring manager will ensure they are assessed consistently against the defined criteria. The hiring managers must also record the reasons for shortlisting or not shortlisting each candidate using the objective criteria set out.

Interviews and Selection

Assessment methods will be appropriate for the role and short-listed candidates will be invited to an interview, however as a general rule will include the following:

- An initial conversation to check requirements
- Interview with key competency questions
- A technical test, "in tray" practical or written exercises

Wherever possible, candidates will be interviewed by at least two interviewers. Interview notes, feedback, and scoring will be clearly documented to support fair and impartial decisions.

All interview questions will focus on the requirements of the job. We do not ask questions that could imply discrimination based on a protected characteristic. For example, candidates will not be asked about pregnancy or family planning.

Any selection tests used are directly related to the skills required for the specific job or career path. These tests assess the candidate's ability to perform or train for the role, without introducing unrelated or unfamiliar content.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments during the interview process and within the workplace to ensure that no candidates are disadvantaged compared to others. This may include modifying work provisions, criteria, practices, or physical features of our premises, or providing auxiliary aids or services. When being invited to attend an interview, candidates will also be asked if there are any adjustments that can be made.

We will regularly review our selection tests to ensure they remain relevant, free from bias, and effective in assessing candidates fairly.

Appointing new employees

The candidate who is successful at the selection stage will be verbally offered the role in the first instance and will subsequently receive a written offer of employment.

All offers of employment will be conditional and based on the successful completion of pre-employment checks, such as having the right to work in the UK and receiving satisfactory references. The salary will be offered based on the skills, experience, knowledge and/or qualifications of the candidate and taking into account the level and requirements of the role.

Following an offer, the new employee may be asked to provide details of any medical condition for use only in emergency situations or for first aid, which will be kept confidential. If the employee requires any adjustments to be made, they will also be asked to let us know at this stage.

For best practice reasons the Company will request and monitor diversity data to ensure a wide range of potential job applicants are being reached. Candidates may choose whether or not to provide this information.

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to upholding our equal opportunities policy throughout the recruitment and selection process without consideration to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Job applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions to this. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled people
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).

If it is necessary to assess whether personal circumstances will affect the performance of the job (for example, if the job involves unsociable hours or extensive travel), this will be discussed objectively, without detailed questions based on assumptions about any of the persons protected characteristics.

We are also committed to equal pay and equality of terms in employment. We believe all our employees should receive equal pay where they are carrying out work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value. To achieve this, we will endeavour to maintain a pay system that is transparent, free from bias and based on objective criteria.

Training

We will make sure that all our employees are familiar with our equal opportunities policy and any hiring manager will also receive training on inclusive hiring and leadership practices to help ensure they promote equal opportunities at all times

and to create a work environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

We will keep confidential all candidate information gathered through the recruitment process and will fulfil the requirements of the relevant legislation. For further information, please refer to the Data Protection Policy.

This policy will be kept under review and may be amended at any time.