

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY



1. Introduction

This document explains Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre's policy on the recruitment and selection of paid staff. It will be made available on request to applicants for Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre posts and will be used by line managers who are responsible for recruiting staff, to ensure consistency. All selection decisions will be based on skills, qualifications and experience.

2. Equality commitment

Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre believes that no person or group should be treated less favourably in employment because of their race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or offending background.

Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no discrimination occurs at the point of selection.

Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre recognises that apart from job related qualifications and experience, other knowledge and experience may be equally valid in the appointment of a worker and are particularly relevant in the case of people from groups which experience discrimination.

Where the policy refers to a disabled person, we are using the definition under the Disability Discrimination Act, which states that someone is a disabled person if they have:

"a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

3. Job Description

When a vacancy arises a job appraisal will be carried out and the job description brought up to date.

Job descriptions will be flexible and allow for reasonable adjustments to be made should disabled people apply.

The job description will include the following information:

- Title
- Overall role of post
- List of principal responsibilities and duties (around 8 to 12 very brief statements)
- General duties such as attending internal meetings, representing Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre, preparing reports and statistics, undertaking training.
- Responsibility to work in a way that promotes equality.

4. Person Specification

The person specification is a statement of the specific skills, knowledge, experience and attributes required to undertake the tasks involved in the job. It will be used as a basis for selecting candidates to be short-listed and for the decision -making during the interview itself by providing known, appropriate, justifiable and agreed criteria.

The criteria will be testable against the application form and interview. No criteria will be used for short-listing or selection that is not included in the person specification.

Criteria will be divided into those that are essential (candidates must have these) and those that are desirable (can be acquired after appointment). Genuine Occupational Qualifications will be included, where appropriate, with justification.

No artificial barriers to age, disability or race will be included.

All posts will be open to applicants of working age except in exceptional circumstances.

Formal qualifications will not usually be required unless necessary and related to the job. If so, this will be stated in the person specification. Equivalent overseas qualification will be regarded as acceptable. Any doubts over comparability will be checked.

Full consideration will be given to all types and lengths of experience, including voluntary work experience.

The criteria may be weighted. The recruitment panel will make this decision.

5. Advertising

Where posts are externally advertised, advertisements will be designed and placed to attract as wide a group of suitable applicants as possible. Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre maintains a list of outlets where job advertisements are placed. This is available on request. Organisations will be added to the list on request.

For temporary, short-term posts of less than six months duration, advertising may be restricted to those outlets that do not charge an advertising fee.

All advertisements will carry Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre statement of commitment to equality, the date of the interview and for data protection purposes, will highlight that 'personal data' will be processed for the purposes of determining their suitability to the post. We will make sure we provide job information in accessible formats for disabled people.

6. Information to applicants

The following papers will be sent out to job applicants:

- Covering letter, including date of interview and named person who can discuss job with applicant
- Person specification
- Summary of terms and conditions
- Foundation statement
- Background information relating to the post
- Application form
- Equality monitoring form
- Disabled people at work – options form
- Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre leaflet

Applicants who are short-listed, will be advised by standard letter of the interview date.

7. Information to short-listed candidates

Letters to candidates invited for interview will include:

- Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre should attend to a request for an indication of any 'reasonable adjustments'.

Applicants who have indicated they are disabled will be asked to give sufficient details to enable the panel to take into consideration any adjustments that need to be made to the interview arrangements or the post.

- Details and a map of where the interviews will be held
- Outline of the format of the selection process, e.g. formal interview, written exercise, presentation group work
- The times at which the candidate will be required to attend
- Details of any additional material the candidate will be required to bring
- Any other information relative to the day
- Names of panel members

8. Selection Panel

All selection decisions will be made by a panel and not an individual. There will be at least two people. Panels will, where possible, reflect groups that experience discrimination in their make-up in an attempt to eliminate stereotyping and bias.

Panels will always include the line manager and a person with expertise in the job area. Other panellists will be drawn from the Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre committee, partnership bodies, user groups or senior staff.

Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre Chief Officer will provide briefings to each selection panel on how to ensure the process for recruitment and selection complies with the Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre Recruitment Policy and avoids discrimination.

9. Short-listing

Short-listing will be on the basis of essential and desirable criteria that will be applied consistently to all applicants.

Disabled applicants will be offered the choice of applying under the 'guaranteed interview' scheme and if they do so, should complete the 'disabled at work options form'. If they apply under the scheme, they will be guaranteed an interview, if they meet the essential criteria. Assumptions will not be made about whether or not they are able to do the job.

