



Recruitment & Selection Policy

Approval date September 2019
Review date September 2022

This policy applies to

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Link Group | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Link Housing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Link Living | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Link Property |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Horizon | <input type="checkbox"/> Larkfield | <input type="checkbox"/> West Highland | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lintel Trust |

Policy Summary

The Recruitment & Selection Policy sets out Link's approach to attracting and selecting the best candidates for employment through a fair and cost effective process. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and the PVG and Disclosure Policy which includes the Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy.

Equalities

This Policy will be applied in accordance with Link Group's Policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, as well as the Equality Act 2010. There are no potential implications for employees who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act. The application of this policy and associated policies will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for people with protected characteristics.

Privacy

Link may process personal data collected in accordance with its data protection policy. Data collected for recruitment and selection purposes related to this policy is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the employment contract and carrying out employment law obligations. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with Link's data protection policy immediately.

Policy Owner

Director of Human
Resources and Business
Support

Review Manager

Head of Human
Resources

Approved By

Senior Management
Group

Revision History

Date	Version Number	Comments

1. INTRODUCTION

Link Group Limited recognises that its employees are its greatest asset and that it relies on the skills, competencies and contribution of all to deliver high quality services to all its tenants, service users and other customers. Link is, therefore, committed to the recruitment, selection and appointment of the best people to meet the needs of Link and to actively promoting equality and diversity.

Link's Recruitment and Selection Procedures [RSP] will be in accordance with current statutory legislation and, regulations which apply to the sector. Link has taken appropriate regard to Safer Recruitment through Better Recruitment Guidance (Care Inspectorate and Scottish Social Services Council, 2017).

Link is committed to equality and diversity 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, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership. Candidates with a disability are encouraged to apply and reasonable adjustments to roles will be considered.

This policy is intended to be used as guiding principles for recruitment and selection campaigns and has been designed to maximise flexibility to meet the needs of all areas of the business¹. Any significant variations to the practice contained in this policy must be approved in advance by the Head of HR.

2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles govern the operation of this policy:

- Be clear and understood by all employees
- Be fair, equitable and non-discriminatory
- Reflect the needs of a diverse organisation
- Reflect best practice
- Be flexible and adaptable to changing business needs

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to provide:

1. a framework to attract, recruit, select and retain the best possible candidate for every vacancy, based on their relevant merits.
2. steps to ensure that access to employment opportunity is based on fair, objective and job-related criteria and that no applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
3. a basis for monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of our recruitment and selection practices.

¹ Excluding Larkfield Housing Association Limited

4. a partnership approach to recruitment and selection between recruiting managers and Human Resources.
5. the most cost-effective recruitment and advertising methods.

4. APPROACH AND METHOD

The Senior Management Group [SMG] in its formal approval of the policy acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy lies with the appropriate directors and managers of the Link group of companies. All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed.

The policy will be implemented using the following approaches:

4.1 Resource Planning and Authorisation to Recruit

Existing Posts

An existing post is defined as a position that is already in the establishment budget as a permanent position. Therefore, replacing an existing position i.e. for an employee resigning from such a position, can be approved by the vacant posts line manager, as the post has already been budgeted for.

New Posts

Temporary posts of less than one year [without guaranteed external funding] may be approved at directorate/subsidiary level where budget for that year allows, as can temporary posts which are tied to external funding provided the duration of the post is no longer than the funding duration.

Temporary posts of more than one year [without guaranteed external funding] must be approved by SMG, as must all permanent posts. This is with the exception of LinkLiving, where all posts can be approved at directorate level.

In all instances, before recruiting for a post, the manager should consider whether:

- the vacancy needs to be filled
- new and/or changed tasks and skills are required
- the tasks can be absorbed within an existing job role(s)

Having considered the above and it is subsequently concluded that the vacancy needs to be filled, the line manager must:

- be in receipt of and accepted a written resignation from the leaving employee (where applicable)
- complete an Authority to Recruit form before any advertising, or have received a completed Authority to Recruit from the designated approver (as covered above).

4.2 Job Description and Person Specification

Where a vacancy is to be filled, the line manager will review or prepare a job description and person specification based on a template available from Human Resources. Any new job descriptions or revised job descriptions must be approved by an appropriate Human Resources representative, and have been subject to job evaluation.

The job description should clearly state the responsibilities and main duties of the role. The person specification will reflect the required experience and competencies as well as any qualification and registration requirements.

4.3 Advertising

Job vacancies will normally be advertised, as appropriate, internally and externally [on Link's website and other relevant recruitment media] at the same time.

