



Section 1: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

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Section 1: RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURES

1.1 Policy Statement

It is the Policy of North Tipperary Vocational Education Committee to recruit and retain a quality staff in a fair and consistent manner, free from discrimination.

To this effect, North Tipperary V.E.C. base the following recruitment and selection procedures on the job description and the objective requirements of the job without bias on the grounds of the candidate's sex, marital or family status, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, race, or membership of the travelling community.

These procedures are governed and informed by the following National and European Union Legislation;

1. Articles 48 & 49 (re: Free Movement of Workers) and Article 119 (re: Equal Pay) of the Treaty of Rome, 1957, as Amended by Subsequent Treaties.
2. Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2007
3. Employment Permits Acts, 2003 & 2006
4. European Communities (Aliens) Regulations, 1977
5. Aliens Act, 1935
6. Data Protection Acts, 1998-2003
7. Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 & 2003
8. Disability Act, 2005
9. Department of Education and Science Circular Letters/Collective Agreements
10. Public Service Management (Recruitment & Appointments) Act, 2004
11. Other relevant Collective Agreements

1.2 Freedom Of Information

The Committee is not yet subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997-2003. However, our policies and procedures reflect our future binding obligations in this regard.

1.3 Vacancy

The recruitment and selection process begins when a vacancy exists, arising from either;

- o a new post
- o a vacant existing post
- o a substitute post.

The initial steps taken are as follows;

- o Determine the nature of the contract i.e. permanent whole-time, fixed term, pro-rata part-time, non casual part-time, casual part-time
- o Clarify the exact nature of duties
- o Prepare a job description.

If the vacancy is an existing post, consider;

- o Whether the job has changed, and
- o Whether the post description needs to be changed to accurately reflect what the person in the new job will do.

1.4 The Job Description

This guide has been developed to assist in the development of Job Descriptions. The job description can be used for a variety of purposes, including:

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- Recruitment
 - Job Evaluation
 - Clarification of roles and responsibilities
 - Performance Management Development System (PMDS).

A clear description of exactly what is required of the post enables the Selection Board to select the most suitable candidate for the post.

Analysing the Job Requirements

The first step in the development of a job description is to establish the purpose and general objectives of the post, and then to analyse the requirements of the job to include clarification of the duties, responsibilities and other job demands. It should also identify the skills, abilities and experiences that someone would need to possess to be able to perform satisfactorily in the role.

In analysing the requirements of the job consideration should be given to such factors as:

- The purpose and objectives of the post
- Key tasks and responsibilities
- Lines of supervision and reporting relationships
- Challenges of the role
- Extent of communication and liaison
- Extent of authority, creativity and decision making
- Level of accountability and risk
- Level of complexity
- Educational requirements
- Main competencies i.e. skill, ability and experience requirements.

Drafting the Job Description

In writing a job description, the following broad principles should be adhered to:

- A job description describes the job, not the person in it.
- A job description describes what the job will be and what the post holder will do now and in the future.
- A job description describes the major tasks of the job.
- A job description's wording provides sufficient flexibility for the allocation of new duties relevant to the core functions of the post.
- A job description must not be discriminatory or make explicit or implicit reference to the age, gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race, membership of the travelling community, or any other irrelevant characteristics of the post holder.

The job description should focus on the purpose of the post and the principal duties and responsibilities and should include a descriptor of the following:

- Post information such as title, school, grade and reporting relationship
- A statement of the purpose/objective of the role
- A list of the principal duties and responsibilities
- Any other relevant information

Post Information

This is the identifying information for a post and should include such information as:

- Job title and subject/work area
- School/College/Centre
- Reporting relationship (the title of the person who this post reports directly to)

Purpose/Objective of the Role

Provide a broad overview of the purpose and/or objective of the role. This should be a paragraph of between 1 and 3 sentences and give a picture of why the job exists.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

Detail the key areas of responsibility of the post. It is essential to describe the whole job and to focus on broad areas of responsibility rather than specific tasks. The list of principal duties and responsibilities should, as a general rule, be limited to 10 - 15 bullet points.