Only completed application forms will be considered, except where disabled people need to send in applications in other formats. Personal information will be separated from the forms on receipt and will not be seen by the panel until short-listing is completed. The 'disabled people option form' will be kept with the application form, to ensure the short-listing panel takes account of reasonable adjustments needed. CV's may be included to give additional information, but will not be considered on their own without the appropriate form.

Application forms may be completed in handwriting or by word processor and are available on request.

10. Interviewing

All questions at interview will relate to the person specification. Each candidate will be asked about the same main areas and will not be asked about personal circumstances.

The selection panel will prepare questions and agree who will ask which questions before the interview.

All candidates will be asked about their commitment to equality and how they will ensure their work promotes this.

11. Declaration of Interest

If any of the selection panel know any of the applicants, personally or professionally, they should declare this to the rest of the panel. It will be for the panel to decide whether this could be prejudicial and whether that member should withdraw. Their decision should be recorded with brief reasons. In general personal knowledge of a candidate will not debar a panel member unless the applicant is a close relation or partner. If a panel member wishes to withdraw from the process, however, they should be allowed to do so and a replacement nominated.

12. Certificates and Qualifications

Candidates will only be asked to bring certificates or evidence of qualifications where these are necessary criteria for the post, or as evidence of identity of their commitment to learning and development.

13. Asylum and Immigration Act 1996

All candidates will be asked to provide evidence that they are eligible to work in the UK. This will be a document showing the name and NI number from a previous employer, Inland Revenue, Benefits Agency, Contributions Agency or Employment Service and could be P45, payslip, P60, NI card or letter.

14. Selection and Rejection

Decisions about selection will be made in accordance with the person specification. Once the person has been selected, and confirmed their acceptance, all unsuccessful applicants will be informed.

15. References

A minimum of two references will be taken up on candidates who successfully complete the interview stage, but will only be referred to after interviews have taken place. They will be used to verify factual information and to support or deny the appointment of a candidate, not to choose between candidates.

16. Pre-employment health checks

If the selected applicant has taken considerable amounts of sick leave, not related to a disability in recent posts, or had to leave previous posts because of a sickness not related to a disability, the recruitment panel may decide to refer the applicant for an Occupational Health Assessment prior to confirming an appointment. In these cases, an offer of employment will not be made until the health check has been carried out and the panel is satisfied with the result. Past sickness, which is not recurrent, will not automatically bar candidates from selection.

Where sickness is related to a disability, the panel will take this into consideration when considering adjustments that need to be made.

17. Recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau's (CRB) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice.

A disclosure is only requested if it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to the Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre Chief Officer and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

If the person selected starts work before the disclosure is received, they will not be able to work unsupervised with children, young people or vulnerable adults until a satisfactory disclosure is received.

Unless the nature of the position allows Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre who are involved in the recruitment process, have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offenders. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training, in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview we ensure that if a discussion takes place on the subject of any offences, or other matter that might be relevant to the position, failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position, could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

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 you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

18. Retention of Information

Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use storage, retention and disposal of disclosure information and its obligations under the Data Protection Act.

All application forms, notes and disclosures relating to unsuccessful applicants will be kept confidentially for 6 months and then destroyed by secure means.

This information will only be used in the event of any complaints or claims to employment tribunals or in circumstances where funders require us to keep this information for audit.

The Chair of the selection panel or the officer in charge will ensure that notes are kept to record the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates, and the scores candidates if any are used. These notes will be kept as in the above paragraph.

Rough notes made by interviewers to act as memory aids when making the decision may be retained as proof of a fair interviewing process.

Disclosure information is not kept on an applicant's personnel file and is kept separately and securely, with access limited to those who are entitled to see it. Dudley Community

Church/Dudley Counselling Centre recognises it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone not entitled to receive it.

However, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a disclosure, name of subject, reference number and decision taken. We may also keep equality monitoring data on applicants.

19. Monitoring of recruitment information

The officer responsible for the recruitment will ensure the Equality sheet is completed, with details of gender, ethnicity and disability of all applicants, those who were short-listed and those who were selected. This information will be considered by the Equality Monitoring Committee, who will advise on any action needed if the profile of applicants does not reflect the population profile within Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre area of remit.

20. Successful/Unsuccessful Applicants

Once a decision has been made by the panel, successful applicants will be notified by telephone and will be sent written confirmation. Successful applicants will be required in writing to accept/refuse the position. Successful applicants must notify Dudley Community Church/Dudley Counselling Centre of their availability to begin employment.

Unsuccessful applicants will immediately receive confirmation of the panel decision.

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