If there is a re-structuring or redundancy situation within Link, or where there are budgetary restraints that prevent any additional headcount in the relevant department, the processes of matching, restricted competition and/or internal advertising will be applied as appropriate for relevant vacancies in the first instance.

If an individual is within the last 3 months of their apprenticeship, and a role becomes available within the organisation for which they are now, or about to become, qualified to undertake, managers may offer the apprentice the position without undertaking a recruitment exercise. This is subject to the apprentice satisfactorily meeting the requirements of the apprentice role.

Human Resources may only initiate the recruitment process when a completed Authority to Recruit form, and an updated job description, has been complete.

4.3.1 Advertisements will include key areas from the following list and a link to where detailed information can be found:

- Job title and the location of the post
- Salary band or hourly rate
- Number of hours per week or per relevant period
- Essential criteria required (including where required any disclosure, PVG, or SSSC requirements)
- Brief details about the job and terms of appointment
- How to Apply and the Closing date for applications
- Interview date[s] where possible
- Statements that Link values diversity and welcomes applications from all individuals who match the requirements of the post
- Organisation name and that the employing organisation is part of the Link Group
- Current accreditation marks or other awards

4.4 Application Formats

Applications should be made in a standard format which is normally made available online. For specialist, registered manager or senior posts alternative application formats and processes may be agreed in consultation with HR.

Application information will also make clear to candidates that the canvassing of Board or Committee members or employees of Link, either directly or indirectly, in connection with any appointment will disqualify the candidate. HR staff will restrict their contact with candidates to that which is necessary to the administration and co-ordination of the recruitment and selection project.

4.4.1 Disclosure of Information

There will be information provided in the application process to make clear that if an applicant progressed into employment, a failure to disclose important information may lead to dismissal if discovered at a later date. This includes but is not limited to employment history, qualifications, registrations.

In addition, applicants will be asked to declare any close relationships (as set out in Link's Code of Conduct). Failure on the part of the candidate to disclose a close relationship with a member of Link's Boards, Committees or employees may disqualify the candidate and, if such a failure to disclose is discovered after appointment, this will be dealt with under the appropriate policy and may ultimately result in the employee's employment being terminated.

4.5 Short-listing and Invitation to Interview/Assessment

Human Resources [HR] will register completed applications and retain monitoring information before the application forms are passed to the recruiting line manager(s).

Shortlisting will be carried out normally by the members of the interview panel using the criteria set out in the person specification. The person specification requirements will be applied to all applicants equally. Candidates with a disability who meet the minimum requirements of the Person Specification [i.e. match all the essential criteria], will be selected for interview.

A record of short-listing decision will be provided to HR by the short-listing manager(s).

Invitations to interview will be sent to shortlisted candidates by Human Resources. Those selected for interview will be informed of the selection process, including any tests and/or presentations required and how long the selection process is likely to take.

All candidates will have the opportunity to advise of a disability and any related request for reasonable adjustments to the interview/assessment process on grounds of disability.

Applicants who have not been shortlisted will receive an email advising them of this from Human Resources.

4.6 Interview/Assessments

4.6.1 Interview/Assessment Panel

An interview panel will be appointed, and it will normally include at least the recruiting line manager and either another appropriate manager/specialist postholder or a HR representative. Any exception to this must be agreed with Human Resources.

In addition, and where appropriate, customers or service users may be included in the selection panel or suitable assessment such as a group discussion. Where this occurs those involved will be fully briefed about their role and responsibilities including confidentiality.

4.6.2 Interview /Assessment Methods

Interviews and/or other assessments will be designed as a fair and objective selection method appropriate to the job and skill/competence requirements.

Methods may include any one or combination from the following list (or other appropriate methods where agreed with HR):

- screening/personal interview
- competency and/ or skills-based interview
- presentation
- task simulation (e.g. in-tray, ICT-based assessment, practical assessment)
- group exercise
- psychological assessments administered by qualified and trained assessor (normally only for senior or specialist posts)

4.7 The Selection Decision

Members of Interview Panels and/or Assessment Panels will score candidates in accordance with agreed criteria and scoring system using standard scoring records. These records should be returned to HR.

4.8 Offers of Employment

Line Managers may make verbal conditional offers of employment.

All written offers of employment will be issued by Human Resources and will be conditional upon satisfactory receipt of:

- references [external candidates will require two satisfactory references],
- proof of identity and eligibility to work in the UK,
- health check

and where relevant,

- sight of original qualification certificates
- a satisfactory Protection of Vulnerable Groups [PVG] or Disclosure Scotland check and
- SSSC registration or any other regulatory checks as required for the position
- any additional requirements relating to manager registration with the Care Inspectorate.

