



## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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### 1. About this policy

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline St George's, University of London's approach to recruitment and selection and provide guidance to recruiting managers.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all jobs/roles within St George's, University of London.

### 2. Recruitment and Selection Principles

- 2.1. St George's, University of London recognises that in order to achieve its mission and vision it needs to recruit high quality staff.
- 2.2. All vacancies should be filled by fair and open competition. However, it is accepted that there may be some roles, as listed in 2.4 below, where appointment without a full recruitment campaign and strict adherence to the detail of this policy is acceptable. However, recruitment of such roles should adhere to the same principles, including equal access to all potential candidates and being decided on merit.
- 2.3. All employees involved in recruitment panels should be appropriately trained, including completing St George's, University of London's recruitment and selection training.
- 2.4. The following roles may not require a recruitment campaign:
  - Roles to be filled by internal applicants only, for example Associate Deans, course-related roles or positions filled by students. In such cases it would be usual to undertake some form of selection process but this would not be to the same level as for externally appointed roles. For example, these roles do not need to utilise the St George's, University of London recruitment system nor require HR support other than at confirmation of appointment; anonymisation of applications may not be possible; and,

other than where the role is linked to specific additional funding (eg a responsibility allowance), then approval from the Resourcing Review Committee (RRC) is also not a requirement. The recruiting manager must however be prepared to evidence that other aspects of their procedures are compliant with the principles of this policy. Candidates for internal only roles should discuss taking on the additional role with their line manager in order to start considering the workload management implications of taking on additional responsibilities.

- Temporary roles of 12 months or less, particularly where an appropriate candidate is already available. This includes cover roles, for example acting up, to cover a vacancy while the permanent recruitment campaign is taking place or to cover maternity leave or long-term sickness. Nevertheless, there may be instances where undertaking a recruitment campaign is good practice, for example if there is more than one existing employee who could temporarily act up into a role. If the role is to be extended beyond 12 months or made permanent a recruitment campaign should be undertaken.
- Posts resulting from applications where it is necessary to put forward a named individual (eg research grant applications or development awards).
- Extension of a fixed-term contract for an existing employee.
- Appointment as part of a training programme, for example George's Academic Training (GAT) programme.
- Honorary appointments.
- Roles that are being re-advertised within 12 months where there is an available reserve candidate from the previous campaign.

### **3. Equality and Diversity**

3.1. The diversity of people within St George's, University of London's community is one of its strengths. St George's, University of London is proud of its diverse staff and student body and committed to creating a positive working and learning environment where all people are treated with dignity and respect.

3.2. St George's, University of London is therefore committed to pursuing recruitment strategies and procedures that provide equal access to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other irrelevant factor.

3.3. As part of its recruitment process, St George's, University of London undertakes anonymised sifting for non-academic roles, whereby the personal details of candidates, including their name, are not visible to the sifting panel. In addition, in order to maintain candidate anonymity, it is usual practice not to enable candidates to

upload a separate CV or cover letter, unless specifically required by the recruiting manager.

3.4. St George's, University of London is a Disability Confident Employer. This means that St George's, University of London is committed to ensuring an inclusive and accessible recruitment process, encouraging and supporting disabled people to apply to work with the university and supporting them throughout the recruitment process. As part of the Disability Confident status, St George's, University of London operates a guaranteed interview scheme, offering interviews to disabled applicants where they meet the minimum criteria for the job. Furthermore, St George's, University of London ensure that vacancies are communicated in an accessible way and actively provide reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process to ensure any barriers that applicants with disabilities might face are addressed. More information St George's, University of London's disability inclusion work is available [here](#).

3.5. Recruiting managers are advised to have a balanced shortlisting and interview panel, both in terms of gender and ethnicity. This is to reduce the possibility of unconscious bias and also to demonstrate to candidates that St George's, University of London has a diverse workforce. Recruiting managers should speak to Human Resources (HR) if they require assistance in setting up balanced panels.

