

Recruitment & Selection Policy

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1 Policy information

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2 Policy Statement

Avela Home Service (AHS) recognises the importance recruitment and selection plays in the success of an organisation and the services it delivers to our customers. This policy has been designed to support and promote a high standard of recruitment practise, provide equality of opportunity, strengthen our services and attract and retain the best talent. This policy applies to recruitment of office based staff and not trades.

3 Policy aims

The overall policy aim is to attract and retain the best talent for AHS' vacant office-based roles, including managerial positions. These employees will demonstrate the relevant skills, experience and knowledge required to add value to the organisation and the services that are delivered. Every recruitment exercise should identify the best person for the role.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote a positive image of AHS as an employer and service provider.
- To provide clear, concise recruitment information that is appropriate to the job role.
- Choose a relevant recruitment and selection method for the job role.
- Recruit an individual that is most suited to the job role through ability and individual merit.
- Fill vacancies within an optimum timeframe, using the most efficient and effective resources.
- Reach a wide pool of applicants as practicably possible for the job role.
- Ensure recruitment practices are inclusive and provide equality of opportunity.

4 Recruitment and Selection Policy

It is not always the immediate response to backfill a job role when this becomes vacant. Recruiting managers should consider the current and future workforce, service delivery and value for money.

4.1 Establishing a vacancy

Following a resignation, the role and purpose of the job should be assessed i.e. can the duties be reallocated, are they still relevant or is there an alternative arrangement that would be more suitable. This is an opportunity to assess whether recruitment is the most appropriate method or whether an alternative may ultimately provide a better service or value for money.

Once recruitment has been established for a vacant job role or there is a change to a part of the organisational structure, the 'Recruitment Authorisation Form' (Appendix 1) should be completed. Once completed and authorised, this should be provided to the HR team to action along with the finalised job description and person specification.

4.2 Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A Job Description (JD) will be produced for each vacant position using the standard template (Appendix 2). The JD should include the main duties and responsibilities of the job role accurately and concisely. Where the vacancy is a new post within the organisation, a full job description should be produced. If the vacancy is filling a previously held post, the previous job description should be reviewed to ensure it is still accurate.

Alongside the JD, a Person Specification (PS) should detail the qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience the ideal individual would hold to be successful in the job role. These should be categorised into essential (the minimum standard required to fulfil the role) and desirable requirements (a standard that will allow the individual to perform more effectively in the role). All requirements should be measurable.

4.3 Internal Opportunities

We recognise the importance of providing development and career progression opportunities to current employees to enhance retention and motivation.

Where it is clear that internal advertising is the most appropriate method i.e. we are aware of internal employees who meet the essential criteria of a role, this may be advertised as internal only in the first instance.

4.4 Advertising

Decisions regarding the advertising of vacancies will depend on a number of factors. These include: value for money, the role being advertised, the seniority of the position and the external labour market.

External advertisements will be placed on the AHS and SLH website, and through other job boards/advertising channels as agreed between HR and the Recruiting Manager. We will ensure our advertisements reach as wide a pool of potential applicants as practicable and encourage applications from underrepresented groups to achieve this, we may:

- Include statements encouraging applications from under-represented groups.
- Target advertising to reach under-represented groups.
- Consider more flexible-working patterns.

HR will prepare and post job advertisements, where the following information will be included as a minimum:

- Job title
- Salary and relevant benefits
- Contract type
- Hours
- Closing date for applications
- Recruitment date for interviews (where possible)
- Summary of the role and main responsibilities
- Summary of the requirements for the roles
- Job Description/Person Specification

4.5 Shortlisting

Applications will be provided by the HR team along with a shortlisting matrix to the recruiting manager. Personal details such as name, addresses or contact information will not be provided to the panel until after shortlisting has been completed. This will ensure that any decision to shortlist an application is based on suitability in line with the person specification. After this, a final shortlist should be agreed. HR will carry out a quality check on the final shortlist to ensure no bias has influenced the shortlisting.

Unsuccessful external applicants will not normally receive feedback on their initial application, however they will receive notification from HR that their application has been unsuccessful.

4.6 Selection Methods

For all appointments, the recruiting manager and a member of the HR team will be present as part of the panel. Where possible, there will be diversity of gender on the panel. Panel members must ensure they can attend all aspects of the recruitment process i.e. presentations, interviews, and assessment centres. This is to maintain consistency and fairness for the candidates. HR and the recruitment panel must remain mindful of and challenge potential unconscious bias which could play into decision-making at interview and assessment stage.

As a minimum, a competency-based interview will be used to determine who is appointed into the role. This could also incorporate a further assessment, for example a presentation or work-based task.

