

Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of having the right person, in the right place, at the right time (CIPD, 2014)

Key Facts

Whilst it is easy to get wrapped up in the administration of recruitment, it is important to remember that it is all for a reason! A bad appointment can have a devastating effect on not only the role but also on team morale.

Take your time and plan in advance. You may want someone to start straight away, but that should not stop you from interviewing or carrying out pre-employment checks.

Everyone involved in the recruitment of a new member of staff should be made aware of the legislation involved (for example, the Equality Act 2010) and how to avoid discrimination. Further detail of how an occupational requirement could be applied can be found in the Guidance note Genuine Occupational Requirements.

The recruitment process will vary from role to role but there is a general pattern that can be followed. The various stages will now be dealt with in detail.

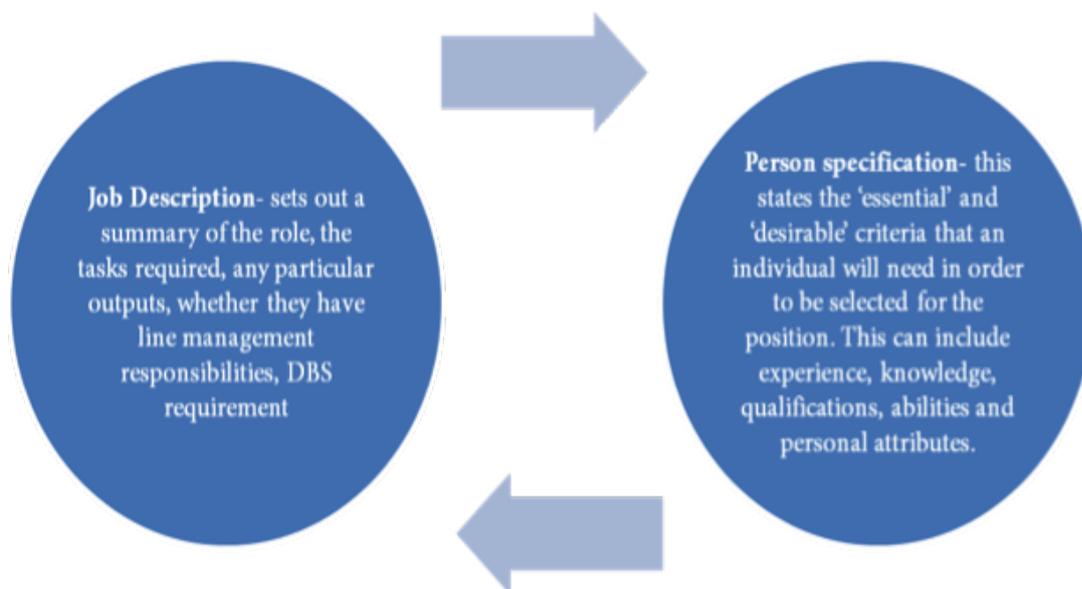
A standard recruitment process

1. Establish requirements for the post and budget for costs
2. Advertise the role
3. Shortlist applicants
4. Interview and test the applicants if necessary
5. Offer role subject to pre-employment checks
6. Take references, check right to work in the UK, Safeguarding

Establish requirements for the post

Nowadays, most candidates will expect there to be a Job Description and Person Specification for a role they are applying for.

The information should be drawn up by the PCC (or someone else on behalf of the PCC) in advance of advertising for the post.



You should also establish your budget for the post, in particular what salary and benefits you are going to offer. Ensure that you budget for all 'oncosts' including Employer's NI and pension. You will also need to ensure you have budget for materials such as a computer or desk.

Equality Act 2010

No one should discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.

Recruitment processes in particular should be checked to ensure that discriminatory criteria is not being used. An example of this maybe if you ask for someone with 'at least 5 GCSE'S'. This could be seen as discriminatory towards the older workforce so you should put '5 GCSES or equivalent'.

There are limited occasions where exceptions can be applied. These are called Occupational Requirements (ORs) and in the context of parish life they could particularly relate to the need for workers to be Christian.

Many parishes are surprised to hear that they can't ask all of their staff to be Christian, but just because the role involves working for the church it does not mean that all employees have to hold the beliefs of the Christian faith. An OR only applies if the duties of the particular job require it and it achieves a 'legitimate aim'.

Further details of how an occupational requirement could be applied can be found in the guidance note Genuine Occupational Requirements.

