



RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENTS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

1. PHSO aims to have a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve and the working populations around our offices in order to help us achieve our goals and in line with our visions and values.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

2. This policy provides a recruitment process to cover all appointments at PHSO whether external or internal, permanent or temporary and includes transfers and secondments. It applies to all participants in the recruitment process: applicants, employees, recruiting managers and HR, People & Talent.
3. The policy covers all PHSO employees including those on fixed-term contracts applying for posts within PHSO.
4. The policy does NOT apply to self-employed contractors procured under service contracts.

PRINCIPLES

5. When recruiting the following principles apply:
 - recruitment exercises support PHSO's vision, values and corporate priorities of quality, efficiency and influence;
 - a commitment to equal opportunities and the recruitment of individuals from a range of diverse backgrounds, including identifying and advertising in the most appropriate medium to encourage applications from underrepresented groups;
 - no applicant receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of age, disability, ethnic origin, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, membership of a Trade Union or, where applicable, any other factor which is not relevant to the genuine requirements of the job;
 - opportunities for development and career progression are an important factor for employee retention and motivation. PHSO is committed to providing such opportunities for its employees, wherever practicable;
 - the most appropriate and cost effective recruitment methods will be used to secure the best candidate for the post in the shortest possible time;

PROTECT

- external recruitment organisations with whom we work in partnership, will demonstrate PHSO values and will be selected in accordance with PHSO procurement guidance;
- recruitment exercises are owned and led by managers, in partnership with HR, People & Talent who will provide guidance and support;
- recruitment campaigns will be conducted fairly and openly and recruitment decisions will be based on merit in line with our strategic aim to ensure we attract and retain people who are best in their field with the right range of skills and competencies;
- PHSO will undertake positive action in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 where there is clear evidence of under-representation in order to improve the diversity of the workforce;
- all personal details and information about the deliberations leading to selection decisions will remain strictly confidential. All records containing such information will be handled and stored within the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998).

OUTCOMES

6. PHSO will have a high performing and diverse workforce that reflects the community it serves.
7. PHSO will demonstrate a process that complies with current legislation and best practice and reflects the visions and values of the Office.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8. HR, People & Talent will review recruitment decisions to monitor the effectiveness of the process and ensure fairness and consistency of results.
9. Equality monitoring of recruitment and selection outcomes will take place for each campaign with regular quarterly reporting to the Leadership Team.
10. A formal review of this policy will take place on a regular basis unless there is a significant change in relevant legislation or business need which triggers a review.

Recruitment procedure

1. Identifying and authorising a vacancy

1.1 Each recruitment exercise is owned and led by the recruiting manager, who is responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient budget for the role and appropriate senior level sign off in order to recruit. The process is initiated by completing the Recruitment Approval Form, and sending it to the recruitment team, identifying whether the vacancy:

- is permanent or temporary;
- is full or part time and/or suitable for flexible working;
- could be located in either of PHSO's offices;
- meets the criteria for an 'internal only' advertisement (paragraph 2.1);
- is suitable for a secondment;
- is appropriately funded within current establishment.

1.2 As part of this process, the recruiting manager should review and where necessary, update the job description and person specification which should be clearly related to the requirements of the job. If the job description has had significant amendments, it may need to be re-evaluated using PHSO's approved job evaluation system. The recruiting manager should consult the recruitment team if unsure as to whether a job evaluation is needed.

1.3 On receipt of the form, job description and person specification, the recruiting manager and a member of the recruitment team should meet to discuss and agree the:

- most appropriate recruitment method;
- advert wording;
- application pack contents;
- application competency questions;
- composition of the selection panel (shortlisting and interview);
- shortlisting dates;
- interview dates; and
- assessment tests (if required).

2. Advertising

2.1 Vacancies may be advertised either internally only, externally only or a combination of the two. Consideration will be given to equality and diversity when deciding between internal and external recruitment:

- internal only - where there is likely to be a pool of internal candidates who meet the competencies for the job, thus providing a development opportunity as well as cost saving by avoiding the expense of external recruitment;
- internal only - the post requires an existing knowledge of PHSO and the way it works and there are one or more internal candidates who meet the competency criteria;

PROTECT

- external only - the role requires specialist skills that are not available internally;
- external only - the vacancy is temporary and needs to be filled quickly for operational reasons;
- external only - the diversity of the pool of people who may apply for this role is limited.

2.2 Other than in exceptional circumstances, posts will be advertised for a minimum of 2 weeks and will close at 5pm on a working day to ensure candidates can contact a member of the recruitment team.

3. Application process

3.1 In order to apply for a role within PHSO, applicants will need to complete the PHSO application form. This can be provided in an accessible format, as necessary.

