

# RECRUITMENT POLICY

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## RECRUITMENT POLICY

### POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our policy and practice is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Internal career development and progression:** The majority of vacancies will be filled internally except for specialist posts where the skillset cannot be found internally or for entry level or training posts e.g. apprenticeships. Providing opportunities for development and progression makes sound business sense as it increases employee engagement and retention and supports succession planning;
- **Development of a flexible and skilled workforce:** Managed lateral moves within Groups, lateral adverts on our recruitment system and filling priority posts after Gateways enables the Welsh Government to swiftly and effectively align people to meet ministerial and business priorities. This provides opportunities for employees to take on challenging roles and develop their skills in new areas of work.
- **Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles** - All initial external recruitment to permanent posts will be underpinned by these statutory principles, including the requirement that permanent appointments must be made on merit via fair and open competition as set out in the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010;
- **A strong link between eligibility and performance management outcomes** Eligibility criteria are designed to ensure that only those who have been identified as having the performance and potential to move to the next grade are able to apply. As well as being a screening tool, it provides a pool of credible, high-calibre candidates;
- **Equal Opportunity:** We have a statutory duty to adhere to the principles that there should be equality of opportunity for all people in conducting our business as an employer and service provider. We have a legal duty to eliminate all discrimination, advance equality of opportunity for all people and promote good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

We offer a guaranteed interview to Armed Forces veterans who meet the minimum criteria for a role. We offer a guaranteed interview for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates who meet the minimum criteria during internal recruitment.

- **Workforce Planning:** Delivery of our policy will be informed by workforce planning activities undertaken by all Groups.

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All our policies are fully inclusive of all staff regardless of age, marriage and civil partnership (both same sex and opposite sex), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, whether they have an impairment or health condition, are neurodivergent or use British Sign Language, their gender identity or gender expression. We acknowledge that the terms 'gender identity' and 'gender expression' are not protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, however, we believe that Government policy which includes provision for those persons who identify within the 'trans' umbrella (rather than on the basis of binary gender) is a more inclusive approach and one which ensures the Welsh Ministers are in a position to comply with all their statutory duties related to equality and the promotion of well-being in Wales.

If you have any feedback on the inclusivity of this policy, please email the Equality in the Workplace Team.

This Policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by a change in legislation or business need.

## RECRUITMENT GUIDANCE

### 1. Application

- 1.1 The Recruitment Policy, Guidance and Procedures apply to recruitment of people into and around the organisation. They do not cover external recruitment to or promotion within the Senior Civil Service or the Civil Service Fast Stream, both of which are governed by a UK strategy managed by Cabinet Office.

### 2. Workforce Planning

- 2.1 Supported by HR Business Partner teams, DG Business areas<sup>1</sup> are responsible for compiling workforce plans that reflect their future people resource needs. These plans align with delivery of business planning objectives in support of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the assignment of employees to priority work areas.
- 2.2 To assist workforce planning and to ensure that business needs are met through effective deployment of resources, employees who move laterally (via an advertised lateral or managed move), will remain in the post for 12 months before they can apply for a further lateral move, unless the post is of a shorter duration or there is a business need for a further move within this period.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to DG Business Areas within this document mean PSG, OFM, EPS, ESNR and HSS.

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- 2.3 If you have been successful in securing a post on a TPA you are not eligible to apply for another TPA post until the originally intended end date has elapsed.
- 2.4 HR Business Partners can offer advice and guidance on workforce planning and options for managing resource needs.

### 3. Equality & Diversity

- 3.1 We are committed to ensuring and promoting equality of opportunity, removing barriers and eliminating discrimination in employment. All employees and prospective employees have access to equality of opportunity in employment and career advancement on the basis of their skills, ability, qualifications and suitability for work.
- 3.2 We ensure that our recruitment practices reflect the needs of individuals with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and advertise all external vacancies on the Welsh Government website as a minimum. Internal vacancies are advertised on the intranet using our online recruitment system. Job advertisements are available in accessible formats if required.
- 3.3 Training for those involved in the recruitment process covers equality considerations at every stage, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for candidates at all stages of the process, including application assessment and interview: and to consider reasonable adjustments prior to making selection decisions. Specific HR Panel Chair Training is available.
- 3.4 All interview candidates, whether applying for a post advertised externally or internally, will be asked at least one question related to equality, diversity and inclusion at interview.

### Part-time Working and Job-sharing

- 3.5 The Welsh Government is committed to supporting SmartWorking arrangements, both as a means of supporting employees who have responsibilities outside the workplace and of promoting different patterns of working as a way of modernising office practices. Every advertisement must state that a post is open to candidates who wish to work on a part-time or job-share basis unless, on rare occasions, a business case to the contrary has been produced and approved by the Equality in the Workplace Team in advance of the advert being placed.
- 3.6 Every post advertised under this policy and procedures must be considered as capable of being filled by a part-time employee or by two or more employees using a job-sharing arrangement (subject to the caveat above). More information on job splitting/carving is available in the [line managers'](#)

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[guidance](#) on job redesign and recruitment planning. When a part-time or job-share employee is the best applicant for a post, they should be appointed even if they (or all the members of the job-sharing arrangement) do not work the full hours advertised. The recruiting line manager should make further arrangements to fill any remaining hours. A line manager must not appoint a less suitable candidate who is available to work all the hours advertised. To do otherwise would contravene the legally binding requirements of the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles to appoint on merit.

