

North Halifax Grammar School

Recruitment & Selection Policy



Approved by:	Full Governance Board
Date approved:	Summer Term 2023
Next review:	Summer Term 2025
Policy owner:	Personnel Officer

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to promote and support fair and open recruitment and selection within North Halifax Grammar School Academy Trust **Academy Trust** and to ensure consistency and transparency in all aspects of the recruitment and selection process.

All staff are required to follow the rules set out within this policy.

Occasionally there may be times when, owing to short-term operational needs, exceptions may be made to the policy. All such cases should be approved by the Headteacher or the Chair of the Governance Board as appropriate.

Aims

The Academy Trust is only as good as the people within it. Recruitment of the right people is therefore critical to our success. This policy aims to ensure that when vacancies arise, we recruit the best people available to fill those posts.

Mindful of this overall aim, the Academy Trust aims to ensure that:

- We comply fully with the Safer Recruitment practices as determined by the Department for Education (“**DFE**”) and other Government bodies to ensure robust efforts are made to prevent unsuitable or unqualified persons from working with our students.
- Our recruitment processes are streamlined to ensure that good candidates are not deterred or do not find alternative opportunities because of administrative delays.
- Recruitment costs are kept to a minimum, whilst ensuring that we recruit the best people.
- Our packages are attractive enough to secure the recruitment of the best people.
- We are able to work flexibly to achieve these goals, whilst also observing our duty to promote equality and diversity within the Academy Trust.

All job vacancies must have clear and appropriate job descriptions and person specifications (before the recruitment process begins). Applicants for posts will be short-listed and selected according to their ability to meet the essential/desirable requirements of the person specifications and core duties of the job descriptions.

The Academy Trust is committed to observing equality legislation (as contained in the Equal Opportunities Policy) and promote good practice when it comes to recruitment.

Scope

This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all staff at the Academy Trust.

All employees involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process should be aware of and adhere to the contents of this policy.

Any external consultants, recruitment agencies or external experts who assist in the recruitment process must act in accordance with this policy. The Personnel Officer is responsible for providing such external parties with a copy of this policy.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and the Academy Trust may amend it at any time.

Implementation

The process for filling a vacancy within the established staffing structure of the Academy Trust can only begin with approval of the Headteacher.

The process for filling a vacancy should begin as early as possible (normally as soon as a resignation is received, a job move is agreed, within the last three months of a temporary contract, or when a new post is approved). Whilst recruiting for a vacancy (created by the departure of a previous post-holder) is a usual

step, it should not be considered as being the automatic one until other options have been considered, which may involve:

- reorganising work distribution within the Academy Trust;
- increasing an existing employee's responsibilities where possible;
- redesigning or automating job tasks;
- restructuring within the relevant area or department;
- re-deployment;
- using secondment opportunities; or
- using a contractor/agency temporary staff for short-term assignments.

Personnel Officer

Within the Academy Trust, the Personnel Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring that all recruiting managers are aware of the content of this policy;
- ensuring consistency of application throughout the Academy Trust; and
- ensuring the provision of training and advice on the operation of the policy.

Job Description and Person Specification

Recruiting managers will be responsible for ensuring that Job Descriptions are prepared/reviewed outlining the duties and responsibilities of all roles, and a Person Specification for each post is prepared to outline the required characteristics, attributes, knowledge and experience of the ideal candidates (along with specifying any essential requirements).

Advertising

Where a job is to be advertised externally, adverts will be placed in a sufficient variety of media to reach a broad cross-section of potential applicants whilst also considering the most cost effective medium. Online advertising will be used in preference to print advertising where it is deemed not to impact adversely on the likely audience for the advertisement. For certain specialist or hard to fill vacancies a recruitment agency or executive search agency may be used once approved by the Headteacher.

As part of the Academy Trust's commitment to equal opportunities in recruitment, advertisements will not be confined unjustifiably to those areas or publications which would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applications from particular minority groups.

