



### Recruitment of Police Staff

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## 1 Statement of Intent

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and information on recruitment procedures for police staff.
- 1.2 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are committed to ensuring this policy complies with relevant legislation and general principles of fairness, and that consultation has been undertaken with all relevant staff groups.
- 1.3 All Norfolk/Suffolk policies are intended to promote equality, eliminate unlawful discrimination and actively promote good relations regardless of a person's gender, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital or family status, trade union or staff association or support group activity, disability or age.
- 1.4 The recruitment and selection process will usually take a minimum of 12 weeks and line managers should plan for this timeline.
- 1.5 The recruitment procedure will, in many cases, be the first contact that potential employees have with the organisations and it is essential those involved in all stages of the process reflect positively the correct image of the Constabularies.

## 2 Authorising vacancies

- 2.1 New posts must be set up and graded according to local Force procedures (contact HR Service Desk for more information), and details of existing posts (including the current job description and person specification) must be reviewed prior to advertising as below.
- 2.2 Line managers must submit the request for advertising to HR in line with local procedures, together with an up to date job description, person specification and

draft advertisement. Managers must also consider whether the post can be delivered on either a part time or job share basis. For further information please contact the HR Service Desk.

2.3 Consideration should be given to any existing [select list](#) prior to advertising.

### Reviewing an existing role prior to advertising

Prior to advertising a vacancy for an existing post, the line manager should consider whether the post has changed or whether it needs to change and contact the HR Service Desk for advice where necessary:

- Have the priorities, aims or duties of the post changed?
- Are the job description and person specification still accurate? (see [Appendix A – Preparing a Job Description and Person Specification](#))
- Is the post still needed, i.e. could the duties be shared amongst a number of other postholders or allocated elsewhere?
- Is the grading of the post still appropriate?
- Would the funding for the post be better utilised if transferred to fund a post in another section or department?
- Are the working hours of the post still appropriate?
- What are the future requirements and possible implications for the post?

## 3 Advertising

3.1 Following receipt of the documents listed in Section 2.2 from line managers, all arrangements for advertising will be made by the HR Department. All permanent vacancies will be advertised on the Force website and will also be advertised in Force Orders. Vacancies offered on a temporary basis will only be advertised on Force Orders, unless the line manager requests an external advertisement. Dependent on need, posts may be advertised in local media, and for more senior or specialist posts, advertising in specialist publications will be considered.

3.2 Advertising costs whether for local media, specialist or national advertisements must be met from departmental budgets.

3.3 All vacancies will be offered preferentially in the first instance to those on the 'at risk' register (see Change Management FPD).

### Drafting the advertisement

The effective timing, content and placement of advertisements are critical to ensure the receipt of a satisfactory response from eligible applicants. The line manager must decide on the appropriate advertising media, e.g. website only, local or national press, specialist journal, etc.

The advert should include extracts from the Job Description and Person Specification, as well as accurate and relevant information to encourage suitable

applicants, and to enable unsuitable applicants to deselect themselves. There should be no stereotyping of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 unless the post has a genuine and justifiable occupational need.

HR will ensure that the advert contains a closing date, information on where to obtain application forms, and details of any nominated person to be contacted for further information on the vacancy.

In addition, advertisements on the Force website and in Force Orders must include the following:

- that the post can be delivered on either a part-time or job-share basis, where the manager has confirmed this is the case
- preference will be given to applications from internal staff at risk of redundancy
- the recruitment criteria for all posts are subject to reasonable adjustment in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Force Orders only: all internal applications will require management endorsement in line with the Joint References FPD to confirm an applicant's eligibility in relation to attendance, performance and conduct records.

3.4 The HR Department may alter the advertisement after consultation with the appropriate line manager to ensure the Force meets best practice and is compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the terms of this FPD and/or the official corporate image of Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies. The HR Department is responsible for placing internal and external advertisements, and will check that all the correct information and appropriate authorisations have been received prior to placing the advertisement in the requested media.