3.6. In particular, recruiting managers are encouraged to include a Fair Recruitment Specialist on the interview panel. The Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative provides a pool of staff volunteers who identify as being from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background and who are available to join interview panels across the university. The Fair Recruitment Specialist Initiative brings benefit not only in providing visible diversity to our applicants and in our community but also ensures multiple perspectives are present in hiring decisions, as well as offering development opportunities to the specialists themselves. More information on Fair Recruitment Specialists is available [here](#).

## **4. Flexible working**

4.1. St George's, University of London encourages flexible working and the job description template highlights that flexible working is an option.

4.2. There are a number of reasons why managers should offer flexible working. This includes to recruit and retain the highest quality employees. The pool of available candidates will be bigger if flexible working is an option and it also promotes equality of opportunity.

4.3. Further information on flexible working can be found in St George's, University of London's [Flexible Working Procedure](#).

## **5. Deciding whether to recruit**

5.1. Most recruitment occurs in order to recruit a replacement after an individual has left. This provides a good opportunity to reassess work requirements. Relevant questions to consider are:

- Does the job or role continue to be required?
- Is a like-for-like replacement needed or are alternative approaches possible, for example could the work be redistributed among the rest of the team or done differently?
- Is an ongoing permanent replacement required or a temporary one?
- Does the job or role need to be done at the same level as the previous post-holder? If the role is to be undertaken a different level it should be benchmarked or HERA evaluated.
- Are changes in the job likely in the foreseeable future?
- Are there other St George's, University of London employees who require redeployment opportunities? HR can advise on this.

## **6. Job description and grade**

6.1. If a decision is taken to recruit, a job (or role) description should be written. A job description outlines the purpose, duties, responsibilities, tasks and relationships of a particular job. A job description needs to be attractive to potential candidates but also realistic in what they might expect their job to involve if they join St George's, University of London.

6.2. The person specification within a job (or role) description should clearly set out the essential education or professional requirements, skills, experience and attributes required for satisfactory performance in the role. Care should be taken not to overstate the competencies required. While St George's, University of London wants to attract strong candidates, overstating the person specification could lead to fewer applicants and/or the successful candidate feeling that the job does not meet their expectations and they are being underutilised.

6.3. The job description template is available on the website and includes some guidance on what to consider when writing a job description and person specification.

6.4. If the job being recruited to is a replacement post it is always good practice to revisit the job description and consider whether any requirements have changed since it was last filled.

6.5. It is not possible to cover every eventuality in a job description and employees are also expected to undertake other activities appropriate to the grade of their role, as directed by their manager. Job descriptions can only ever reflect the current

requirements of the post and as duties and responsibilities change, the job description will need to be reviewed and amended.

6.6. For a like-for-like replacement the job grade will remain unchanged. For new roles the appropriate job grade will need to be determined, either through HERA evaluation or by benchmarking it to a similar job in St George's, University of London. More information on job grading can be obtained from HR.

6.7. For some jobs, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are required and this should be specified in the job description. It is up to the recruiting manager to specify whether a DBS check is required. Further information is available in the [Policy on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults](#) or from a Safeguarding Officer.

## 7. Approval to recruit

7.1. All recruitment to posts, or roles with specifically linked funding, requires approval as outlined in the table below. Details on RRC, meetings and the form to complete for consideration are available on the website [here](#). Job descriptions should be attached to requests for approval to recruit.

| Type of role                                                                   | Approval required from                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| New or replacement posts of 3 months duration or more                          | RRC or JRES for 100% grant funded roles |
| Temporary appointments up to 3 months, including cover for maternity leave etc | Finance or JRES for grant funded roles  |

## 8. Advertising a vacancy

8.1. Once approval to recruit has been granted, recruiting managers should complete a Recruitment Request Form (RRF), which is available on the [recruitment webpages](#). This form should be passed to HR, once fully completed and approved, who will arrange to advertise the role on the St George's, University of London jobs portal and other relevant sites/publications, eg jobs.ac.uk, as required.

8.2. Care should be taken when drafting a job advert around the language used. For example, some phrases are considered to be more likely to attract a particular gender.

8.3. A template job advert is also available on the [recruitment webpages](#).

8.4. Recruiting managers should decide the closing date for their job advert, which will normally be at least 2 weeks after the job was advertised.