Other Information

This section can also be used to detail any other information that is important for a potential candidate to know about the advertised post and/or working environment.

Regular Review

At the time of writing, the job description is a snapshot of the post. Bear in mind that it may become outdated as the duties and responsibilities of the job evolve and should be reviewed for accuracy on a regular basis.

Given the pace of change in most work areas, it would be unusual for the duties and responsibilities for a post to remain static over any length of time.

As a minimum, Job Descriptions should be reviewed in all instances where the post becomes vacant and before any recruitment action is initiated. However the meetings that occur as part of the regular Performance Management Development System (PMDS) are also a timely opportunity for a review to occur.

1.5 Person Specification

The person specification is drawn up on the basis of the job description. It outlines the qualifications, skills, experience, knowledge and competencies required for successful performance in the role. Issues such as qualifications and experience should be examined carefully, and should only be stated in the person specification if they are essential requirements for the job.

- What educational standards are required?
- What work experience is necessary?
- Are any special aptitudes necessary? E.g. manual dexterity, languages, verbal or numerical skills
- What personal characteristics are needed? E.g. leadership, maturity, dedication, creativity
- Have any special circumstances been identified? E.g. willingness to travel, health, availability to do overtime in certain circumstances

These are the criteria against which candidates will be assessed and provide a transparent means of measuring an individual's competitiveness for appointment. The more accurate the criteria are, the more likely that the best candidate will be selected for the job.

The Person Specification assists the recruitment and selection process by providing:

- A consistent and objective set of standards for all candidates which can be observed/measured, and
- A framework against which feedback can be provided.

The Person Specification should be broken down into two sub-sections, namely, essential and desirable criteria.

Essential Criteria are those that are critical for the satisfactory performance of the job. In the selection process, candidates must meet all essential criteria to be eligible to progress to the

next stage of the selection process. Given this, it is important that the essential criteria are reasonable and do not unjustly discriminate against any potential candidates for employment (whether directly, indirectly or by association).

Where a certain level of educational qualification or professional registration exists for a post, this should be clearly stated as an essential criterion.

Desirable Criteria are those which enhance a person's capacity to do the job. They are not listed as essential because, while important, it is expected that they can also be acquired once in employment. For instance, while specific knowledge about the Committee and its remit could be of benefit to a candidate, it can also be learned.

The extent to which a candidate satisfies the desirable criteria listed for a post (compared to the other candidates) will usually determine their success, or otherwise, for appointment.

1.6 Advertising the Post

North Tipperary VEC currently advertises vacancies in a number of ways, namely;

- National press
- Local press
- Appointments section of the Committee's website, www.tippnorthvec.ie

1.7 The Application Pack

The Application Pack will be prepared by Human Resources Department and will include inter alia the following:

- Application Form
- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Advertisement for the Post
- Timeline in respect of selection process
- Relevant information specific to the post, if applicable
- Agenda
- Profiles of candidates
- Circular letters appropriate to post
- Notes for Interview Board
- Selection Board Report
- Criteria (marking sheet)
- Conflict of Interest Form
- Travel Expenses Form.

1.8 Selection Board

The primary method of selection in North Tipperary VEC is by means of interview. A Selection Board is established in respect of each post and is requested to recommend a candidate for appointment following a selection process. The Selection Board assesses all applications against the selection criteria.

The main assessment method of short listed candidates is a formal interview, supplemented in some cases by presentations, second interviews, skills and aptitude tests.

Additional assessment methods such as a two-interview process, completion of relevant tasks e.g. skills testing or provision of portfolios of work may also form part of the assessment. Any additional assessment methods used must accurately and specifically test essential or desirable knowledge and/or skills, as expressed in job descriptions, advertisements and selection criteria to ensure that they are neither directly nor indirectly discriminatory.

The Selection Board

The purpose of the Selection Board is to assess the merit of each candidate and to recommend for appointment the candidate with the greatest merit, in relation to the criteria as specified for the post. The deliberations of the Selection Board should at all times remain confidential. The recommendation of the Selection Board is forwarded the HR Department and forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer for his consideration.