The Academy Trust will also advertise vacancies internally via email. Line managers should encourage existing employees to apply for vacancies if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

The advertisement (whether internal or external) will clearly define the name of the Academy Trust, job title, nature of the contract (permanent, fixed term etc.), salary or salary scale, any minimum qualifications, any particular skills and/or experience required for the position, working hours and closing date, and will include key job information including how and to whom to apply. Adverts should be drafted so as to avoid specifying requirements for the position which are potentially discriminatory on the grounds of age, sex, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, race, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or trade union membership.

Applications

In order to maximise response, recruitment packs will be made available on the Academy Trust's website prior to any advertising going live. Packs will be made available by post or email for applicants upon request. The pack will include:

- Job description/Person specification.
- Application form.
- If by email, a link to the Academy Trust's website or if by post a copy of the Academy Trust's prospectus (teaching posts only).
- Online Safety policy.

Short listing and selection

The criteria for shortlisting and for selection will match those of the job and person specifications to ensure that the shortlisting and selection is carried out fairly and systematically.

The shortlisting panel will identify how well applicants meet each of the essential criteria. Desirable criteria may then be used to reduce large numbers of applicants who appear to meet all the essential criteria. The shortlisting panel will then, where possible, create a short list of candidates to be called for interview.

The shortlisting of candidates is carried out with anonymised information, with all personal details of the candidate removed from the application form before the shortlisting panel view the applications.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process we may consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on any shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we may wish to explore with the applicant at interview.

All candidates called for interview will receive a formal invitation letter along with copies of the Academy Trust's Safeguarding Policy & Child Protection Procedures and a Self-disclosure form which should be completed and returned prior to the interview. They will also be advised of the need to bring evidence of their right to work in the UK.

Interviews

The appropriate assessment methods may include one or more of the following:

- structured interview(s); formal and informal;
- work simulations such as role plays or "in-tray" exercises;
- candidate group discussions;
- presentations or "teaching" simulations;
- guided tours with staff or students;
- psychometric testing; and/or
- practical assessments (e.g. to assess technical capability).

Feedback from such activities will be given to the panel before formal interviews take place. In some cases, candidates might not be taken through to formal interviews if there is a clear gap between the performance of one or more candidates.

There should be a set format (including interview questions) for each candidate to ensure that all candidates have an equal opportunity to present themselves and so that responses at interview can be fairly compared.

The interview panel will typically be made up of:

- The Headteacher (or a nominated manager who is seen to be suitable to sit on the panel).
- A Governor (if this is appropriate to the level of the role).
- The recruiting manager (or a nominated person who is seen to be suitable to sit on the panel).

At least one member of the interview panel will have relevant and valid Safer Recruitment training.

Each candidate should be assessed on their own merits first before a comparison of ratings and candidates is undertaken.

The interview panel should be mindful that interview notes may be requested by candidates after the process is complete. Suitable notes may also be needed for the giving of feedback. All notes must be returned to the Personnel Officer.

The interview panel should not ask about an applicant's personal circumstances (even in small talk), no assumptions should be made about an applicant's willingness to undertake (or suitability for) the position and consideration should be given at all times to the need for reasonable adjustments.

The Academy Trust must retain all interview notes for 6 months from the date of the interviews after which they will be confidentially destroyed.

Teaching Qualifications

It is the Academy Trust's standard that all permanent teaching staff hold QTS. Anyone recruited to a permanent teaching role as an unqualified teacher, or as a teacher qualified overseas, will be expected to obtain QTS within 12 months of their employment commencing.

References

References will, where possible, be taken up in advance of the interview process. One reference must be from the candidate's last place of employment or study, whichever is most relevant. In cases where both references have not been obtained, an offer of employment may be made subject to references until satisfactory references have been received. If the references received are not satisfactory or if references are not received within a reasonable period of time, then the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

The Academy Trust reserves the right not to interview a candidate if satisfactory references have not been received by the interview day.

Notifying Successful Candidates

A member of the interview panel or the Personnel Officer will contact the successful candidate by telephone as soon as practicable after the interview. The offer of employment is conditional on the candidate evidencing their right to work in the UK and on the basis of satisfactory references, if not already received, DBS check, completed and acceptable self-disclosure form and Occupational Health clearance if required. In some situations, we may also require the successful candidate to attend a medical examination with a view to obtaining a medical report confirming to our satisfaction that they are fit to carry out the duties required for the position offered to them.