8.5. Recruiting managers should allow at least 5 working days between submitting a recruitment request form and a vacancy being advertised on line.

## **9. Shortlisting**

9.1. St George's, University of London's recruitment system (<https://jobs.sgul.ac.uk/>) includes a Vacancy Management module which enables online shortlisting of candidates. All recruitment managers and members of the selection panel will automatically be given access to the module within 24 hours of the role being posted online.

9.2. Members of a selection panel should score applicants within the Vacancy Management module of the recruitment system. Each candidate should be scored against the selection criteria. The candidates with the highest scores will be invited to interview. Recruiting managers should determine how many candidates they wish to invite to interview. It is possible to keep some candidates as reserves in case more interviews are required. HR will confirm to candidates who are not being invited for interview, or placed as a reserve, that they have been unsuccessful.

9.3. St George's, University of London's policy is that shortlisting must be undertaken by at least two people and notes should be made within the Vacancy Management module of why the decision to shortlist or not was taken.

9.4. The confidentiality of candidates must be respected by those involved with shortlisting and interviewing. No information on a candidate's application should be given unless the individual candidate has given their permission.

9.5. It is St George's, University of London's policy to use online application forms for appointments in order to make comparison of candidates easier and aid shortlisting. However, in some rare instances it may be possible to utilise a CV and cover letter. Please speak to HR if this approach is required.

9.6. It is advised that interviews take place at least one calendar week after shortlisting is completed in order to give candidates enough time to arrange their diary and prepare for the interview.

## **10. Interviewing and testing**

10.1. The recruiting manager should inform HR of who they want to invite to interview. HR will invite the candidates and confirm attendance with the interview panel but the recruiting manager should make arrangements for the time and place.

10.2. It is good practice to have a balance of genders and ethnicities on an interview panel.

10.3. Recruiting managers should also consider any candidate testing that they wish to undertake. It is good practice to test candidates in some way, eg a presentation, seminar, drafting skills, prioritisation or data test, in order to get a better idea of how they would perform in a work scenario. Care should be taken to ensure that all candidates are aware that they will be asked to undertake a test and do so under the same conditions.

10.4. When interviewing candidates, concentrate on determining how they meet the requirements of the person specification. It is good practice to ask candidates a similar set of questions in order to ensure that all candidates get equal opportunity to demonstrate their competence and suitability. The interview panel should agree amongst themselves who will ask which questions. Interviewers should ask open questions which cannot be answered “yes” or “no” and do not lead the interviewee to one particular viewpoint or answer.

10.5. Interviews also offer an opportunity to ask about any gaps in a candidate’s application or employment history. However, care should be taken when interviewing not to make assumptions about candidates that could be perceived as discriminatory, for example if a job requires frequent travel ask all candidates how they would manage that aspect of the job, do not assume that some candidates might find it easier than others.

10.6. Once a decision has been made and the Recruiting Manager has made an offer to the successful candidate an Authorisation of Appointment form (which can be found on the [recruitment webpages](#)) should be completed and submitted to HR. HR will inform the other candidates that they have been unsuccessful. In some cases a candidate may be held as a reserve, in which case they will not be contacted until the situation is confirmed.

10.7. Should no candidate have performed strongly enough, the recruitment campaign will be deemed to have been unsuccessful and HR can assist with re-advertising. In such circumstances it may be appropriate to reconsider the requirements of the role, job description and most effective places to advertise the vacancy.

10.8. All candidates are offered the opportunity to receive written feedback on their performance and why they were/were not successful in their application. Recruitment panels should therefore provide a rationale for their decision and ensure that they keep sufficient notes to explain their decision. Any documentation on a recruitment campaign held by panel members should be securely destroyed no later than 12 months after the interview was undertaken.

## **11. Temporary Recruitment**

11.1. Employment via a recruitment agency or on a fixed-term contract are the usual approaches when employing somebody to cover a temporary position. If recruiting somebody to a fixed-term contract the same procedures should be followed as already described.

