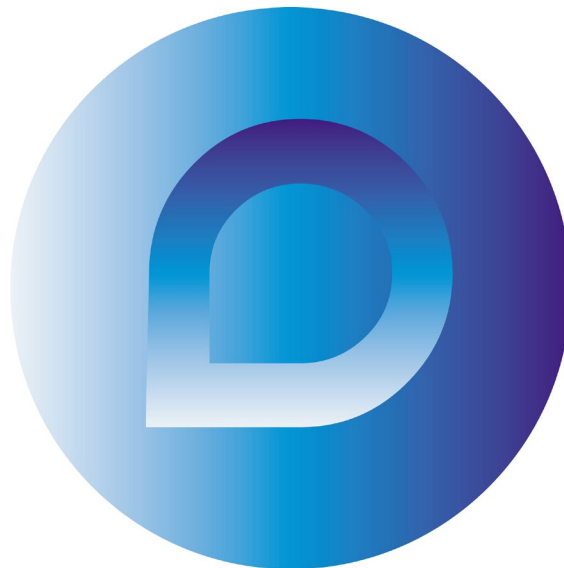


Recruitment Policy and Procedures



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Recruitment policy

1. Purpose

The By Design Group Ltd and associated companies (BDG for future reference in this document) recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. The BDG therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined below, which also meet the requirements of the companies Equal Opportunities Policy, the Equality Act 2010, and all other relevant employment legislation.

Management guidelines on the implementation of this policy are provided separately.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure cover all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all staff recruitment except casual staff. In order for the policy and procedure to be effective it is essential that any employee who is involved in any aspect of the recruitment and/or selection of staff is aware of this document and follows it. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the senior management in the BDG, including heads of departments, line managers in conjunction with the HR function to ensure that this is the case.

3. Core Principles

- The BDG has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment.
- The BDG will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the BDG.
- The BDG wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process and as required in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post.
- The BDG will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.
- The BDG will provide appropriate training, development, and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities in order to meet this core principle. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy him or herself that he/she is appropriately trained and can comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure.
- Recruitment and selection are a key public relations exercise and should enhance the reputation of the BDG. The BDG will treat all candidates fairly, equitably, and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- The BDG will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow innovative ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- The BDG will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost effective.
- If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to access any documentation held on them in

accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

4. Recruitment & Selection Procedure

There are a number of key stages in recruiting and selecting for a post. This procedure outlines the key stages.

4.1 Preparation Stage

- The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the area's strategic plans and budget has been completed.
- The recruitment of staff will consider the BDG's need for innovative ideas and approaches and additionally should support the BDG's commitment to ensuring a diverse workforce by proactively seeking to attract groups that are under-represented in the BDG's profile to maximise its ability to meet diverse requirements.
- Recruitment should form an integral part of the staffing strategy for the area and should take account of the need for any 'positive action' initiatives in process. 'Positive Action' is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to the steps that an employer can take to encourage applicants from people who share a protected characteristic (e.g., a certain gender or race) who under-represented in a particular area of the workforce, for example:
 - placing advertisements in the minority ethnic press, the women's press and any other publication which is targeted at groups which are under-represented.
 - including statements in advertisements that encourage individuals from under-represented groups to apply for the advertised position.
- All new or changed posts must be formally role reviewed and graded before they are advertised in order to help ensure equal pay for work of equal value.
- Formal authorisation to recruit to a post should be sought before commencing the recruitment process.
- If a manager believes that there may be potential difficulties in recruiting for a post they should contact the Directors or HR function for advice and guidance on comparative market rates and options for appropriate action.

4.2 Job Description & Person Specification

- A job description and person specification must be produced or updated for any vacant post that is to be filled.
- The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post.
- The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge, and experience for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used do not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.

4.3 Advertising

As a minimum all positions will normally be advertised within the BDG. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide staff with opportunities for career development, thus maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to waive the need to advertise. This is likely to include the following circumstances:

- positions requiring specialised expertise where the manager in the department can demonstrate that a comprehensive search has been conducted and the nominated individual is the most suitable

- person for the position.
- where the manager can verify that the work is required for a specific purpose of no greater than twelve months duration.