### **The Disability Confident Interview Scheme**

- 3.7 We are committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. As part of our commitment to encouraging disabled people to apply to the Welsh Government, we will offer an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum requirements for the post.
- 3.8 Welsh Government has adopted the social model definition of disability which recognises that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that all (or potential new) employees can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical model of disability ('a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities').
- 3.9 We guarantee to interview any disabled person whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that candidates must provide evidence in their application which demonstrates that the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience designed as essential are met.
- 3.10 If any candidate has an impairment, health condition, is neurodivergent or uses British Sign Language and wants to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of the recruitment process, they can contact the Diversity in Recruitment team to agree a 'Recruitment Adjustments passport'. The candidate can then use this passport for all future internal recruitment exercises.
- 3.11 The Disability Confident Interview Scheme will be applied to all advertised posts. For internal recruitment including lateral moves and Assessment and Development Gateways, the Welsh Government will apply the same principle.<sup>2</sup>
- 3.12 For internal vacancies advertised laterally the panel will be informed by the Recruitment Team once the sift results have been submitted on the online

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<sup>2</sup> There is no requirement to operate in accordance with the Disability Confident Interview Scheme for internally advertised posts but Welsh Government has chosen to honour these arrangements internally too.

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system, if there are any additional candidates who will need to be interviewed, under the Disability Confident arrangements. Welsh Government has also adopted this arrangement for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates, who will also be guaranteed an interview if they meet the minimum criteria.

- 3.13 We maintain records of diversity data related to all online and offline recruitment exercises and decisions for monitoring purposes. We analyse this data to assess trends, to inform our future recruitment policy and practice and to fulfil our reporting obligations under the Equality Act 2010. All diversity data is securely stored with access restricted to a small number of staff within central HR teams.

### 4. Welsh Language

- 4.1 Recruiting line managers must assess the need for Welsh language skills, when considering the requirements for a new or vacant post. The Welsh Language Requirements Assessment Form (which contains guidance on making the assessment) must be completed by the recruiting line manager when creating a new post or preparing to fill a vacant post (via any means). The completed form must be forwarded to the relevant Operations Team for recording against the post details.
- 4.2 Where a post is advertised as requiring Welsh language skills, the selection panel will ensure that consideration is given at the planning stage as to how these skills can best be tested, and ensure that arrangements are put in place. The job overview or advertisement should outline how these skills will be tested during the selection process e.g. via application form or written test.
- 4.3 All Selection Panels will also need to consider and plan in advance for candidates who wish to apply and/or be interviewed in the Welsh language. Applications submitted in Welsh must not be treated less favourably than applications submitted in English. Candidates are required to note their preference in terms of language for interview and are advised that if they request a Welsh language interview, they will receive a bilingual interview. This means that at least one question will be asked, and will need to be answered, in the English language, as proficiency in English is essential for all Welsh Government posts.
- 4.4 Guidance on the above issues is contained on the Recruitment pages and in the [Interview Language Guidance](#) on the intranet.

### 5. Eligibility Criteria

- 5.1 Prior to applying for a lateral move, or Assessment and Development Gateway potential candidates will be required to check and confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria. Eligibility criteria will be checked and any offers will be withdrawn if a candidate is found to be ineligible. Any candidate found to

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have intentionally provided incorrect information about their eligibility or intentionally applied for a post for which they knew they were ineligible, may be subject to action under the Discipline procedures. If any candidate has any doubts or concerns about their eligibility, they should contact the Corporate Shared Service Centre on 03000 255454 or email the Shared Services Helpdesk. Any eligibility criteria will need to have been met up to, and including the closing date of the relevant advertised vacancy.

- 5.2 If you have been successful in securing a post on a TPA, you are not eligible to apply for another TPA post until the originally intended end date has elapsed.
- 5.3 Details of the specific criteria for lateral moves and Assessment and Development Gateways are set out in the relevant sections of the recruitment procedures.

### 6. Training

- 6.1 All recruiting line managers, panel chairs and members are required to attend success profile interview training and be signed off by the central recruitment and resourcing teams before being involved in any selection interviewing as part of a recruitment process. Training is only open to employees who are substantive at EO level and above. This training covers the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles, equality considerations at all stages of the process and use of the online application management system.
- 6.2 Following this initial training, recruiting line managers and panel members will be required to update their knowledge and skills depending upon the frequency of their participation in the selection process:
- Employees who have not undertaken any recruitment activity or interviewing within the previous two years will be required to attend the full success profiles interview training course again, prior to commencing any recruitment activity.
  - Employees who have undertaken some recruitment activity within two years of completing initial training are encouraged to complete the [Success Profiles](#) e-learning module and read the [Guidance available on the intranet](#).
- 6.3 This will enable us to give assurance to the Permanent Secretary and the Civil Service Commission that we are complying with the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles. It will also help to ensure that recruiting line managers and panel members are confident in their ability and can fulfil their responsibilities to carry out recruitment activities effectively and in compliance with our policy and guidance.

