
21. Recruitment Policy



UK law and Action 21's Equality and Diversity Policy do not allow discrimination either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, ethnicity, cultural or religious beliefs. The recruitment process must result in the selection of the most suitable person for the job in respect of skills, experience and qualifications.

All employees are required to comply with the requirements of the Equality and Diversity Policy at every stage of the recruitment process including production of job descriptions, advertising material, instructions given to recruitment agencies, short listing of applications, interviewing, selection decisions and offers of employment.

1. Recruitment Authorisation

The filling of any vacancy must be authorised by the Board of Trustees before any attempt is made to take action. In making the request to the Trustees consideration should be given as to whether the role could be absorbed amongst the rest of the team or elsewhere in the organisation. Cost implications should also be considered.

2. Job Descriptions and Advertisement

Once authorisation has been obtained, the General Manager must produce a job description for the vacancy agreed in conjunction with the H. R. Trustee, which provides a fair and accurate representation of the role and follows the format which is laid out in the Job Description Form.

In addition to advertising positions externally, all vacancies will be advertised within Action 21 to all members of staff and volunteers.

Candidates who apply for positions with Action 21 will always be informed of the outcome of their application as quickly as possible. They should be informed of the outcome in writing.

3. Recruitment Interviews

Recruitment interviews will be arranged and conducted by the General Manager and at least one Trustee. Interview arrangements should wherever possible be confirmed in writing to the candidate.

4. Offer of Employment

An offer should be made orally to the candidate and once agreed; a contract of employment raised and sent out with the offer letter.

Once the most appropriate candidate has been selected by the interview panel and the offer of employment made, the Board of Trustees should be informed.

5. References & DBS checks

All employment offers are conditional upon receipt of two references and a DBS check which are satisfactory to Action 21.

References will usually be sought in writing and require that a standard reference form be completed although details may be checked or clarified by phone where necessary. If a response to a written request for a reference has not been received, Action 21 will phone the referee and may seek an oral reference instead.

If references which are satisfactory to the Action 21 are not received within a reasonable timescale then it may be necessary to withdraw the offer of employment.

7. Qualification Certificates

All applicants may be required to provide evidence of qualifications.

If an applicant falsifies certificates or evidence of qualifications and this subsequently comes to the attention of Action 21 at any stage during employment, the individual will be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable to dismissal.

8. Work Permits and Illegal Working

All successful applicants will be required to provide evidence of one original piece of documentation from the list below once an offer of employment is made:

- A document giving the person's National Insurance number and name. This could be a P45, a National Insurance card or a letter from a government agency;
- A document showing that the person can stay indefinitely in the UK or that they have no restriction preventing them from taking employment. This may be an endorsement in a passport or Home Office Letter;
- A work permit or other approval to take employment from the Department for Education and Employment;
- A document showing that they are a UK Citizen or have right of abode in the UK. This may be an endorsement in a passport, a birth certificate, a registration or naturalisation document or a letter from the Home Office;
- A document showing that they are a national of a European Economic Area country. This may be a passport or national identity card: or
- A document confirming registration with the Worker Registration Scheme.

In order to avoid discrimination, it is essential that the same criteria are applied to every person who is offered employment with Action 21. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that a relevant document has been supplied which satisfies the criteria set out above.

If an applicant is not able to produce one of the listed documents then they will be advised to contact the Citizens Advice Bureau for further advice and their employment will be put on hold until evidence can be produced and the offer may be withdrawn.

9. Personnel Records & Starter Procedures

Personnel records are held by Office Action 21. A file containing paper records is held for each employee and will include:

- Contract of Employment
- Personal information – New Starter Form
 - Next of kin
 - Home address
- Changes to terms and conditions
- DBS report
- First Aid certificate
- Absence records
- Current Disciplinary details
- Records of any Training undertaken
- Records of Objectives and Performance Appraisals

These records are held in a secure environment, only accessible to General Manager. Electronic records may also be held by General Manager. This enables information gathering and quick access to employee records.

10. Complaints Procedure

Any applicants who consider that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against during the recruitment process should write to General Manager stating the grounds of the complaint. Any employee who wishes to complain about his/her experience of the recruitment process should do so by means of the Grievance Procedure.

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Action 21 (2010) Ltd ("Action 21") Registered Charity number: 1136450
Action 21 (2010) Ltd ("Action 21") Company registered number: 07185413P

Appendix I

Recruitment procedures

1. Job Descriptions and Advertisement

The job description should be given to all candidates prior to interview to enable them to prepare adequately for the interview which will improve the success of the interviewing process.

Particular care must be taken when producing job descriptions to ensure that requirements of the role are reasonable and can be objectively justified and will not unfairly disadvantage certain groups e.g. women, ethnic minorities, elderly or disabled persons.

2. Shortlisting

Preparation is the key to maximising the likelihood of selecting the most suitable candidate for the position.

- Identify specific job-related criteria using the job description
- Match these criteria with those detailed in the candidate's CV
- Use this to select which candidates will be invited for interview, if appropriate.

Once a list of criteria has been identified it is useful, particularly when considering a large number of candidates for one position, to record how the candidate(s) compare using a tabular format, as follows:

Name	Criteria					
	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
Candidate 1						
Candidate 2						

3. Recruitment Interviews

3.1 Preparing for the Interview

- Identify any areas on the list of criteria that need further exploration or clarification. For example, where it is not obvious from the candidate's CV that they possess the required skill.
- Identify any other areas on the CV that need further exploration or clarification. Look particularly for unexplained gaps in employment, a succession of rapid job changes, or a statement of achievement that needs to be validated.
- Formulate the questions to be covered in the interview with room for note taking and scoring. Ensure that they will enable all the above information to be gathered.
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3.2 During the Interview

- Use the same questioning strategy with each candidate and do not ask for any personal information or views that are not relevant to the job as this could be considered discriminatory
- Do not accept partial or unclear answers to any of your questions, probe for more detail if necessary, give every candidate an opportunity to answer the questions fully
- Try to keep questions open, not questions which require a simple yes / no answer.

3.3 After the interview

Read through your notes about each candidate and score the candidate on the interview question sheet. Your reasons for appointing or not appointing a particular candidate are important in case your final decision is challenged e.g. under the Sex, Age, Race or Disability Discrimination Acts.

- Compare each candidate against the job description again in light of the additional information you now have concerning each candidate.
- Make an assessment for each candidate as to whether they will fit the culture of the team and the Company as a whole. However, ensure that you are not discriminating against any candidate because he/she is a different sex or of a different age or from a different racial, religious or cultural background to the rest of the team.
- **Do not pick the best of a bad bunch** – recruitment mistakes are costly and time consuming and ultimately it is better to re-advertise to get the right person.
- If you are uneasy or unsure about anything that was discussed in the interview, ask the candidate back for another interview or talk to them over the phone to clarify. Do not ignore your instincts and offer the job anyway and hope that it will be alright.
- Let all candidates know whether they are successful or not as quickly as possible. Delays could mean that you miss out on the best candidates.

4. Offer of Employment

In setting a starting salary to offer the chosen candidate bear in mind the salary level the candidate is seeking, the budget and the authorised salary range (as shown on the Job Description Form).

An offer should be made orally to the candidate and once agreed, a contract of employment needs to be raised and sent out with the offer letter.

5. References

The referees should usually be the applicant's current or previous employers, although in the case of a college or school leaver the college tutors or teachers will be acceptable.