## 4 Applications

4.1 Application packs issued to applicants will contain an up to date job description and person specification, the relevant application form and an equal opportunity monitoring form.

4.2 Individuals currently employed or engaged by the organisation, those working for the organisation as agency staff, and serving police officers will be eligible to apply for posts which are only advertised on Force Orders, however, agency staff and serving police officers should complete external application forms.

4.3 Internal application forms must be endorsed by management in line with the Joint References FPD to confirm an applicant's eligibility in relation to attendance, performance and conduct records.

4.4 Applications received after the closing date will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances with the agreement of the line manager of the vacant post. Any extension should be notified immediately to all those who requested an application for the post.

4.5 Equal Opportunities monitoring information will be removed from completed application forms and will not be made available to those carrying out the

selection process. Monitoring information is used by the Constabularies to provide management statistics for meet internal and external reporting requirements, e.g. HMIC.

## 5 Shortlisting

- 5.1 The relevant Command or Department is responsible for the drawing up of a short list of applicants.
- 5.2 In order to arrive at a short list, the information provided by applicants on the application form will be assessed against the essential and desirable criteria contained in the person specification and the results recorded using the short listing form provided by HR. Only the information provided against the person specification can be used - not personal knowledge, etc. - and to ensure fairness the criteria cannot be added to or deleted once the post has been advertised.
- 5.3 Shortlisting should be carried out by two people, and if the applicants are well known to both people shortlisting, then an independent person should take up one of these roles to ensure fairness. The shortlisting will ideally be carried out independently or by joint discussion to agree the final shortlist.

### Effective shortlisting

If there are a large number of applicants, initially a simple system of ticks against essential criteria will suffice in reducing the numbers. Where numbers have been reduced to applicants who meet all the essential criteria, marks should be awarded in accordance with the shortlisting form provided by HR for each criteria dependent upon the extent to which the applicant fills the requirement.

The final shortlist will comprise applicants who achieve the highest scores against the essential criteria, however, if a large number of applicants achieve the same score on the essential criteria it will be necessary to add the score of the desirable criteria to come up with a final total. If this still does not reduce the amount of applicants in the shortlist to a suitable number for interview, a weighting system may be used. The simplest weighting system is to highlight the essential criteria which are most critical to the role, and to multiply scores of these criteria by two. These 'critical' essential criteria must be highlighted **before** shortlisting commences.

The shortlisting panel should identify reserves (the next highest scoring applicants) for the interview shortlist, who can be contacted to attend if shortlisted applicants decline attendance at the interview. These reserves must have at least met each essential criterion and must be given the appropriate notice before the interview date.

- 5.4 All those shortlisted for interview must meet all of the essential criteria as a minimum.
- 5.5 On receipt of the shortlist, HR will highlight to the line manager whether any of the applicants has stated that they have a disability: any disabled applicant who

meets all the essential criteria on the person specification will automatically be shortlisted for interview, regardless of whether other applicants achieve a higher shortlisting score.

5.6 Applicants are advised in the application packs that if they are not shortlisted they will be sent no further communication, however, internal applicants will be sent letters informing them they are rejected and who to contact for feedback.

## 6 The selection process

6.1 It is the responsibility of the line manager to plan the selection process for the vacancy, although the HR Service Desk will assist with making these arrangements.

6.2 The line manager must return the shortlist to HR along with the following information, to allow for the selection process to take place as soon as possible:

- interview/assessment date, time and location;
- where applicants should report to and who they should ask for on arrival;
- details of all members of the interview panel;
- details of any assessment/tests as part of the interview process (to advise applicants of any specific preparation or presentation topic and the resources available to them, e.g. flipchart, laptop etc.).

6.3 The HR department will send out invitation letters to shortlisted applicants, to include map, details of tests, etc. and names of interview panel, giving at least seven days' notice of the interview/assessment date. As a guide, interviews should take no more than one hour each, and time should be set aside for post-interview discussion by the panel.