4.7 Candidates with a disability

In line with our commitment to recruiting and attracting disabled candidates under the 'Positive About Disability scheme' all candidates who meet the essential criteria and who have indicated that they have a disability and wish to make an application under the scheme as part of their application form, will automatically be shortlisted for interview.

Prior to interview attendance, all candidates will be contacted by the HR team to establish if they require any adjustments/support on account of a disability. Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded from the recruitment and selection process unless it is clear that they are unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. HR will ensure that reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process are made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged on account of a disability.

4.8 Ethnic minority guaranteed interview scheme

We understand that applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds can experience additional barriers when applying for roles. To address this we offer all candidates from an ethnic minority background a guaranteed interview should they wish to apply under the scheme and meet all the essential criteria outlined in the person specification. Information regarding applicants who have applied under the scheme will only be shared by HR once shortlisting has been completed and essential criteria have been met. It is hoped that this will

encourage diversity within our workforce and enable candidates to recognise our commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all.

4.9 Closely connected candidates

In cases where an applicant for employment has close connections to a Board or Committee member, involved resident or colleague, AHS will ensure, prior to any shortlisting exercise, that:

- There is disclosure of the individual's connection
- Consideration of the application is based solely on merit and suitability in relation to the requirements of the post
- No person having any personal knowledge of the applicant plays any part in the assessment or decision

A definition of close family members and close connections can be found in the Declaration of Interest Policy Appendix A, Section 2 of the Accompanying Guidance to the Declarations of Interest Form. A copy of which can be obtained from the HR team.

Sector best practice suggests that the presumption is against offering employment. However, provided the applicant is able to demonstrate that he or she fully meets the post's requirements, AHS may decide to offer employment. Where this concerns a senior post, the absolute assumption is against offering employment.

Should a Board or Committee member wish to apply for employment with the Group, they must:

- Immediately declare their interest and resign from the Board(s) or Committee(s) on which they serve, and
- Understand that there will be no presumption that the applicant would necessarily be reappointed to the Board(s) or Committee(s) if unsuccessful in their application for employment

Where the employment of a relative or other closely connected person to a Board or Committee member is approved, measures will be put in place to ensure that the supervision and appraisal of the member of staff is not compromised. Relatives and others closely connected with the member of staff should not be involved in their direct line management.

4.10 Rehabilitation of Offenders

AHS will not automatically refuse to employ a particular individual just because they have a previous criminal conviction.

If an applicant has a conviction that is not spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) and if the nature of the offence is relevant to their suitability for the job for which they have applied, we will review the individual circumstances of the case following a discussion with the person and may at our discretion, decline to select the individual for employment.

Should an individual secure employment with AHS having failed to disclose information relating to unspent convictions when requested, they may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Policy.

In certain circumstances, candidates are obliged to disclose spent convictions as well as unspent convictions. These circumstances are contained in the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975.

If the job we are recruiting to is one of the excluded jobs listed in the Exceptions Order we will request the applicant to disclose all convictions, whether spent (and unprotected) or unspent. Even in these circumstances, however, we will still take into account whether the nature of the conviction has some relevance to their suitability for the job for which the individual has applied. If the job is exempt, at the time of offering the post, we will seek documentary evidence about that person's criminal convictions and the applicant's agreement to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a basic, standard or enhanced disclosure (as appropriate).

We are committed to ensuring that all information provided about an individual's criminal convictions, including any information released in disclosures, is used fairly and stored and handled appropriately and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Data held on file about an individual's criminal convictions will be held only as long as it is required for employment purposes and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised person.

When considering an applicant with a conviction we will carry out an objective assessment and will take into account:

- A person's age at the time of the offence
- How long ago the offence took place
- Whether it was an isolated offence or part of a pattern of offending
- Any other relevant considerations about the person's conduct before and since the offence
- A person's abilities, skills, experience and qualifications
- The nature of the conviction and its relevance to the job in question
- The risks to the business, customers, clients and colleagues

We will also:

- Be confidential and discrete when requesting and handling criminal records
- Advise applicants to submit confidential records separately from the usual application form and to the HR Team
- Comply with data protection law, including GDPR (and the Information Commissioner's Employment Practices Code).

Should an applicant disclose a criminal record, we will risk assess the nature of the conviction against the role being applied for. This will consider:

- An examination of circumstances leading up to an offence
- Repeat offences
- The length of time since an offence(s) took place

- The nature of the job, workplace environment, exposure to money, property and vulnerable people
- The extent of job supervision
- An individual's attempt to rehabilitate

4.11 Unsuccessful Candidates

We appreciate the time, effort and commitment candidates make to search and apply for jobs. We will contact all candidates to advise of the outcome of their application and provide personal feedback after interview where this is requested.