Composition of the Selection Board

The composition of the selection board is dependant on the nature of the vacancy.

- Appointment and promotion of second level teaching staff is currently subject to the terms and conditions of Department of Education & Science Circular Letter 43/00; the typical composition of such a board is three members, including an educationalist, a personnel specialist and a member of the Committee.
- Interview in respect of academic appointments in the Adult Education area will be conducted by a three person board typically composed of an Adult Education Officer, a Further Education expert and a member of the committee.
- Administrative appointments are subject to the terms and conditions of Department of Education & Science Circular Letters.
- Special Needs Assistants interviews will be conducted by a three person board typically composed of the Principal of the relevant school/college, a member of the Committee and a Personnel expert.
- Support staff interviews will be conducted by a three person board typically composed of the Principal of the relevant school/college, a member of the Committee, a member of committee's administrative staff.

The Gender representation on a Selection Board should be an important factor in the composition of the Selection Board.

Conflict of interest

There may be times when a member of a Selection Board has a family relationship, well known friendship or other form of relationship, positive or negative, with one or more of the candidates for a post.

Upon examination of the Interview File, should a member of the Selection Board be unsure whether such a conflict of interests exists, she/he should inform the Head of Human Resources if she/he feels the relationship may make it difficult for her/him to apply the merit principle, or feel that her/his participation may compromise application of the merit principle.

The Head of Human Resources will decide whether it is appropriate for the Selection Board member to be part of the selection process. If the Selection Board member continues in the selection process, then her/his opinion should be canvassed last in any discussion to avoid any impression of conflict of interest.

All members of Selection Boards will be required to complete a Conflict of Interest Form certifying that their participation in the selection process will not contravene the principles of Conflict of Interest.

1.9 Teaching Council of Ireland

The Teaching Council was established on a statutory basis in March 2006 to promote teaching as a profession at primary and post-primary levels, to promote the professional development of teachers and to regulate standards in the profession.

In accordance with Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001, a person who is employed as a teacher in a recognised school but is not a registered teacher, may not have his or her salary paid from Oireachtas funds.

North Tipperary VEC requires that all applicants for teaching posts are registered with the Teaching Council and possess a relevant teaching experience qualification.

For details of how to register and other information, please refer to the Teaching Council of Ireland website, www.teachingcouncil.ie

1.10 Shortlisting

Shortlisting is the process whereby candidates are assessed against the agreed selection criteria on the basis of information provided in the application documentation, in order to identify those candidates who best satisfy those criteria for further assessment.

Once the application deadline has closed, the HR Department will provide all members of the Shortlist Board with a full set of further particulars, job description, person specification, and advertisement, together with a list of all candidates and their complete application documentation. The Shortlist Board members will then assess the list of most suitably qualified candidates who will be invited to interview.

The Process of Shortlisting

Each Shortlist Board member will:

- Read each application and rate candidates according to the essential and desirable selection criteria only
- In the first instance, shortlist all candidates who possess the essential criteria stated in the advertisement or information package
- Note any additional information required either before or at interview
- Note briefly the reasons for not short listing each unsuccessful candidate.

The Shortlist Board will:

- Agree on and record a final shortlist
- Consider re-advertising the post if no candidates meet all of the essential criteria
- Shortlist further, where a substantial number of candidates possess all the essential criteria, to either remove those candidates who do not possess the desirable criteria, and/or, rank those candidates who best meet the essential criteria.

Shortlisting Checklist

All Shortlist Board members will be required to ensure that they:

- Have had access to a complete set of copies of applications
- Have received a copy of the advertisement, post description, and the application package for candidates
- Have received a copy of the shortlisting table, including names of candidates against essential and desirable selection criteria
- Have read the Committee's Procedures on Recruitment and Selection
- Have read each application, and any supporting documentation, carefully
- Compare and rate each candidate against essential/desirable criteria
- Eliminate applications not matching the criteria
- As a member of a Shortlist Board, discuss the rankings and come to an agreed shortlist
- Sign the document recording the decision on an agreed shortlist.