6.4 Individuals will be requested to bring along information to satisfy legislative requirements. Copies of these documents should be made and kept with the applicant's recruitment information.

6.5 Reasonable adjustments should be made to allow individuals with a disability to undertake the selection process. If a shortlisted applicant states in their application that they are disabled, the HR Service Desk must contact the individual to ascertain whether any reasonable adjustments are necessary for the interview/assessment, e.g. hearing loop, sign language interpreter, etc. Full details are available in the Joint Disability Management FPD.

6.6 Expenses will not be paid to applicants for attendance at selection processes. Internal applicants may attend an internal interview in work time, and should inform their line manager of the interview arrangements.

6.7 Pre-interview/assessment visits to the prospective department/area of work and/or telephone conversations with applicants (following a request by the applicant) should be facilitated where possible, however, this is not part of the formal selection process and any decisions on appointment must not be

influenced by visits from or telephone calls with applicants, neither must the fact that a applicant chose not to avail themselves of this opportunity.

### Assessment methods

- 6.8 The aim of the selection process is to obtain accurate, objective and comprehensive factual information to enable the capabilities of the applicant to be assessed. The selection process will usually involve an interview, but depending on the role may also involve use of other assessment methods such as ability testing, presentations, work samples, etc. however these should only be used when this can be justified by the activities and criteria within the job description and person specification, otherwise they may indirectly discriminate against applicants on the basis of a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.9 HR Advisors can advise on suitable forms of assessment and selection. Consistency and fairness to all applicants is paramount whichever methods are used. Applicants should be made aware as to how the test results will be used.

### Psychometric/Ability Testing

- 6.10 Psychometric/ability tests should only be used in conjunction with other assessment methods and only when their use can be supported by the available technical information, i.e. job description/person specification. Tests must be necessary for the role or they may indirectly discriminate against applicants on the basis of a protected characteristic such as disability or age, and where possible reasonable adjustments should be made.
- 6.11 Only qualified testers should administer, score and interpret tests in accordance with the instructions provided by the test distributor (ERAS) and to the standards defined by the British Psychological Society:
- To administer, score, interpret and feedback the results of Ability Tests, an individual must have achieved the ERAS or BPS Level A Certificate of Competency in Psychological Testing.
  - To administer, interpret and feedback the Personality Profile, an individual must have achieved the ERAS or BPS Level B Certificate of Competency in Psychological Testing.
- 6.12 Qualified testers should endeavour, where possible, to develop and enhance their competence as test users. A list of all qualified testers is available from the Recruitment Manager at OCC, Wymondham. Qualified testers should not offer services which lie outside their competence nor encourage or cause others to do so. Testers should inform the test-taker of how the results of the testing will be used in relation to selection procedures or career development.
- 6.13 All test materials will be ordered with the agreement of the Head of HR Service Delivery (Norfolk & Suffolk) and will be stored securely in the HR department where no unqualified individual can have access to them.
- 6.14 Where possible, verbal feedback should be given to all individuals who have undertaken psychometric testing. Where this is not possible, individuals can

request for feedback to be given by the tester at a later time or date convenient to both parties, or written feedback should be provided on request.

- 6.15 Once feedback on the test has been given to the individual and the line manager, if applicable, all test results should be returned to the HR Service Desk, who will ensure they will be treated as strictly confidential and stored securely in a form suitable for developing norms, validation and monitoring for bias.
- 6.16 The results will be monitored by the HR department to ensure that no bias in terms of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 has occurred. The results of all psychometric tests are to be treated as strictly confidential, and will only be made available with the express consent of the test subject.