However, in the circumstances outlined above, if the successful candidate is likely to require a Tier 2 certificate of sponsorship to apply for permissions to work in the UK, the post must be advertised in line with UKBA requirements.

- Staff subject to redeployment will be given access to vacancies before they are advertised more generally within the BDG or externally.
- In certain circumstances it may be more effective to use a recruitment agency or people's individual networks. This should be discussed and agreed with the Directors / HR function. This will, however, not eliminate the need to advertise the position internally and any external agencies or consultants who assist in the process must act in accordance with this policy and with respect to our equal opportunities requirements.
- Applicants should be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision regarding their suitability for the role. Further particulars that provide such information should be produced using the template that can be obtained from the BDG HR function.
- Staff who have been in an acting position that subsequently becomes vacant will have to apply for the position when it is advertised, but in such cases the position can be advertised, in exceptional circumstances on an internal basis only.
- Applicants are asked to provide equal opportunities details when making their application to enable a robust means of monitoring the success of recruitment in relation to our diversity aims. This information is separate from the job application and applicants are free to indicate that they do not want to provide these details.
- The BDG has a legal obligation to comply fully with the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- All adverts must be placed through the HR team, except where alternative arrangements have been formally agreed in advance with the HR team.
- All advertised vacancies will be placed on the BDG's website where possible; plus, certain roles, may also be advertised on other job websites.
- All advertising must be cost-effective and agreed in advance with the Directors.

5. Selection of Candidates

5.1 Shortlisting

- Shortlisting may involve the whole panel but must be carried out by a minimum of 2 people where possible to avoid any possibility of bias, one of whom would normally be the direct line manager.
- Shortlisting and selection panels for appointments must meet the minimum composition requirements, as outlined in the management guidance (appendix 1), and should be constituted with due consideration to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.
- A member of the HR function will not normally be on a panel unless it is requested.
- Notes of the shortlisting decisions for each candidate should be recorded by each member of the panel on the shortlisting decision form (available from the BDG HR function). The Form should be returned to the HR function once the shortlisted candidates for interview have been selected.
- Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including any tests, in writing giving as much prior notice as possible and a minimum of five working days before the interview. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, they should also be asked to advise if there are any particular arrangements or reasonable adjustments that could be made so that they can participate fully in the selection process.
- All candidates (internal and external) should be assessed objectively against the selection criteria

set out in the Person Specification , and only candidates who meet all the essential criteria should be short-listed. Assumptions about the qualities of internal candidates should not be made.

5.2 Selection & Interview

- All redeployment candidates who meet the essential criteria for the post (as set out in the person specification) will be offered an interview.
- Interview should normally be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the recruiting manager / person in charge of recruiting the post.
- Selection is a two-way process: candidates are assessing the role and the BDG. Those involved in recruitment should consider how best to convey a positive image.
- It is recommended that a range of selection methods, which are suitable for assessing both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification are established as this will enhance objective decision making which is difficult through interview alone.
- Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.
- Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken, ideally by the interviewers, so that they can refer back to these when assessing candidates against the person specification and making decisions. Notes of the interview and any other notes on the candidate taken during the recruitment and selection process should be passed back to HR following the selection process and will be kept for a minimum of 6 months following the selection process.
- In situations where there is more than one candidate who is suitable for appointment, but one or more of the candidates requires the BDG to sponsor them under the Tier 2 skilled worker category to obtain the right to work in the UK, in accordance with immigration rules the panel should give preference to any of the candidates who do hold a continuing right to work in the UK. The BDG will ensure that it complies with all current immigration rules by reviewing its recruitment processes and management guidance as and when changes occur.
- In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the chair of the panel or the recruiting manager, although he or she may delegate this to another member of the panel where appropriate.
- Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will, as a minimum, receive telephone, email, or written notification of the outcome of the selection process.
- Where there is an international candidate and a candidate from the UK who are equal after the selection process is complete and both meet the requirements of the role, then the candidate from the UK must take precedence, and be offered the role. This reflects the statutory employment requirements.