4.12 Complaints

Job applicants, at any stage of the Recruitment and Selection process, wishing to make a complaint should be referred to the HR & OD Manager who will ensure that the complaint is acknowledged, investigated and a response given to the complainant.

4.13 Appointment

Successful candidates will receive a written provisional offer of employment from the HR team. Confirmation of employment will be subject to the following:

- References covering the last three years of employment
- Sight of right to work documents
- Sight of qualifications as specified and required for the job role
- DBS confirmation where required

4.14 Temporary Recruitment

All temporary recruitment should be approved through the same method of submitting the Recruitment Authorisation Form. The HR team are responsible for engaging and coordinating recruitment agencies where this is required.

As temporary recruitment usually arises unexpectedly e.g. due to long-term absence, it is important that a prompt response is given to ensure the process minimises the impact this has on the business. Assessment of candidates will therefore be made by review of CV and a remote or face to face interview. This will be conducted by the recruiting manager and a member of the HR team.

All temporary roles should be continuously reviewed as it is expected these are a short term solution. Temporary recruitment should not provide a long term solution. Guidance should be sought from HR regarding agency workers' rights after they have been in the business for 12 weeks.

4.15 Apprenticeships

Where possible, we will create, work with and support initiatives which provide apprenticeship opportunities. This includes on the job training alongside achievement of a professional qualification.

4.16 Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Director of Avela to ensure that this policy is acted on through a process of policy dissemination and implementation in collaboration with their managers.

The HR team are responsible for establishing a fair and effective recruitment and selection process for all applicants and will provide specialist advice, guidance, support and training as required to managers and colleagues.

4.17 Data Protection

We use all the information provided by applicants during the recruitment process to progress their application with a view to potentially offering employment.

We will not share any information provided by applicants with any third parties and we will use the contact details provided by applicants to make contact and progress their application, this information will only be available to HR and provided to the recruiting manager for the purpose of contacting a candidate to discuss the outcome of their interview. Other information provided as part of the application process will be used to assess their suitability for the role.

We do not collect any more information than we need to fulfil our stated purposes and will not keep it longer than necessary. Application details are stored in secure electronic files where only the HR Team and recruiting Managers have access. Recruiting Managers will not have access to equality and diversity information. Applicant data will not be accessible by any other employees of AHS not involved in the recruitment process.

Six months after the date shortlisting (for non-shortlisted candidates) and six months after the date of interview (for shortlisted but unsuccessful candidates) all information will be permanently destroyed and no record of applications will be held by AHS. For successful candidates who are offered employment with AHS, personal information will be transferred into our HR system where a personal secure record is set up and recruitment documents are stored securely.

5 Customer Standards & Performance Monitoring

Colleagues from different teams and positions were involved in the development of the policy and were able to provide feedback to support the final version. A review of best practice was also undertaken to ensure its effectiveness.

6 Policy Review Considerations

6.1 Equality Impact Analysis

An equality analysis was carried out whilst writing this policy to ensure that no groups were excluded or disadvantaged when applying to work for AHS or for a promotional post within the organisation.

AHS is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection for permanent, temporary and apprenticeship positions. Job design, shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out with regard to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act and all equal opportunities information is separated from application forms and held by the HR Team for monitoring purposes only. It is not used during any point of the recruitment or selection process.

As part of the Disability Confident Accreditation, we guarantee an interview to any disabled person who meets the essential criteria required. We are committed to supporting a good work life balance for colleagues and will offer the opportunity to work flexibly where possible. We will also work to support any candidates requiring adjustments with the recruitment process which would enable them to perform at interview and not be unfairly disadvantaged on account of a disability.

6.2 Policy Assessment

In order to achieve its corporate objectives, AHS places high importance on the effective management of risk. A risk management system has been adopted which looks at all the risks facing the business including strategic and operational risks and those involving resources, legal and financial risks.

AHS is committed to being proactive in managing risk rather than reactive. The adoption of this policy will ensure that we maintain acceptable standards and support our colleagues to perform to the best of their ability.

The HR Team is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of any information provided by candidates in their application form and any additional information they provide by completion of the equal opportunities form and health check form.

7 Customer Influence

Colleagues from different teams and positions were involved in the development of the policy and were able to provide feedback to support the final version. A review of best practice was also undertaken to ensure its effectiveness.

8 Statutory and Legislative Framework

- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Employment Equality Regulations Act 1995
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974