### Work Samples

- 6.17 Work samples are exercises designed to replicate tasks within a role as closely as possible. They can range from a single exercise such as audio-typing or a written exercise which enables literacy to be tested, to assessment centres covering a range of activities to test applicants on several aspects of a role. Work samples could cover almost anything but commonly include keyboard and computer application tests, 'in-tray' exercises, group discussions, presentations, writing a report or role plays.
- 6.18 To use them successfully the exercise(s) need to be devised and most importantly a "model answer" needs to be produced so that the performance of each applicant can be marked objectively. It must also be decided in advance how the results of the exercise will be used in conjunction with the interview to determine the applicant's final scores against the essential and desirable criteria.
- 6.19 Care must be exercised to ensure the tests are appropriate, non-discriminatory and do not carry any unfair bias. Examples of this would be where knowledge of the police gives internal applicants an unfair advantage over external applicants.

### Interviews

- 6.20 The interview panel should comprise at least two persons but not more than three persons, one of whom will act as the Chair. The Chair of the panel must be trained in interviewing or have extensive experience of interviewing for police staff roles.
- 6.21 For posts at Scale 6 to SO3, the panel should include where possible a member of the HR department. For M grades and above, the interview panel must consist of a technical specialist in the relevant field, the line manager and a senior HR person.
- 6.22 For interviews involving internal applicants (as well as serving or retired police officers), there must be an independent interviewer – i.e. someone who is not familiar with the applicant - on the panel to ensure fairness and objectivity.

Independent interviewers may be a member of the HR department or any other individual who has been trained or has experience in interviewing.

- 6.23 Panel chairs should be of the same grade or above to the post they are interviewing for.
- 6.24 Interviews must be held in a comfortable, quiet room without risk of interruption. Where possible, the line manager should arrange for someone not on the interview panel to greet the applicant, escort them to the interview room and take copies of any documentation that they have been asked to bring with them.
- 6.25 The panel chair should decide on the questions they will use in the interview process **before** the interview day. The questions will allow each applicant to be scored against the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification. If any of the criteria being tested are 'technical' in nature, i.e. experience in IT systems or knowledge relating to specific legislation, model answers to these technical questions should be prepared before the interview commences to help the panel determine how the individual scores against the criteria.
- 6.26 The chair of the panel will open and close the interview, and manage the content and timekeeping to ensure that the interview remains on time and in line with the agreed questions - a consistent approach to the interview regarding all applicants is vital.
- 6.27 Applicants are not allowed to bring materials into the interview to assist them unless this has been approved as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.28 The panel should take notes during the interview to assist with scoring the applicants, and should pass all notes back to HR following the interview. In the event that an applicant challenges the legitimacy of a selection decision all notes will be disclosable.
- 6.29 At the end of the formal questioning the applicant should be given the opportunity to ask questions and provide any additional information. Under no circumstances should offers of appointment be made in the interview.

## 7 Scoring applicants

- 7.1 The chair will ensure that the panel reaches a decision on each applicant in terms of scoring and suitability for the role, and that all details are fully recorded on the scoring sheets provided. Care should be taken to ensure the evidence is there if challenged by unsuccessful applicants at a later stage. At the end of each interview, each panel member should independently give each applicant a score against each criterion. These individual scores will form the basis of a discussion to gain consensus on the score for each applicant for each criterion. The consensus scores will be recorded on the scoring sheets provided, together with a brief explanation on the reasons for this score. Each applicant should be discussed and scored immediately – before the next interview commences.

- 7.2 Any applicant who fails to achieve an 'acceptable' score on all essential criteria will be considered unsuitable for the role. The applicant who achieves the highest total score will be successful. If two or more applicants achieve the same highest score, the panel should look to see who has scored highest against essential criteria to determine the successful applicant. If the scores are still tied then a 'weighting' system may be used: highlight the essential criteria which are most critical to the role, and multiply scores of these criteria by two. These 'critical' essential criteria should be highlighted before the interview commences to ensure fairness.
- 7.3 If another form of assessment is being used in addition to the interview, the panel should consider the results of this in addition to the interview responses when determining the score under the relevant criterion. For this reason any tests/presentations should be carried out prior to or as part of the interview.
- 7.4 In the event of the panel being unable to differentiate between applicants even after following the above guidance, the chair of the panel has the final decision and must ensure that the justification for the outcome is documented.
- 7.5 It is important to ascertain which applicants are considered by the panel as suitable or not suitable for the post after the interview. This will assist the panel members where their first choice declines the offer of appointment.
- 7.6 The chair of the panel will ensure that the interview record forms are completed in full and signed by all panel members at the end of their discussions. These forms, together with all interview notes and any other information must be retained with the recruitment information and returned to the HR Service Desk.
- 7.7 At the end of the recruitment and selection process the line manager should review the effectiveness of the process, to determine what went well and what can be improved in future recruitment exercises.