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### 7. Confidentiality and Security of Information

- 7.1 All aspects of the recruitment process must be treated confidentially and documentation handled and circulated only to those individuals involved in the process. All application, sift, test and assessment and interview documentation must be marked OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE and stored securely to prevent unauthorised access. Where information is held electronically it must also be protected to prevent unauthorised access. Further information is contained in the Data Protection and Security policies. Any breach of confidentiality in a recruitment process related to the terms of the Recruitment, Data Protection or Security policies may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- 7.2 Information about recruitment decisions must not be disclosed to anyone who is not involved in the process except for the recruiting line manager, the panel, the Corporate Shared Service Centre, and Expert Services (Assessment and Development Gateways) who have a legitimate reason to access the information. Exceptionally, there may be occasions where the Resourcing Team, Expert Services will need to have access to this information.

### 8. Record Keeping

- 8.1 The recruitment process will be documented using the appropriate templates available on the intranet and on our online recruitment system. Access to records will be limited to employees involved in the process.
- 8.2 Recruiting line managers must ensure that records and paperwork are held securely in accordance with the Security and Data Protection policies and procedures.

### 9. Welsh Government's Responsibility

- 9.1 It is vitally important that recruiting line managers understand the [Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles](#) so that they can ensure legal compliance when recruiting externally.
- 9.2 The Welsh Government, like other devolved administrations, UK Government Departments and agencies, must comply with the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and the Recruitment Principles. Overall responsibility for doing so rests with the Permanent Secretary.
- 9.3 The Commission does not seek to set out the recruitment policies and practices that departments and agencies must follow. It will, however, look to see whether those policies and practices comply with the requirements of the Recruitment Principles when it audits them.



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9.4 The following explains in more detail how the Commission interprets the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

- **Merit** means the appointment of the best available person judged against the essential criteria for the role. No one should be appointed to a job unless they are competent to do it and the job must be offered to the person who would do it best.
- **Fair** - means there is no bias in the assessment of candidates. Selection processes must be objective, impartial and applied consistently.
- **Open** means that job opportunities must be advertised publicly. Potential candidates must be given reasonable access to information about the job and its requirements, and about the selection process.

### 10. Accountability

10.1 Ultimately, the Permanent Secretary is accountable for all recruitment decisions taken on behalf of the Welsh Government, but locally line managers have been given devolved authority to recruit on behalf of the organisation within their business areas. With this authority also comes the responsibility to recruit within the Commission Recruitment Principles. Failure to do this may result in the authority to recruit being revoked by the Permanent Secretary on a local level, or if serious breaches are found, the Commission may take the decision to revoke the Welsh Government's ability to undertake its own recruitment.

### 11. Monitoring & Compliance

11.1 The Commission undertakes annual audits of the recruitment policies and practices of the Welsh Government in order to ensure compliance with the requirement of appointment on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and the Recruitment Principles. This audit considers all recruitment exercises selected for their compliance with the Principles, the correct use of exceptions to the Principles and the quality of record keeping. Information on the Commission can be found on its [website](#).

11.2 The Commission will report publicly on the Welsh Government's capability and compliance with the Principles, including examples of poor and good performance, and best practice.

11.3 The Resourcing Team also undertake compliance monitoring to ensure that this recruitment guidance and the procedures are adhered to by all those involved in the recruitment and selection process.

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### 12. Queries, Concerns and Complaints

- 12.1 Concerns or queries from external applicants can often be addressed by providing them with further feedback and clarity on the assessment process. However, if someone is not satisfied with this information and wish to raise a complaint, they have a right of appeal to the Deputy Director - Corporate Services OD and, if still not satisfied, to the Civil Service Commission.
- 12.2 Queries, concerns or complaints from employees about lateral moves (managed or advertised) should be made to the recruiting line manager. Those about Assessment and Development Gateways should be made to the Resourcing team following the published appeals process. . If at any point the chair of an interview panel believes the Recruitment Principles or Procedures may be breached, they must pause the competition until this has been resolved.
- 12.3 Any concern or complaint about a lateral move must be submitted within five working days of the interview outcome being received by the candidate. No successful candidate will be able to take up a role during this period in case an appeal is made. If an appeal is upheld, this may mean that the outcome of the recruitment exercise may not be valid and the interview process may be repeated with a different panel in order to be assured that there is no bias in the repeated process.
- 12.4 If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of their initial enquiry, they must raise the issue under the informal stage of the [Grievance](#) procedure.
- 12.5 An employee who has applied for an externally advertised vacancy has a further right of complaint to the Civil Service Commission

### 13. Offering a Post

- 13.1 Where posts are offered as lateral moves, the recruiting line manager is responsible for informing candidates of the outcome. It will be important for the recruiting line manager to keep all paperwork as they will be responsible for giving feedback to unsuccessful candidates. The offer should be made to the individual by e-mail, and the individual should be asked to confirm acceptance by e-mail. The recruiting line manager should liaise with the individual and their current line manager to agree a start date, and will then notify the Corporate Shared Service Centre Recruitment Team of the move using their original email chain. The Corporate Shared Service Centre will update the online system and action the move. Line managers should not submit a people moves form, as it will be rejected. If the employee has workplace adjustments in place these will need to be discussed with the new line manager. For external candidates coming into Welsh Government, line

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managers must ensure that any workplace adjustments are in place before the new starter begins their role.