Parishes can reasonably expect their staff to keep to its values and culture and therefore the ethos of the parish, without actually belonging to its particular religion or belief. It is possible therefore to state in the advert that the job holder must be 'in sympathy with the aims and ethos of the Church'. This does not mean the same as asking them to be a Christian.

Advertising the role

At this stage you should establish what application process you would like to follow- for example, will you ask the applicant to complete an application form or send a CV and covering letter?

You can then draw up an advert and advertise your role in many ways:

- Parish magazine
- Newsletters
- Notice in Church porch
- Diocesan website (free of charge)
- Local papers
- National press eg. Church Times

The last two can be expensive and are probably not necessary for standard administration roles. You should be able to find applicants for most parish roles using the other routes available.

Generally you can advertise a role for as long as you wish. We would generally recommend no less than two weeks.

Shortlisting

Once you have reached the deadline date you should collate all applications and then ask at least two people to shortlist.

Shortlisting criteria should be established using the Job Description and Person Specification. The applications should then be scored, for example 0 (criteria not met) 3 (criteria met completely).

Not all criteria can be tested at the shortlisting stage, sometimes it might be necessary to wait until the interview process.

We would recommend that you shortlist no more than 5 people for interview. This can be difficult if you have a large number of applications!

For any applications that are not shortlisted, you must be able to show your objective reasons for their rejection, in particular you should ensure that no unintentional discrimination has occurred.

You should keep all applications for 6 months before destroying them.

Interviewing

The key to a successful day of interviewing is in the planning. Here are some quick tips:

- Prepare questions against the specification in advance of the interview. Be clear about what a perfect answer would be so you know how to score the answers given.
- Agree roles/responsibilities of the panel members.
- Use open questions to draw out wider responses and closed questions to clarify ambiguous information
- All questions must have a purpose to gain evidence of a technical ability or competence, for example team working, communication skills, leadership.
- Avoid questions about personal life and interests
- Score after each interview and before you meet the next candidate.

An interview process may not just mean one formal interview. It could also include a written test, a second interview or a presentation; whatever you think is necessary to determine the best candidate for the role.

Remember this is also your opportunity to sell the role and the parish; candidates will be assessing you just as much as you are assessing them!

At the end of the process, you should be sure that you have found the right person.

We must all accept that individuals may need some training or that they might not have all of the aptitudes required to

begin with, but if you do not feel that you have found the right person, try again!

Offer role and complete checks

Good news! You are now hopefully at the stage where you have found your most suitable candidate and would like to offer them the position!

When offering a role you should make the offer conditional on:

- Receipt of references that are satisfactory to the parish
Various reference request templates are available and are especially important if the individual is working with children or vulnerable adults
- Evidence of right to work in the UK (see the [Home Office guidance](#) for which documents are suitable).
If evidence can not be provided then you may need to sponsor the individual under the Home Office immigration requirements- speak to the HR department at the Diocese if this occurs
- Evidence of qualifications that may be required for the role
For example, an accountancy qualification may be needed for a Finance Manager role
- Disclosure and Barring Service check and confidential declaration (if required)
This may be required for roles that involve regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults

You can make the offer verbally but always follow up in writing. You will also need to provide a contract of employment.

Ensure that all checks are completed before the individual starts work with you and before the offer is confirmed.

You should also go back to the other candidates to confirm that unfortunately they have not been successful this time.

FAQs

Is it ok for me to ask a candidate if they have a disability or have experienced any long term sickness?

Apart from in a limited number of situations, under the Equality Act 2010 it is generally illegal to ask an individual about their health before you offer them a role. Exceptions may be if:

- You wish to find out whether any adjustments are required for the interview process
- You are monitoring applications for diversity and equal opportunity purposes
- You need to find out if an individual can carry out an intrinsic part of the role (for example a care home assistant may need to be able to lift and physically support patients).

Aside from the above, we would not advise that you ask about health and instead request an occupational health assessment for an individual after you have offered them the role. The offer can be subject to the outcome of the health assessment.

Further information about asking health related questions [can be found here](#).

Can I request references prior to the interview?

We would not generally recommend that you do this as it could make the process unfair. If you receive detailed references for one candidate but none or very little for another, it could mean that you are making a judgement based on unequal information.

The lack of detail in a reference is not generally a reflection on an individual as nowadays employers give very little information in a reference. Most companies now only provide job title and dates of employment.

We would normally advise that you only request references for your ideal candidate once you have conditionally offered them the role.

The advice in this document has been taken from the Diocese of London and this is acknowledged with thanks.