## Guidelines for Interviewers

**Listening:** the interviewee should do at least three quarters of the talking. The main activity of the interviewer should be that of active listening. Supportive listening by the panel members on behalf of a colleague who is currently asking questions is important, and they should be taking notes of the applicant's responses.

**Probe as necessary:** there is a need to be patient and persistent until the questioner is satisfied on a particular point. Open questions should be used as these will demand an extensive reply. Other examples are 'in your opinion.....', 'give me the advantages and disadvantages for.....'.

If you are getting a strong positive or negative response to a applicant, it is good practice to test your theory by seeking contrary evidence, e.g. if a applicant concerns you by the apparent lack of assertiveness, ask further probing questions to find evidence that they have been or can be assertive in other situations. This will allow a much more balanced picture and provide evidence to support your initial reaction as opposed to a mere hunch.

### Appropriate questions:

The Equality Act (2010) sets out a number of protected characteristics which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

You must **not** ask questions about someone's protected characteristics, and asking the same questions of both sexes, or all groups, does not in itself ensure non-discrimination. All questions must be prepared in advance of the interview, and if you need any support or advice share these with your HR Advisor.

Be aware that legal action can be taken against you if you ask job applicants any questions that are not allowed by equality law.

Examples of questions you should not ask, relating to protected characteristics, are as follows:

- "What is your marital status?"
- "How many children do you have?"
- "Are you planning on getting engaged or married?"
- "Do you intend to start a family?"
- "How would you feel as the only woman on a shift?"

## 8 Select lists

8.1 Formal select lists are used to save time and resources in the recruitment of certain police staff roles, which occur frequently and/or are complex and time consuming to recruit to, e.g. Communications Officers, Fingerprint Officers, etc. All available vacancies will be filled by the highest scoring applicants at interview/assessment, and all remaining applicants who were considered suitable for the role will be formally placed on a select list. If a vacancy for the same post comes up within 6 months, the next highest scoring applicant on the select list will be offered the position, subject to satisfactory references, medical and security checks. It is important that the HR Service Desk keep a record of any formal select lists. Individuals currently held on such a list have an expectation of employment if the same post comes up again within 6 months, and this must be made clear to the individuals.

### Second applicant

8.2 Where an identical vacancy unexpectedly arises within 6 months of a previous selection process, and a suitable second applicant was highlighted, this individual may be approached as opposed to re-advertising. Appointing the second applicant, as opposed to re-advertising, will not be appropriate in all cases and line managers are not obliged to follow this option. It will only be appropriate when there have been two good applicants interviewed, resulting in a difficult decision in the first instance, and therefore offering the post to the second applicant can be explained and justified.

8.3 After an individual on a select list or second applicant has been offered a position by the line manager, HR will ensure that the applicant confirms that the details on their original application form are still current and correct. Select lists which are older than 6 months should be discarded and the vacancy should be re-advertised to allow a new pool of applicants to apply. If a new advertisement fails to attract new applicants, then individuals on previous select lists may be contacted to see if they wish to make a new application for the vacancy.

### Select lists and staff at risk of redundancy

8.4 Any staff who are at risk of redundancy must be given preference over any individuals on a select list for a vacancy. Each time a select list is used, a decision will need to be made by HR in relation to staff currently or potentially at risk.