- 13.2 Any offer of appointment for a role following an Assessment and Development Gateway or an external exercise must only be made by Central HR and will not be valid or official unless it has been made by them. Line managers will be responsible for issuing outcomes for Lateral Moves. Offers will not be made until the online recruitment system and all supporting documentation is updated, complete and accurate and the HR Resourcing Team are satisfied that the recruitment has been conducted in line with policies and procedures. Successful candidates will be informed via email and asked to confirm acceptance of the post. External candidates will also be forwarded a Starter Information Pack which enables pre-employment checks to begin.

### RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES – General Principles

#### 14. Welsh Government Recruitment

Recruitment into and within the Welsh Government will be determined by workforce planning needs. Recruitment may be to permanent, temporary or fixed term appointments.

#### 15. Managed Moves within Departments

- 15.1 Deputy Directors have discretion to fill permanent and temporary posts or a permanent post which is temporarily vacant (such as due to maternity leave or long-term sickness absence) through a **lateral** managed move within the team/division/department in consultation with their HR Business Partner.
- 15.2 Employees will have to serve 12 months in post before they can apply for a further lateral move, unless the post is of a shorter duration or there is a business need for a further move within the period. Employees may apply for an Assessment and Development Gateway, provided they have been substantive in their grade for at least 18 months. Employees can only apply for one Assessment and Development Gateway per 12 months.

#### 16. Filling a Post using a lateral move

- 16.1 All posts will normally be advertised on our online recruitment system as a lateral move once it has been determined that the managed move process will not apply.
- 16.2 To be eligible to **apply for a lateral move**, applicants must meet **all** of the following criteria:

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- hold a permanent or fixed term appointment;
- have been recruited via fair and open competition and on merit;
- must have passed probation;
- must have been in their current post for 12 months must not have any current formal warnings for misconduct, underperformance or sickness absence;
- have an up to date performance record/performance category recorded;
- not be subject to any other restrictions imposed on them as a result of previous post moves e.g. a requirement to remain in post for a specific period

16.3 Successful employees will be required to remain in their new role for a minimum of 12 months before they can apply for a further lateral move unless the post is of a shorter duration or business need requires otherwise. However, employees who move posts are eligible to apply for an Assessment and Development Gateway at any time, provided they have been substantive in their grade for 18 months.

16.4 Where a lateral move is for a temporary period, the employee will need to discuss with their current line manager whether their previous post will be kept open or whether arrangements for a managed move within the group can be made.

### **The lateral moves process**

16.5 To advertise a post as a lateral move, the line manager will follow their group's approval process.

16.6 Once approved, the line manager will submit a general enquiries form to the Cooperate Shared Service Centre selecting recruitment as the subject area. Once the automatic reply has been received with the reference number, they then must send the lateral move vacancy template and confirmation of approval. The Corporate Shared Service Centre will upload the vacancy on our online recruitment system. Vacancies will be advertised for 10 working days.

16.7 The deadline indicated in an advert is absolute. Late applications will not be accepted for any reason unless this has been agreed beforehand as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010. It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they have submitted a fully completed application via the online recruitment system by the advertised deadline.

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- 16.8 The interview panel will consist of the recruiting line manager and one other panel member. Both panel members must have completed the success profiles interview training. The second panel member must also be:
- at the same grade or above the grade of the vacant role;
  - be a different gender to the recruiting line manager, and;
  - an independent person from any group **and** must complete the declaration of interest form.
- 16.9 Applicants will express their interest by submitting an application via the online recruitment system. The application will ask candidates to demonstrate how they meet the requirements of the role. They will also be required to confirm their eligibility to apply.
- 16.10 When they apply for a post staff **must** notify their line manager that they are doing so.
- 16.11 Following the closing date, the panel will review all applications submitted. A sift must be conducted. Prior to letting candidates know the outcome of the sift, if the recruiting line manager has only been able to invite to interview a proportion of those who met the minimum criteria they must contact the Corporate Shared Service Centre Helpdesk to check if any of the candidates not shortlisted for interview have requested to take part in the Disability Confident Interview Scheme or the Guaranteed Interview offer for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates. If candidates in either group meet the minimum criteria for the role (usually an assessment of 'Sufficient evidence' against all the criteria), they must be invited to interview.
- 16.12 The recruiting line manager will personally issue the outcome to each applicant by email, using the template provided on the intranet. If an applicant has any queries or concerns about the process and/or the outcome, they will raise them with the recruiting line manager.
- 16.13 The panel will conduct an interview with the candidates who met the required standard. This will include testing of the candidate's Welsh language ability if required. As the discussions relate to a lateral move, candidates will be assumed to have the relevant level of competence for the grade and questions will relate to the bespoke job requirements and technical requirements of the role only. Candidates will be assessed according to set scoring criteria. The appointment will be based on merit with the candidate scoring the highest marks being offered the post. Detailed information and guidance for line managers and candidates is available on the recruitment pages of the intranet.
- 16.14 Following the interview(s), the line manager will then personally issue the decision(s) to the candidate(s) by email, and agree a start date with the successful candidate and their line manager. This will usually be four weeks