3.2 On occasion for internal only roles a shortened process may apply, this is set out in section 7 along with guidance for all internal applicants.

3.3 As part of the application process candidates will be asked to complete a diversity questionnaire and those candidates with a disability, wishing to apply under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, will be asked to indicate this on the application form.

3.4 The standard competencies for PHSO roles are:

- delivering quality outcomes;
- working together;
- managing self;
- supporting the business.

3.5 When completing an application, candidates will be asked to provide evidence and examples to demonstrate how they meet these competencies.

4. Shortlisting/Longlisting

4.1 Shortlisting is undertaken by the selection panel. If there is a large number of applications, the panel may decide to 'long list' the applications. Long listing focuses on a smaller number of competencies in the first instance in order to reduce the total number of applications.

4.2 Applications will be shortlisted on the extent to which they meet the competencies required for the role; the shortlisting manager will be looking for evidence and examples to support a candidate's competence against each area.

4.3 As part of its commitment to equal opportunities and as a user of the 'two ticks' disability symbol, PHSO guarantees progression to the first stage selection process (such as test, assessment exercise and interview) to any disabled candidate applying under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, who meets the minimum shortlisting selection criteria.

5. Assessments and interviews

5.1 Some recruitment campaigns may involve an assessment or test, for example in campaigns:

- with a large number of applications, where an additional assessment stage after shortlisting can focus on specific skills and attributes and the results used to select candidates for interview;
- where a test is part of the interview process and will contribute to the overall interview scores.

The recruiting manager and the recruitment team must discuss the potential for additional assessment at the earliest opportunity and include it in the campaign timetable.

5.2 PHSO will make reasonable adjustments to the testing/interviewing stages of recruitment where it is possible to do so. Such adjustments may include additional time for testing or larger print.

5.3 The interview panel will usually be comprised of three people, which, where possible, will include the vacancy manager, a manager of the same Pay Band, or higher, than the vacancy and a member of HR, People & Talent. The interview panel will ideally be the same group of people as the shortlisting panel. However, this may not always be possible in large campaigns.

5.4 For internal vacancies, it may be the case that a manager of one or more of the candidates will be on the interview panel. It is acknowledged that whilst it is good practice to avoid this, there may be occasions where it is unavoidable. The decision as to the composition of the panel will be the recruiting manager's, in discussion with the recruitment team.

5.5 As part of PHSO's commitment to equality and diversity the diversity of the panel should always be considered when the panel is being formed.

5.6 The interview is usually the final stage of selection of any recruitment campaign. When adapting the questions and supplementary questions for each candidate, the interview panel will have read the application form and any other supplementary information. Therefore the end of interview discussion and scores will have considered the 'whole package' of information when making the final decision to appoint.

6. Offer of employment

6.1 After the interview, once the panel have made a decision to appoint, all panel paperwork should be signed and returned to the recruitment team.

6.2 The panel chair, usually the recruiting manager, should contact the successful candidate in order to make a verbal offer of employment, as soon as possible following the interview. The recruitment team will follow this up with an oral and conditional offer of employment letter.

PROTECT

- 6.3 The panel chair, usually the recruiting manager, should also contact all unsuccessful internal candidates to inform them of the outcome of the interview and offer feedback over the phone or in person. The timing of these notifications is important, all candidates should hear at around the same time.
- 6.4 The recruitment team will take up references (usually the two most recent employers), initiate CRB and health checks, along with any other checks suitable to the role. In all but exceptional cases a prospective employee will not be sent an unconditional offer of employment and contract until each of these checks has been satisfactorily completed. On receipt of these checks if there are any areas of concern they will be discussed with the recruiting manager.
- 6.5 PHSO reserves the right to withdraw a job offer if a prospective employee has a conflict of interest for which no resolution is possible;
- 6.6 The recruitment team will contact all unsuccessful external candidates to advise them of the interview decision and offer feedback. In individual role campaigns the recruitment team will forward feedback requests to the panel chair to respond. In larger campaigns the whole panel may become involved in giving feedback if there are a large number of requests.

7. Internal applications

- 7.1 Posts that are to be filled without an external advert, will either:
- invite employees to complete an online application form, supplemented by a Manager's Endorsement Form; or
 - invite employees to submit an expression of interest/statement of suitability with a Manager's Endorsement Form; or
 - be filled through management selection (see paragraph 9).
- 7.2 Applications will be shortlisted on the extent to which they have demonstrated that they meet the competencies required for the role by providing evidence and examples to support this in the same way as an external application.
- 7.3 On occasion, employees will be asked to submit an expression of interest or statement of suitability rather than completing an internal application form. As with a full application this will be assessed, therefore the applicant must provide evidence and examples to demonstrate how they meet the competencies required for the role.
- 7.4 All internal applications must be supported by a Manager's Endorsement Form. This is an assessment of how well the employee meets the criteria of the role for which they have applied. As such, it is important that the employee and current line manager discuss this *before* an application is commenced. If an Endorsement Form has not been received from the line manager by the closing date, the application will not progress to the shortlisting stage.
- 7.5 In general we would expect those employees on probation to complete their probation before applying for an alternative role in PHSO. However, in the event that an application is made by a probationer or a temporary agency worker with

PROTECT

less than 10 month service, the Manager's Endorsement Form will be used as the first stage of the selection process. If the manager does not support the application it will not progress to the shortlisting stage.