5.3 Referees

- Information sought from referees (by the HR function) should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided. It should be noted that many organisations have a policy of not providing personal references and therefore references provided may only confirm details of current appointment. This is much less likely to be the case with references for posts which are of a more personal nature.
- Normally two references will be taken up, upon being offered the role, one of which should be from the current or most recent employer.
- If the appointment is urgent, the HR function may seek to obtain a verbal/telephone reference for the successful candidate providing those standard procedures for doing so are followed.
- Referees should not be contacted without the candidate's consent and the information provided should be treated as confidential.
- In certain circumstances a school or personal reference is acceptable.

5.4 Making the Appointment

- It is recognised that in many cases it is desirable to make a verbal offer very shortly after the selection process to enhance the BDG’s ability to recruit the selected candidate. In such cases the verbal offer will normally be made by the chair of the selection panel, although he or she has the discretion to delegate this responsibility if felt appropriate.
- The BDG recognises open contracts as the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees and will appoint new and existing staff to indefinite contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify use of a fixed-term contract.
- Appointments will usually be made at the minimum of the advertised salary unless directly relevant experience would justify additional increments. Advice should be sought from the Directors if the intention is to appoint at the maximum of the advertised salary scale. No appointment can be made above the advertised scale.
- Once a selection decision has been made the HR team will produce a written offer of employment following receipt of a New Starter Information form (which includes all details for the new member of staff) from the chair of the selection panel, in line with agreed service standards. Offers of employment are normally subject to satisfactory references, checks of qualifications and any other checks as appropriate, such as Asylum and Immigration checks, DBS checks (for posts that are exempted from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act).

5.5 Induction

Induction is the final stage of the recruitment process and is carried out by line managers and / or the HR function. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed the line manager is responsible for advising the HR function of any specific requirements to be covered within the induction programme for the new employee.

6. Responsibilities

Role	Accountable for
Head of Department (or nominee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the need for the post(s) in the context of the Departmental staffing plan and budget. • Ensuring the competence of all nominees who make recruitment decisions within the department. • Ensuring specific requirements are forwarded to the HR function for inclusion in the induction programme for any new employee(s).

<p>Person in Charge of Recruiting Role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with the Directors to determine whether a vacancy is a replacement post, a new post or an existing post which requires revision. • Ensuring that all new/revised posts are formally graded before they are advertised and that formal authorisation to recruit has been sought. • Discussing potential difficulties in recruiting with the BDG HR function. • Preparing a Job Description, Person Specification, draft advert, and further particulars. • Agreeing recruitment plan and timescales with the BDG HR function. • Undertaking any tasks agreed to as part of the recruitment timescales drawn up with BDG HR function (e.g., inviting short-listed candidates to interview, taking up references, issuing rejection letters). • Ensuring that any agencies or external consultants who assist in the recruitment process adhere to the BDG’s Recruitment Policy. • Advising of any specific requirements to BDG HR function for the induction programme for the new employee(s).
<p>Person in Charge of Short-listing / Selection Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing a short-list on behalf of the Selection Panel. • Keeping a written record of all short-listing and interview decisions. • Making a verbal offer of employment. • Providing feedback to unsuccessful short-listed candidates if requested, ensuring equal opportunities requirements are followed.
<p>Human Resources Function</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing professional HR advice on grading of posts, content of job descriptions/person specifications, advertising, and appropriate salary levels. • Placing job adverts if required. • Carrying out pre-employment checks. • Issuing written offers of appointment and contracts of employment. • Undertaking any other tasks agreed to as part of the recruitment timescales drawn up with the recruiting department (e.g., inviting short-listed candidates to interview, taking up references, issuing rejection letters). • Monitoring and reviewing the recruitment process and supporting policies / guidance.

APPENDIX 1

MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

For assistance at any stage of your recruitment process, contact the BDG HR function.

You can request a recruitment checklist to help you through this process.

Preparation

Starting with an up-to-date job description and person specification, you need to grade your vacancy, plan your selection methods, write your advert, and get authorisation to recruit.

Advertising

Advertising is the usual method of attracting applications. However, you might instead use candidate pools as your source of applicants.

Selection

Longlist, telephone screen, shortlist, invite, interview, test, select - how to pick the best candidate.

Appointment

You have chosen your preferred candidate: now we need to make an offer, complete pre-appointment checks and, if necessary, obtain permission to work in the UK

New starter

You now have a new colleague.