1.11 Other Forms of Assessment

For some posts it may be necessary to supplement the interview with other forms of assessment. Shortlisted candidates will be advised in advance of any alternative forms of assessment. The

Committee reserves the right to use a variety of assessment techniques; such additional forms of assessment may include inter alia the following:

- Delivering a brief presentation on a particular subject
- Demonstrating the safe use of a basic piece of equipment
- Completing an assessment of computing skills, for example word processing, spreadsheet or desktop publishing skills
- Psychometric testing
- Oral and/or written tests in the Irish Language
- Teaching a lesson.

1.12 Interview Arrangements

The HR Department will make arrangements for the interviews by:

- Preparing a schedule of interviews from the agreed shortlist
- Arranging for an appropriate venue - interviews and waiting area
- Advising shortlisted candidates of their interview date, time, and venue
- Advising candidates who were not shortlisted
- Advising interview board members of the interview date, time, and venue.

1.13 Preliminary Meeting of Selection Board

A preliminary meeting of the Selection Board will be held in advance of the interviews. The Selection Board will:

- draft an Interview Plan with specific areas of questioning for each Board Member
- base the questions on the selection criteria as specified in the post description
- draw up a Marking Scheme which focuses on the skills, experience and knowledge required for the job
- decide on the time to be allotted to each Board Member.

Questions

Selection Board members should prepare a set of questions and select those considered most effective to assess the candidates and determine how they will rate each of the candidates against the answers they give to each question.

The questions prepared should include a core of common questions agreed by all Selection Board members, to be asked of all candidates. These questions should test the skills, experience and knowledge necessary for the job/post.

The Selection Board must be able to demonstrate that questions asked at selection interviews are relevant to the specific job. The Chairperson must ensure that questions asked:

- Are relevant to the post in question,
- Are aimed at assessing the candidates in relation to the agreed criteria and at eliciting information which will assist the Selection Board in selecting the best candidate for the job,
- Cannot be construed as potentially discriminatory under the nine grounds covered by the Employment Equality Act, 1998, i.e. Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Marital Status, Religion, Race, Family Status, Age, Membership of the Travelling Community.

Prior to the first interview the Chairperson should:

- Allow time to discuss, and decide the order in which the questions will be asked and allocate specific areas of questioning to each member,
- Identify any member of the Selection Board who has prior knowledge of any of the candidates (conflict of interest),

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- o Advise Selection Board members of the procedures for documenting the assessment of each candidate and final decision.

1.14 The Interview

At the start of each interview, the Chairperson should introduce the candidate to the members of the Selection Board, explain the purpose and structure of the interview to the candidate, and indicate that Selection Board members may take notes.

The candidate should be put at ease so that he/she can answer questions to the best of their ability. This may involve asking an early 'ice-breaking' question. The relevant details of the application may be reviewed to give the candidate an opportunity to add information.

The Selection Board must question all candidates against the same selection criteria. Only questions relevant to evaluating a candidate's ability to fulfil the requirements of the job should be asked.

The Selection Board must ask all candidates the same core questions to ensure a consistent and fair approach. Ask supplementary questions if required to clarify issues, obtain further information or to explore areas that arise in the interview.

The Selection Board should actively listen and actively seek clarification.

Members of the Selection Board should obtain sufficient information from candidates to make accurate decisions. Assumptions must not be made about a candidate's capabilities to perform various aspects of the post under consideration.

Candidates may be asked if they wish to discuss matters that may not have emerged in response to questions raised during the interview, to add any information, or to ask any questions.

Candidates will be advised about the timing of decision-making and notification of the outcome of the process.

Each member of the Selection Board must be present for all interviews. If, in exceptional circumstances, a Board member cannot be present for all interviews he/she should withdraw from the Board. A Selection Board member who feels unable to consider all candidates fairly because of prior knowledge or conflict of interest should withdraw from the Selection Board.

1.15 Referee Reports

The nature of referee reports sought is dependant on the nature of the vacancy, at least one of the referees should be in a position to report on a previous employment.