11.2. For all managers looking to recruit a temporary agency worker to cover a short-term vacancy, approval must be sought from Finance in advance, even if the temp is to provide cover for a permanent, budgeted role. Rates quoted for daily rates will need to have VAT (20%) added to them and may also include an agency commission rate on top. There are a number of recruitment agencies already used by St George’s, University of London. If a recruiting manager is planning to use a

recruitment agency that has not been used before, they should first speak with Procurement to see if the agency, or a suitable alternative, are on a framework agreement where the agency fee has already been agreed. If an agreement is not already in place, the fee will need to be negotiated before any staff are appointed.

11.3. If a recruiting manager wishes to appoint an agency temp to a permanent position or fixed-term contract, it is important to note that most recruitment agencies will charge a “finder’s fee”.

11.4. Due to changes in taxation legislation it is highly unlikely that an individual could be employed directly and paid via invoices. The Payroll team can provide more advice on this.

## **12. Pre-employment checks**

12.1. Offers of employment at St George’s, University of London are conditional on satisfactory pre-employment checks. These include proof of identity, that an individual has the right to work in the UK, qualifications, professional registration verification, DBS check (where applicable) and satisfactory occupational health review. HR will facilitate undertaking these checks.

12.2. Recruiting managers should contact HR if they are likely to wish to appoint an overseas candidate who requires a visa to work in the UK, as not all roles are eligible for visa sponsorship. Where the preferred candidate requires a visa, evidence of the appointment process is required, for example a copy of the job advert and selection process undertaken, such as a summary of why the preferred candidate was appointed.

12.3. If any issues arise as a result of the pre-employment check, HR will inform the recruiting manager and the job offer may be withdrawn.

## **13. References**

13.1. Job offers made to successful candidates are conditional on receiving satisfactory references. HR will take up references for the candidate(s) being offered a role. Recruiting managers need to confirm that the reference is satisfactory. There are some important things to note when reviewing a reference:

- A reference should be obtained from the current or most recent employer/line manager.
- While it may help, a reference cannot be relied upon to confirm a candidate’s suitability for a post. It is common practice for many organisations (including St George’s, University of London) only to confirm dates of employment. References generally can only be relied on to confirm a candidate’s employment history, not their performance.

- Consideration should be given to whether a reference raises any cause for concern. If so, this should be discussed with HR.
- Great care must be taken if considering rejecting a candidate on the basis of a reference. Under GDPR legislation, a candidate could request to see a reference and therefore it should be clear why it could lead to a decision to withdraw a job offer.
- It is not considered good practice to approach a contact who it is known has previously worked with the candidate to ask for an informal reference without the candidate's knowledge. This is especially the case if the candidate has not yet informed their current employer of their intention to leave. If a contact was approached informally for an opinion, consideration would need to be given to what course of action would be taken if the information provided was negative. A candidate would expect to be given a reason for a job offer being withdrawn and would likely object to it being on the basis of an informal, unexpected referee.
- For roles advertised internally only, the recruiting manager reserves the right to ask the candidate(s)' current line manager about their suitability for the role.

## **14. Starting salary**

14.1. To ensure equity and consistency in approach to starting salaries, new employees should normally be appointed to the minimum of the pay grade for the job they are recruited to, ie on the first incremental point of the designated grade. For existing employees who successfully apply for a new job in St George's, University of London at the same pay grade as they are currently on, they will transfer to the new job on their existing salary. For existing employees applying for a promotion they would usually be appointed to the minimum of the new pay grade.

14.2. St George's, University of London recognises that there may be some instances where the minimum salary on appointment is not appropriate. Recruiting managers have discretion to offer up to an additional two spine points on appointment, ie up to the third spine point of the relevant grade. Approval must be sought from RRC for starting salaries above the third incremental point of the relevant grade. Such approval can be sought prior to advertising the vacancy if a recruiting manager considers that they may need additional flexibility, eg on account of market relativities.

14.3. Starting salaries will usually be discussed with the individual by HR, after consultation with the recruiting manager.

14.4. St George's, University of London is committed to paying the London Living Wage as a minimum.

14.5. Further information is available in the [Starting Salary Policy](#).

## **15. Probation**

15.1. New entrants to St George's, University of London will be subject to a probationary period. Further information is available in the [Probationary Period Procedure](#).

## Appendix A: Recruitment process