Where issues are raised in any checks that are less than satisfactory, HR will bring these to the attention of the line manager and/or Director for further discussion and

agreement on next steps, including the possibility of ending the contract of employment (with reference to the PVG and Disclosure Policy where appropriate).

Offers of employment include a requirement to complete a probation period before employment is confirmed.

4.9 Temporary Appointments

Temporary vacancies arise for a variety of reasons, short term cover for family leave/absence or interim business requirements. It is not always possible to foresee if the circumstances develop into a 'permanent' (i.e. indefinite) requirement. As such if employees are seeking development or advancement Link encourages people to be open to all opportunities. Where a temporary appointment is made and the post thereafter becomes available on a permanent basis, it must be advertised on a permanent basis.

An employee may be appointed to a post on a temporary, secondment or "acting-up" basis or as part of a succession plan for developmental reasons. An appointment made on this basis will not guarantee the appointment of the employee to any future permanent position. This will be made clear to the employee as part of the offer of appointment. Any resulting permanent appointment will be subject to the recruitment and selection process noted above.

4.10 Unsuccessful Candidates

All recruitment and selection decisions will be recorded. Human Resources will email candidates to advise of the outcome of interview. If unsuccessful candidates ask for feedback this will be agreed by the interview/assessment panel and provided by one member of the panel.

4.11 Recruitment Records

All completed applications and related personal data for unappointed applicants received during the course of recruitment will be processed and then disposed of in line with Link's data protection policy and job applicant privacy notice, seven months after the vacant post has been offered and accepted, unless express permission has been received from the candidate[s] to retain such information.

Applications and recruitment and selection information for successful candidates will be retained within their personnel file for the duration of employment and a period thereafter which is set out in the employee privacy notice and former employee privacy notice.

4.12 Recruitment and Selection Training

Managers are provided with development – which may be group training, individual briefing/coaching, online modules or a combination thereof - on recruitment and selection and equality and diversity, to ensure compliance with Link's approach to recruitment and selection.

4.13 Deviation from the Recruitment and Selection Process

In exceptional circumstances Link reserves the right to deviate from the approaches laid out in this policy. Where there is a legitimate business need to consider this, managers must put in writing to the Head of Human Resources (or in their absence, the Director of HR and Business Support) a proposed deviation and business rationale, who will consider whether to approve or decline the deviation. Until authorisation is received, managers may not deviate from the approaches laid out in this policy.

5. MONITORING OF THE POLICY

Any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls should be reported immediately to the Chief Executive.

6. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Link recognises that employees may have issues or concerns about their work, the environment or working relationships that they may wish to raise and have addressed. Employees are encouraged to raise a concern, in the first instance, with their line manager in an attempt to resolve the matter informally. Should this course of action prove unsatisfactory, however, then an employee may raise a formal grievance.

7. POLICY AVAILABILITY

A summary of this policy can be made available in a number of other languages and other formats on request.

8. POLICY REVIEW

Link undertake to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regard to:

- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
- Changes in the organisation
- Continued best practice

Privacy Impact Assessment Screening Questions

Carrying out a Privacy Impact Assessment [PIA] will be useful to any project – large or small – that:

- Involves personal or sensitive data about individuals
- May affect our customers' reasonable expectations relating to privacy
- Involves information that may be used to identify or target individuals

Please tick the applicable statement(s) below. Will your project involve:

1. A substantial change to an existing policy, process or system that involves personal information Yes No
2. A new collection of personal information Yes No
3. A new way of collecting personal information (for example collecting it online) Yes No
4. A change in the way personal information is stored or secured Yes No
5. A change to how sensitive information is managed Yes No
6. Transferring personal information outside the EEA or using a third-party contractor Yes No
7. A decision to keep personal information for longer than you have previously Yes No
8. A new use or disclosure of personal information you already hold Yes No
9. A change of policy that results in people having less access to information you hold about them Yes No
10. Surveillance, tracking or monitoring of movements, behaviour or communications Yes No
11. Changes to your premises involving private spaces where clients or customers may disclose their personal information (reception areas, for example) Yes No

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of these points, please complete a full Privacy Impact Assessment. If you have answered 'No', you need take no further action in completing a Privacy Impact Assessment.

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Questions

Will the implementation of this policy have an impact on any of the following protected characteristics?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Gender reassignment | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Marriage and Civil Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Pregnancy and Maternity | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Race | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 7. Religion or belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 8. Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| 9. Sexual orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of these points, please complete a full Equality Impact Assessment. If you have answered 'No', you need take no further action in completing an Equality Impact Assessment.