In the case of senior managerial appointments confidential written referee reports for short-listed candidates will be requested by the HR Department in advance of the interview and copies will be made available to all members of the Selection Board. In general referees reports will normally be requested in respect of each candidate called to interview.

Referees will be provided with a list of questions, whether in a written report or by phone.

A verbal referee's report(s) may be sought prior to receiving written references.

Where a member of the Selection Board is a referee for a shortlisted candidate it will be necessary to obtain at least one additional referee report from a non-board member.

Referees Reports will include inter alia the following elements:

- o work relationship between previous employer and the candidate
- o relationship with colleagues

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- employment dates
 - nature of duties
 - standards of performance
 - rate of pay
 - absenteeism record
 - timekeeping
 - reason for leaving
 - the referee's willingness to re-employ the candidate
 - any other information relevant to the advertised position.

1.16 Recommendation

Making a decision on the most suitable candidate

Each Selection Board member should initially apply the marking scheme on the basis of his/her own notes and assessment of each candidate's performance in relation to the criteria.

Candidates should be marked based on:

- Performance at interview(s)
- The written application.

The Chairperson should seek initial remarks in respect of each candidate from all members without discussion. Differences and reasons should then be discussed, at which time the Chairperson should ensure that Selection Board members reach an agreed decision on the candidate recommended for appointment and the names of reserve candidates.

Where the Selection Board fails to reach unanimous agreement the decision will be put to a vote of the Selection Board. Where there is an equal division of votes the Chairperson will be given the casting vote.

Preparing the Recommendation Sheet

The Chairperson, prepares a final report which will include completed marking scheme, and the signed Selection Board's recommendation naming the candidate recommended for appointment, or in the case of multiple posts the recommended candidates.

In certain cases the Selection Board may name reserve candidate/s. Reserve candidate/s should only be named if the Selection Board is fully satisfied of that candidate/s suitability for appointment without reference back to the Board, if the recommended candidate declines to accept the post.

The recommendation sheet is signed by all members of the Selection Board and returned by the Chairperson, to the HR Department.

The report should comment on the relative merit of recommended candidate(s) on the basis of the selection criteria only. The form should also provide information about any candidates not considered for appointment on the basis of selection criteria only.

Clear and detailed reporting will assist if post-interview feedback is requested and/or if an appeal is lodged.

Selection Board members should be aware that any notes that they make about any of the candidates may be discoverable under Freedom of Information legislation. The Chairperson collects all copies of application documents for disposal by the HR Department.

1.17 Offering Appointment

It is the sole role of the Human Resources Department to contact the successful candidate. Offers of employment will be made only following ratification of the Selection Board Report and recommendation for appointment by the Chief Executive Officer.

Offers of employment will be contingent on receipt of the following:

- Original documentary evidence of academic qualifications
- Original long version of birth certificate
- Positive Garda Vetting
- Positive medical examination
- Referees reports
- Proof of Teacher Council Registration.

1.18 Pre-Employment Medical Examination

The primary purpose of the pre-employment medical examination is to assess an individual's fitness for a particular post or occupation with regard to the requirements of that post.

Pre-employment medical questionnaires can:

- Help ensure the individual can perform the tasks effectively
- Detect an infirmity that may be of danger to the worker or co-worker
- Help determine if the job poses a health risk
- Advise if any job restrictions or accommodations are required
- Facilitate health and safety best practice

The pre-Employment medical is carried out by Medmark - details will be forwarded to the staff member prior to issuing a contract of appointment to the staff of the Committee.

1.19 Original Documentary Evidence of Qualifications

The successful candidate is required to submit original documentary evidence of his/her academic qualifications from the awarding institution, and to provide original or copies of his/her academic transcripts following acceptance of the offer of employment.

Candidates must also supply the original of the long version of their birth certificate.

No appointment will be made unless the HR Department is satisfied that a candidate's academic qualifications and birth certificate are bona fide.