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from the date of the candidate being notified of the outcome. (Please note the information re concerns/complaints in paragraph 12.3 above.) Once a date has been agreed, the recruiting line manager must confirm the outcomes at each stage with the Corporate Shared Service Centre. The Corporate Shared Service Centre will then close down the vacancy and action the move. Line managers must **not** submit a people moves form.

- 16.15 Disabled candidates are encouraged to ask for recruitment adjustments to ensure a fair process and this can include adjustments at the application or interview stage. Disabled candidates can speak to the Diversity in Recruitment team (DiR team) if they are not sure what recruitment adjustments are needed. If recruitment adjustments are required, the DiR team will liaise with the recruiting line manager. The recruiting line manager has to ensure the adjustments are put in place. Adjustments may include extending the closing date.
- 16.16 If the recruiting line manager does not put the agreed recruitment adjustments in place for a candidate's interview they will risk invalidating their campaign. Candidates can contact the DiR team within 48 hours after their interview if they feel their adjustments have not been put in place correctly. The DiR team will notify the recruiting line manager of this and they must pause issuing outcomes until this is resolved. If it found that the adjustments were not put in place, the candidate will need to be re-interviewed. The recruiting line manager will notify all other candidates that there will be a delay in them receiving their outcome.
- 16.17 Should the successful candidate have physical workplace adjustments in place, the line manager may need to make separate arrangements, including the possibility of requesting that ICT and/or Facilities move items, so that they are in place on the start date in the new role.
- 16.18 If any applicant has any queries or concerns about the process and/or the outcome, they will raise them with the recruiting line manager. Should a candidate request feedback, the line manager will give it in person.
- 16.19 If the lateral moves process does not produce a successful candidate at either the sift or interview stage, the line manager should discuss options with the HR Business Partner.

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### 17. Temporary Promotion Assignment (TPA)

17.1 A Temporary Promotion Assignment (TPA) will focus on providing a **time-limited** and **high-quality development opportunity** for staff, with a consistent and fair assessment process at all levels. It will be a development opportunity for **short term use** and will not extend beyond a 12 month period. A TPA will not be retained indefinitely by an individual; it will have a clear end date so both the individual and the line manager can plan early, and well in advance for next steps once the assignment has ended.

#### Filling posts on a temporary basis for up to 12 months

17.2 TPA opportunities will be advertised within a Directorate as a minimum. Heads of Profession may wish to offer a TPA opportunity within their profession. It will not be used to attract resource from outside of a Group or used for cross organisation moves (other than within a Profession).

17.3 Anyone who meets the following eligibility criteria can apply for a TPA by submitting an expression of interest:

- You must have a SUCCEEDING or STRENGTHENING performance marking;
- You must have no live disciplinary warnings; and
- You must have successfully completed your probationary period.

17.4 When you apply for a TPA, you must notify your line manager that you are doing so. They will be able to support you through the process and discuss with you how the opportunity can meet your development needs. We will provide Heads of Division with guidance and a template to support a consistent approach across all teams. When you apply for a post, you **must** notify your line manager that you are doing so. They will be able to support you through the process and advise if the role is in line with your development needs.

17.5 All TPA expressions of interest will be sifted. Those who are successful at sift stage will progress to an interview. At the interview you can expect to be asked questions which will test whether you meet the behaviours and skills required of the higher grade.

17.6 If the post is offered on the basis of a TPA, this does not constitute a substantive promotion and individuals appointed will not be promoted on a permanent basis. Time spent in receipt of a TPA allowance does not count towards any calculation of time spent in the higher grade for eligibility to apply for promotion. In line with the TPA policy and guidance, all TPAs will cease at 12 months and individuals and line managers will be automatically notified prior to the TPA elapsing.

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17.7 The employee's former post will be kept open for a return after the temporary assignment has ended in line with the TPA policy and guidance.

### 18. Assessment and Development Gateways

#### Eligibility Criteria

18.1 To be eligible to **apply for assessment and development gateways** EO to G6, applicants must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- hold a permanent or fixed term appointment;
- have been recruited via fair and open competition and on merit;
- must have passed probation;
- must have been in their substantive grade for 18 months
- must not have any current formal warnings for misconduct, underperformance or sickness absence;
- have a relevant performance category uploaded onto HR Self Service;
- not be subject to any other restrictions imposed on them as a result of previous post moves e.g. a requirement to remain in post for a specific period;
- must have a 'Succeeding' or 'Strengthening' performance category;

18.2 Before they apply for any assessment and development gateway, candidates will be required to check and confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria. The eligibility of candidates will be checked and an offer of a post will be withdrawn if a candidate is found to be ineligible. Any candidate who is found to have intentionally provided incorrect information about their eligibility, or to have intentionally applied for an assessment gateway for which they knew they were ineligible, may be subject to action under the disciplinary procedures. If any candidate has doubts or concerns about their eligibility, they should contact the Corporate Shared Service Centre on 03000 255454 or email Shared Services Helpdesk.