## 9 Appointment

9.1 Once the selection has been approved by HR, the Chair of the interview panel will contact the successful applicant and notify them that they have been recommended for appointment, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. External applicants should be made aware that if they resign from their current post prior to all clearances being confirmed they do so at their own risk.

9.2 When contacting the successful applicant, the Chair should verbally ascertain from the successful applicant whether they will accept the post at the starting

salary offered (see below), what notice period they will need to give, and a provisional start date.

- 9.3 If the first choice of applicant does not take up the offer of employment, then the applicant identified as a suitable reserve at interview should be offered the position after consultation with the line manager and the HR Service Desk. For this reason, it is good practice to receive a verbal acceptance by the successful applicant before notifying unsuccessful applicants of the interview results which should be done by telephone as soon as possible after acceptance is received.
- 9.4 After the verbal offer has been accepted, the line manager must notify the HR Service Desk via email as soon as possible to commence the formal appointment process. The HR Service Desk will confirm the offer in writing to the successful applicant subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. The completed medical questionnaire will be forwarded to the Occupational Health Unit for consideration.
- 9.5 On completion of satisfactory checks, the HR Service Desk will confirm the start date with the line manager and send a formal contract of employment to the individual.

#### Starting salary

- 9.6 The successful applicant will be offered a starting salary at the bottom of the post grade unless there are exceptional reasons for starting on a higher increment - in these circumstances approval must be given in writing by the Department Head and a file note placed in the personal file to explain the reasons behind this decision (this may be required to justify the difference in pay as a result of an equal pay claim).
- 9.7 If a applicant declines the offer of appointment on the basis of starting salary, the line manager will consult with the Department Head and Head of HR Service Delivery to consider whether offering a higher spinal column point within the post grade can be justified.

## **10 Pre-employment checks**

### References

- 10.1 Satisfactory references must be received prior to confirmation of appointment. See References FPD for full details. Only information provided by formal referees should be considered. Soundings about individuals on an informal basis will undermine the objectivity and openness of the formal selection process. It should be remembered that information used in the selection process may have to be produced to an employment tribunal in due course.

### Right to work in the UK

- 10.2 The individual must produce proof of the right to work in the UK (this is usually provided at the interview stage and a copy must be retained on the individual's file).

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Security vetting

- 10.3 Security vetting will be carried out on the successful applicant by the Vetting Unit. Home Office guidelines state we are unable to employ an individual who cannot be security checked. This may affect individuals who have been living outside the UK for long periods of time, where it is not possible to obtain security clearance from the country of residence.
- 10.4 For some posts, a higher level of vetting will be required, and the relevant form(s) will be sent to the individual to complete and return with their initial offer letter.
- 10.5 Where any issues are raised by the security checks, the Vetting Unit will consider the position and make the final decision as to whether the appointment may proceed.

Financial vetting

- 10.6 Successful applicants for all posts will be subject to financial vetting. Full details are available in the Vetting Policy.

Medical Checks

- 10.7 All successful applicants are sent a medical questionnaire and enquiry form, which they must return to HR to forward on to the Occupational Health Unit for assessment.
- 10.8 Appointments to certain posts, e.g. PCSOs, may require the successful applicant to attend the Occupational Health Unit for a medical appointment and/or a substance screening test (see Substance Misuse FPD for full details).
- 10.9 With some roles there may be a genuine job-related reason for requiring a certain level of physical fitness in order to perform the duties involved. In such instances, in addition to completion of the medical questionnaire, medical checks and fitness tests may also be required.
- 10.10 Decisions relating to medical checks will take due regard of the implications of the Equality Act 2010 in respect of disability and will allow for consideration of any adjustments which may be deemed reasonable under the terms of the Act.
- 10.11 Occupational Health will inform the HR Service Desk of the results of the medical assessment, and whether the applicant is fit and suitable for the post, as well as any adjustments that may be necessary for the workplace.

**11 Feedback**

- 11.1 Unsuccessful applicants must be notified in writing by the HR Service Desk within 5 working days of the interview/assessment, this confirms the telephone notification they should already have received.