1.20 Garda Vetting

North Tipperary VEC is registered with the Central Garda Vetting Unit (CGVU) who provide a disclosure service for organisations who have staff positions which involve regular unsupervised access to children and vulnerable adults. As part of the Committee's recruitment and selection process, each offer of employment with NTVEC is subject as a condition precedent to a satisfactory outcome of the CGVU process.

1.21 Advising Unsuccessful Candidates

The HR Department will advise unsuccessful candidates as soon as possible following ratification of the Selection Board's Recommendation Report by the Chief Executive Officer.

1.22 Panels for Appointment

The list of recommended candidates in order of relative merit will be retained on a Panel for Appointment, if recommended by the Selection Board, for up to the end of the academic session in respect of academic posts, twelve months or other prescribed period in the case of all other posts.

Where the Selection Board recommends a reserve candidate, that person, should the recommended candidate decline to accept the post, will be offered the vacant post in order of panel placement.

1.23 Post Interview Feedback

A designated member of the Selection Board, should provide post-interview feedback to all candidates who request it.

Marks allotted in respect of the selection criteria will be made available on receipt of a written request to;

Human Resources Department,
North Tipperary VEC,
Church Road,
Nenagh,
Co. Tipperary.

Post-interview feedback should be constructive and be phrased in terms of the selection criteria. Any discussion of comparative skills and abilities of candidates should be avoided so that specific information about other candidates is not disclosed.

Post-interview feedback is aimed at providing constructive assistance to unsuccessful candidates and does not imply an unsatisfactory standard of work or behaviour.

Suggesting areas for improvement and focusing on developmental needs can assist the candidate to be better placed when applying for future jobs.

Post-interview feedback should be essentially the same for all candidates, i.e. based on the specific criteria outlined for the post, so that candidates are confident that racial or other prejudice did not influence the decision in any way.

1.24 Work Permits

A work permit is an employment permit issued to the employee, which permits his/her employment in the state by the employer in the occupation stated on the permit. In general, non-EEA* nationals must have a permit to work in Ireland. EEA and Swiss nationals do not need an employment permit, except for Bulgarian and Romanian nationals

**The EEA (European Economic Area) consists of the EU member states together with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.*

Work Permit - Exceptions

As a foreign national, you do not need a work permit if you are in one of the following categories:

- EEA/Swiss citizen and your spouse (whether he/she is a EEA/Swiss citizen or not) and your dependent children - except Bulgarian and Romanian nationals
- Person who has been granted refugee status - whether through the normal process or as a programme refugee
- Postgraduate student where the work is an integral part of the course of study being undertaken
- Person who has been given permission to stay in the country because you are the spouse of an Irish citizen or the parent of an Irish citizen
- Person who has been refused refugee status but has been granted leave to remain on humanitarian grounds.

Refusal of Work Permits

You will be refused a work permit where you:

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- o Entered the state on the basis that you are not taking up employment, for example, as a visitor
 - o Are in the state illegally or you no longer comply with the conditions under which you were admitted
 - o Have been asked by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to leave the state
 - o Are in the process of being deported
 - o Are seeking employment with a non-EEA/Swiss employer who is operating in the state without business permission from the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Ineligible Occupations

Several occupational sectors have been deemed ineligible for new work permit applications. All staff required for these sectors must be sourced from the EEA labour force exclusively.

- o Clerical and administrative
- o General labourers and labourers
- o Operator and production staff
- o Sales staff: including retail sales, sales representatives and management/supervisory/specialist sales
- o Transport staff: including drivers - bus, coach, car, taxi, fork lift, etc.
- o Childcare workers: including nursery/crèche workers, child minder/nanny
- o Hotel, tourism and catering: all staff except chefs
- o Craft workers.

See www.entemp.ie for up-to-date listings.

Note of Clarification in relation to Second Level Teaching Staff

All teaching staff employed in the Committee's Second Level Schools and Colleges will require registration with and recognition of qualifications by the Teaching Council of Ireland, www.teachingcouncil.ie

North Tipperary complies with guidelines with regard to work permits as laid down by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment from time to time.