18.3 Any eligibility criteria will need to have been met at the time of making an application, on or before the closing date of the vacancy. Any application which fails to meet the criteria will not be allowed to proceed unless the issues are successfully resolved in good time for the recruitment panel to consider it.

18.4 Employees will only be able to apply for an assessment and development gateway to the grade above their substantive grade i.e. there will be no "grade skipping" through the levels within EO, HEO and SEO or into G7 and G6.

#### The Assessment and Development Gateway Process



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- 18.5 We will now be using assessment and development gateways for all promotions. If candidates are in a profession, they should speak to their Head of Profession.  
If candidates apply for an assessment and development gateway and are unsuccessful, they are not precluded from applying for subsequent Gateways at a later date.
- 18.6 Assessment and Development Gateways will be run twice in a 12 month period for each grade. Candidates can only apply for one per 12 months.
- 18.7 Candidates **must** inform their line manager they are applying for an assessment and development gateway at the earliest opportunity.
- 18.8 If an employee is currently on a TPA, there is no obligation to apply. However the gateway is the only way to gain substantive promotion

### Recruitment Adjustments

- 18.9 If a candidate feels a recruitment adjustment would ensure they are assessed fairly in the gateway they will be able to submit a request. Adjustments can be made to any part of the recruitment process (the application as well as the assessment centre) - further information will be within the Candidate Guidance pack.
- 18.10 If a candidate knows they need (or think they might need) any type of reasonable adjustment **in order to make an application**, they need to contact the Diversity in Recruitment team as soon as possible to discuss any required adjustments.

### Welsh Language Requirements

- 18.11 Applications in Welsh are welcomed (please submit via the online recruitment system in Welsh.) The interview will be available to undertake through the medium of Welsh. Candidates should note on their application their preferred language for interview. The online test is not available in Welsh at this time.

### Annual Leave

- 18.12 We will schedule a range of dates throughout the assessment period to give everyone the best chance to attend one of the dates. We cannot make alternative arrangements if someone is unable to make any of the dates scheduled (the only exception is if this is an agreed reasonable adjustment).

### Away from the office

- 18.13 If a candidate is currently on (or about to start) maternity leave, a career break, or long term sickness they can apply for an assessment gateway but

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they must be able to attend one of the assessment centres scheduled (please see the advert and candidate pack for details). The Line manager should inform employees who are 'away from the office' of the opportunity. The timetable for the gateways will be published so candidates can consider when is the right time for them to apply.

### Loan or Secondment

18.14 All staff on Welsh Government terms and conditions who are on **outward** secondments or loans are able to apply.

### Outcome

18.15 Once a successful candidate is matched and in post, this will be a permanent promotion.

18.16 All candidates who meet the pass mark will be promoted, unless there is more successful candidates than posts available, then posts will be awarded in merit order.

18.17 We expect roles to be available in all of our main offices and will support flexible working requests where practicable. Now that we have adopted Smart Working practices across the organisation, we expect the most suitable candidate to be matched to the most suitable post, regardless of location.

18.18 Once matched, candidates would move into their new role within four weeks.

### Requirement to remain in post

18.19 Successful candidates will be expected to remain in post for minimum of 12 months.

### Appeals

18.20 Appeals post sift outcome and post overall outcome will only be considered against the following criteria if you believe:

1. You have been treated unfairly
  2. You have been subject to bias in the assessment process
  3. The correct process wasn't followed
- Detailed appeals guidance is available in the candidate pack.

## 19. Filling a post using external recruitment

19.1 All posts will normally be advertised internally first but, if that approach is unsuccessful, line managers may ask to be allowed to recruit externally if the relevant approvals are in place. This will ensure that we develop talent within the organisation and ensure recruitment processes are cost effective. Line

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managers will need to build these timescales into their planning. Refer to the Recruitment Guidance on the intranet for further information.

- 19.2 Any proposal to recruit employees via an external exercise must be made to the Permanent Secretary using the External Recruitment Requests Business Case Pro-forma available on the intranet.