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11.2 The Chair of the interview panel will be responsible for providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants which may be done as part of the notification of the outcome.

Feedback is a difficult area at any time, and can be an emotive issue. It is good practice to give feedback on an informal one-to-one basis.

To be of use, feedback must be honest and accurate and delivered in a positive fashion. Notes taken throughout the interview will prove beneficial for this. Interviewers must be mindful that any notes taken could be disclosable.

Feedback should be specific, non-judgmental, actionable and proximate. Specific examples need to be given to illustrate examples of what was said or done. Items should be non-judgmental in that they should not include impressions or feelings, which are personal to the interviewer and cannot be measured. The feedback should be actionable in that the applicant must be in a position to do something about it and improve the situation for the future. Where possible, it must be close enough to the event to be remembered.

**Note:** Advice is always available from the HR Service Desk on all selection issues.

## Appendix A: Preparing a Job Description and Person Specification

The job description is a clear statement of duties, objectives and standards required to do the job satisfactorily, and the person specification outlines the essential and desirable criteria that applicants for the role need.

There is a need to regularly review job descriptions and person specifications. When a post becomes vacant this is the opportune time for the line manager to consider how the role may have changed over the years.

When creating a new post or actioning minor changes to an existing job description and person specification, the line manager must contact the HR Policy and Reward team to complete the appropriate pro forma.

**Line managers should be aware that making significant changes to an existing job description and person specification may result in a change in grading.** 'Significant changes' may include an increase or decrease in financial, supervisory or policy development responsibilities. Line managers should contact the HR Policy and Reward team for further clarification and guidance.

### Person specification

The person specification forms the basis of the selection process. It seeks evidence about the applicant as a basis for an objective decision. Recruiting and selecting employees using inadequate, unnecessary or incorrect criteria will affect the quality of applicants for a post, and could also result in a applicant being appointed who is unsuitable to carry out the role.

A balance must be struck between being too generic, giving too many applicants, and being too specific, which may unnecessarily exclude valid applicants from being shortlisted. Ideally there should be no more than 7 essential criteria and no more than 2 desirable criteria.

A person specification is a list of criteria which are:

- job related;
- ability based;
- clearly defined – criteria should be expressed in terms which allow little or no scope for individual interpretation, for example 'Is able to give directions and information to members of the public' rather than 'must get on well with people';
- measurable and objective - 'must be able to type at 50 wpm' rather than 'must be a good typist'.
- Justifiable - individuals should always ask themselves, 'How could I defend the use of each of the criteria if challenged?', for example, asking for previous police experience when what is justifiably required is evidence of basic investigating skills that could have been obtained elsewhere, e.g. Customs and Excise.

- consistently applied;
- may be weighted – this will need to be discussed prior to the person specification being used for selection purposes.

Criteria will include:

- Skills and qualifications required to do the job. Where no formal qualifications are required, then instead state the skills required to do the job, e.g. rather than stating a requirement for GCSE Maths or English, state 'Proven ability to produce statistical reports using Excel' or 'Proven ability to write accurate reports'
- Experience required in a particular field or activity. Unless it can be clearly justified, try to avoid stating how many years' experience are required (this can be indirectly discriminatory on the basis of age). Being specific here can be useful in selecting the right applicant. i.e. instead of 'HR experience', state 'Experience of undertaking HR administration including sickness information'
- Behaviours which the postholder must possess to do the role effectively, i.e. 'Demonstrate effective problem solving skills', or, 'Proven ability to work as an effective member of a team'
- Any specific requirements of the role in relation to travel or working hours, being careful to avoid indirectly discriminating against certain groups, e.g. in relation to driving, you should use 'Ability to travel as required within the county/country' unless there is an absolute requirement to use a Force vehicle to travel. In relation to working hours, the following are suggestions where out of hours working or a shift pattern is required:
  - Ability to work outside of normal office hours on a regular basis,
  - Ability to work on a shift pattern including evenings, weekends and bank holidays.