Feedback for External Candidates

The unsuccessful candidates should be contacted by telephone by a member of the interview panel or the Personnel Officer as soon as practicable. They should be offered the opportunity for feedback. Feedback to the candidate is generally by telephone only but if a request is put in writing it can be provided by email. The feedback will highlight the strengths and limitations regarding the interview, presentation, case study etc. Feedback will not generally be given immediately but unsuccessful candidates will be invited to call the school to get feedback approximately 1 week after interviews.

Feedback for Internal Candidates

Internal candidates should be offered the opportunity to receive feedback on the interview, presentation, case study etc. from a member of the interview panel. All feedback should be given on a planned and pre-arranged basis and should be based on the criteria against which the candidate performed in comparison with other candidates.

Unsuccessful Recruitment Campaigns

Where a recruitment campaign has been unsuccessful, the Academy Trust may decide to:

- re-advertise the vacancy in a different publication or online job-board;
- approach recruitment agencies; or
- utilise a temporary agency worker.

On each occasion a campaign fails to recruit then the role advertised will be re-evaluated in terms of the scope of its duties, the salary offered, (or both) and the medium used to advertise the role.

Safeguarding of Appointments

The Academy Trust undertakes to comply fully with the Safer Recruitment practices as determined by the Department for Education and other Government bodies. These are in place so that robust efforts are made to prevent unsuitable or unqualified persons from working with children. These practices include the requirement for:

- proof of original certificates of qualifications to be provided;
- two relevant references to be obtained (one must be the current or most recent employer);
- proof of right to work in the UK to be provided;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check – including enhanced checks where appropriate (see notes below) to be completed; and
- teachers will be checked against the Prohibited Teachers List and Section 128 list & EEA list (if appropriate).

Using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Academy Trust complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The Academy Trust actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

All posts require Disclosure and Barring clearance and an application for this will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.

We encourage all applicants to declare details of their criminal record if any on the self-disclosure form prior to interview and to provide further details to the Personnel Officer if required. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Academy Trust to ask questions about the applicant's entire criminal record, we only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020.

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.

We ensure that all those in the Academy Trust who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.

Following an offer of employment and up to the applicant's formal start date of employment applicants should disclose any criminal record or other offences which will be noted on their DBS application to the Personnel Officer.

At interview, or in a separate discussion following any offer of employment, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or any other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from working in the Academy Trust. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence(s).

Equal Opportunities

The Academy Trust recognises that equality of opportunity and the recognition and promotion of diversity are integral to its academic and economic strengths. The following principles apply in respect of the Academy Trust's commitment to equality and diversity and the Academy Trust undertakes to:

- provide and promote equality of opportunity in all areas of its work and activity;
- recognise and develop the diversity of skills and talents within its current and potential workforce;
- ensure that all staff members and prospective staff members are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential without receiving any unjustified discrimination or unfavourable treatment on grounds such as age, disability, marital or civil partner status, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, trans status, socio-economic status, trade union membership or any other irrelevant distinction;
- provide and promote a positive working, learning, and social environment which is free from prejudice, discrimination and any forms of harassment, bullying or victimisation; and
- promote good relations between individuals from different groups.

Applicants with Disabilities

The Academy Trust encourages applications from individuals with a disability. If you require reasonable adjustments in relation to your application, please contact the Academy's Personnel Officer to discuss in the first instance.

Data Protection

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations, all personal data obtained in the course of the recruitment process (applications, references, interview notes, test scores, etc.) with the exception of data which is transferred to the appointee's personnel file, will be kept in a secure place for a period of six months, at the end of which time it will be securely destroyed. Personal data collected during the recruitment process will be processed in accordance with our Online Safety policy, which will be made available to all prospective candidates before they provide personal information in a completed application form.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

This Policy will be reviewed every two years.

This Policy is intended to meet the aims set out above, in summary that we recruit the best people, for the best value for money and ensure we meet all of our equalities duties. The Policy will be evaluated on the basis of metrics designed to measure the extent to which these three broad aims are met.