### Fixed Term Appointments

- 19.3 Where an external recruitment exercise is held to fill a fixed term post (either via a job advertisement or through direct recruitment into the role) and there is a requirement for the successful candidate to remain in that post for a specific period, this must be stated in the advertisement and the information provided about the role.
- 19.4 If a recruiting line manager wishes to attach this caveat to a post, they will need to provide assurance of the justifiable reasons for doing this before advertising. The assurance will need to state:
- The background as to why the post is required and any details surrounding why such a post is pivotal to direct reputational issues for the organisation;
  - Details to link the specific skills required for the role and an explanation as to why the individual employed is the only one or one of very few individuals who possess the skills required;
  - An explanation as to why it is of critical importance that the role retains the continuity of the same individual conducting the work throughout the duration of the contract;
  - Details of the repercussions to the organisation if the same individual is not retained throughout the course of the fixed term appointment.
- 19.5 The recruiting line manager will need to record this within the board report as part of the required audit trail.
- 19.6 Contracts and/or letters for those individuals appointed on this basis will also need to reflect the fact that they have to stay in post for the full duration of the contract period as stated at the outset in the advert and /or information provided about the role.
- 19.7 Where the advert/information about the role did not specify a requirement to remain in post for a specified period:
- employees on fixed term contracts may apply for a lateral move if they were recruited through fair and open competition, and have served 12 months in post and at their substantive grade or 12 months continuous temporary employment if they have held a series of roles. They may also apply on promotion if they were recruited through fair and open

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competition, and have served 18 months in post and at their substantive grade or 18 months continuous temporary employment if they have held a series of roles. They must have passed probation and will also need to meet the other eligibility criteria for the role. If an employee is uncertain whether they were recruited through fair and open competition, they should contact the Corporate Shared Service Centre for advice.

- employees on fixed term contracts may apply for any **externally** advertised roles at any time.

19.8 Details of the composition of the interview panel for external recruitment are contained in Annex B.

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### Annex A

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### **Internal Candidates are responsible for:**

- familiarising themselves with this and all other applicable policies and their guidance/procedures, together with the Performance Management Policy/Guidance and Procedures;
- attending 'Interviewee Skills' and other training to support their applications;
- checking they meet the eligibility criteria before applying for a lateral move or a vacancy and raising any issues with the Corporate Shared Service Helpdesk;
- ensuring they notify Corporate Shared Service Helpdesk of any reasonable adjustments early on in the process to ensure they are put in place
- preparing CVs and job applications and submitting prior to the deadline of vacancy closing dates; and,
- raising concerns or complaints with the line manager, HR Business Partner, Panel Chair or HR Resourcing Team or, as a final measure, through the Grievance Route.
- Liaising with the Diversity in Recruitment team to agree any recruitment adjustments.

##### **Line managers are responsible for:**

- ensuring their employees are aware of the Recruitment Policy and this Guidance and Procedures and any future opportunities for lateral moves, Assessment and Development Gateways and progression;
- preparing employees for career development opportunities through the implementation of learning and development plans as part of the performance management process and providing opportunities for development within the job role;
- ensuring all performance management reviews are up to date and outcomes recorded on HR Self Service to enable eligibility of candidates to be determined;

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- ensuring they consider at this stage the benefits of the post being undertaken on a part time or Job Share basis, including, should the successful candidate work part time or there should be a job share partnership, considering how the tasks can be carved to facilitate this.
- carrying out all the transactional elements of the recruitment process, including updating the Cooperate Shared Service Centre so they can update the online recruitment system and the issuing of all outcomes, in relation to lateral moves; and,
- submitting job overviews or job and person specifications to their Resourcing Panel for approval to fill the post.
- ensuring an outreach plan to attract a wide, diverse field of applicants is in place before any external recruitment takes place. [A toolkit on how to attract a wide, diverse field of candidates](#) can be found on the Intranet:

### **Panel Chairs are responsible for:**

- attending Success Profiles Interview Training prior to commencing any recruitment activity, and refresher training as appropriate;
- Before chairing a recruitment panel, assuring themselves that all panel members are appropriately trained. There is Panel Chair Training available.
- ensuring they have followed the correct recruitment and approval procedures by ensuring they have fully planned the recruitment exercise, including being legally compliant with the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles and compliant with Welsh Government guidance;
- The Chair of the panel has the overall responsibility for ensuring that any external selection process is compliant with the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles. Before a competition may proceed to advertising, the Chair must therefore approve the selection criteria, role description, panel membership, process to be followed, timetable, remuneration and other terms. Also, the advertising strategy, including how best to attract a strong and diverse field of applicants. To keep in line with our effort to increase workforce diversity the Chair may also comment on the following in their board report:
  - the strength and diversity of the field of candidates;
  - the efforts that were made to secure applications from currently underrepresented groups;
  - and the success or otherwise of these efforts, and possible lessons to be learned.

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- ensuring that any reasonable adjustments for candidates are in place;
- ensuring that if any panel members have any adjustments , that they are put in place.
- ensuring documentation is fully completed and retained confidentially in accordance with the guidance;
- ensuring that the recruitment scheme for which they are responsible is conducted fairly, openly and without bias with appointment on merit;
- maintaining records of the process and decision-making so that there is an accessible audit trail for review by internal auditors and the Civil Service Commission;
- drafting and publicising job advertisements and arranging translation in accordance with the guidance; and,
- assuring themselves (on behalf of the organisation) that the successful candidate is eligible for appointment to the position.

### **Panel members are responsible for:**

- attending Success Profiles Interview Training prior to commencing any recruitment activity, and refresher training as appropriate;
- ensuring documentation is fully completed and retained confidentially in accordance with the guidance;
- ensuring that the recruitment scheme for which they are participating in is conducted fairly, openly and without bias with appointment on merit; and,
- maintaining records of the process and decision-making so that there is an accessible audit trail for review by internal auditors and the Civil Service Commission.

### **Expert Services Resourcing Team is responsible for:**

- co-ordinating evaluations of recruitment arrangements in liaison with the Corporate Research team;
- being the lead point of contact with the Civil Service Commission and their appointed auditors in order for the organisation to be fully auditable on recruitment schemes;

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- undertaking compliance monitoring to ensure that recruitment procedures and guidance are adhered to by all those involved in the recruitment and selection process;
- being the main point of contact for candidates or panel members to raise concerns or queries in respect of recruitment activity being undertaken;
- quality assuring training and guidance provided in order for those undertaking recruitment activities to do so in a fully compliant manner; and,
- in relation to external appointments, being the point of contact in respect to any salary negotiations via the HR Business Partner.

### **Corporate Shared Service Centre is responsible for:**

- carrying out all the transactional elements of the recruitment process, including the issuing of all outcomes and contracts in relation to external appointments.

### **HR Business Partners are responsible for:**

- ensuring legal compliance with the Civil Service Commission Recruitment Principles and being accountable for any breaches in their area;
- providing support and advice to customers in their Department, including the approvals process, the job description and support in undertaking recruitment in their area. Where this relates to an external appointment, agreeing the remuneration for the post at the planning meeting with the Head of Resourcing, and liaising with the Head of Resourcing in respect to any salary negotiations as per the 'Starting Pay on Appointment Policy/Guidance and Procedures';
- providing advice and guidance on job redesign and job carving to line managers, which will encourage applications from part time or job share people.
- providing advice and support to line managers putting a business case to Equality in the Workplace Team if they deem the post to be suitable only for employees who work full time.
- informing workforce planning and succession planning;
- supporting the preparation of any business cases required for the Civil Service Commission; and,



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- considering job and person specifications and skills profiles for Flexible Posting and liaison with resourcing panels and individuals regarding postings.

### **Diversity in Recruitment team is responsible for:**

- Agreeing recruitment adjustments with candidates, including arranging mentor discussions as requested
- Liaising with the Priority Resourcing team to ensure adjustments are put in place for Gateways (and other forms of assessment)
- Liaising with recruiting managers to ensure recruitment adjustments are put in place during the lateral moves process
- Liaising with recruiting line managers to ensure outreach plans are in place to attract a diverse range of candidates in external recruitment.

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## PANEL COMPOSITION

### General

1. Panels must comply with the general requirements as set out in this Guidance and Procedures. All panels should be diverse. They must have a gender balance. This means at least one female and one male member on the panel. Wherever possible, panels should include a member of one of the underrepresented groups (ethnic minority, LGBT+ or disabled).

### Internal recruitment

2. The panel chair must be at least one grade higher than the post being recruited into and the panel members must be substantive at least at the grade of the post being recruited into. For example, if a post at SEO level is being recruited into, the chair must be a substantive G7 or above and the panel members must be at substantive SEO or above.
3. For Assessment and Development Gateways, there will be two panel members for sift and three panel members for the assessment stage:
  - HR approved Panel Chair,
  - an independent person from any group but must complete a declaration of interest form,
  - must be, as a minimum, substantive at the grade that is being recruited to,
  - In the case of professions, the panel should consist of one HR representative and two representatives from the profession.
4. For lateral only moves, there will be two panel members:
  - The recruiting line manager acting as Panel Chair
  - an independent person from any group however they **must** complete a declaration of interest form.
5. The panel composition is to help ensure that selection is informed by a more rounded appreciation of what is needed to perform at that level across the Welsh Government. The recruiting line manager will determine the mix of specialist and generalist panel members, depending on the post. On occasions, to comply with selection methods for recruitment within a profession, the panel may comprise more than 3 members.
6. The recruiting line manager or the Resourcing team (if it is a centrally managed campaign) will determine whether the independent person is a specialist or generalist, depending on the post.

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7. Director's approval will be required in order to drop out of interview panel once confirmed.

### External Recruitment

8. When an external recruitment exercise is being undertaken, the HR professional (either HR BP or from HR Expert Services) will chair the panel. The HR Chair must be substantive at the grade of the post being recruited into or above. However, if the post is at G6 or 7, the HR professional may be substantive in the grade at either level. The HR Chair must have completed Recruitment and Selection Training and have significant experience as a panel member, including interviewing regularly within the last two years.
9. The other panel members must be substantive at least at the grade being recruited into and comprise:
  - the recruiting line manager
  - an independent person from completely outside the group being recruited into
10. If it is decided that a person seconded to the Welsh Government is needed as a panel member due to their unique knowledge and experience, that individual can form part of the panel provided they are at the equivalent required substantive grade. Secondees may not act as a Chair for any external recruitment activity due to the legal requirement under the [Civil Service Commission Principles](#) that it must be conducted by a Civil Servant.