7.6 Where a manager does support the application, the Manager's Endorsement Form is not scored but contributes to the overall package of information which will support the panel's decision at both the shortlisting and interview stages.

8. Equality and diversity

8.1 All job applicants are protected against discrimination because of sex, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and pregnancy or maternity throughout every stage of the recruitment process.

8.2 The general public sector equality duty came into force on 5 April 2011, which requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. The duty applies to all of the protected characteristics, except marriage and civil partnership, which is only covered by the first part of the duty, to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.

8.3 Positive action

Positive action refers to the elimination of disadvantage experienced by people who are protected under the Act, encouraging their participation in an activity if they are under-represented. For example, PHSO may decide to place an advertisement in a publication targeted towards a particular under represented group, in addition to the usual publications in which we advertise.

8.4 PHSO participates in the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (Two ticks) whereby a disabled applicant who meets the minimum criteria for a job is guaranteed an interview.

8.5 Should a tie-break situation arise at the shortlisting or interview stage where two candidates score equally, the panel may decide in favour of a candidate with a protected characteristic over another qualified candidate if they reasonably believe this group to be under-represented. However, PHSO can only use this provision when faced with a choice between two candidates who are as qualified as each other to undertake the role.

9. Management selection

9.1 On an exceptional basis 'management selection' is used to appoint to a post without it being subject to a competitive recruitment process. This method can only be used in the following situations:

- if the post needs to be filled quickly to meet a pressing business need, and there is only one person suitable to undertake the role. This is usually, but not

PROTECT

always, temporary and has to be agreed in advance with the Director of HR, People & Talent;

- if a post has been upgraded through job evaluation, the Leadership Team may decide to appoint to the post through management selection if opening the post to competition would result in the post holder being made redundant;
- if the post has already been advertised externally, has not been filled and there is no immediate prospect of an appointment, management reserves the right to deploy a member of staff to cover the post temporarily.

10. Internal moves

10.1 Movement internally between different roles can be beneficial to both the individual and to PHSO and it is often an excellent development opportunity for an individual to learn about a different area of the organisation.

10.2 Within Operations regular movement between caseworker roles is particularly encouraged in order to broaden the skills and expertise of caseworkers, as well as providing flexibility in meeting changing demands within PHSO.

10.3 An internal move may be initiated by either PHSO or the employee but is usually implemented by mutual agreement. However, there may be occasions when, due to operational needs, PHSO requires an employee to move to another post for which they have the skills and experience and which is within the same Pay Band. In such a situation the employee will always be consulted and given reasonable notice of the change.

10.4 It is generally necessary for a vacancy to exist before an internal move can be considered; although where a vacancy does not exist the employee may wish to talk with the manager in the desired business area in order to find out if any opportunities may be available. In such circumstances the employee should notify their own manager of their intentions. An internal move is for development not promotion, therefore it will usually be at the same Pay Band. Promotion opportunities will generally be advertised.

10.5 Both the current line manager and the new line manager need to agree to the internal move. However, once this is the case the current and new line managers should agree:

- the impact on existing reasonable adjustments and need for any additional adjustments to support the employee in the new role;
- the start and, if appropriate, end date; and
- the arrangements to ensure an uninterrupted performance review for the employee. This will depend on where in the annual PDRS cycle the move takes place and also the duration of the transfer, if temporary.

11. Appeals procedure

11.1 All applicants have the right to appeal against a recruitment decision if they believe the PHSO recruitment process has not been followed or that PHSO has discriminated against them. This applies to both PHSO employees and external candidates.

PROTECT

- 11.2 For PHSO employees, the appeal process applies to all decisions made through a formal selection process in which the employee was considered as a candidate. Where such a decision is made without a formal selection process, the appeal process does not apply and the employee should consider whether the matter is one which they wish to raise through the Grievance procedure.
- 11.3 Appeals should be submitted, in writing, to the Director of HR, People & Talent within 10 working days of notification of the selection decision. An applicant may appeal on the grounds that they believe that:
- the PHSO recruitment process has not been followed;
 - PHSO has unlawfully discriminated against them.

The Director of HR, People & Talent may appoint another manager in the organisation to investigate, as appropriate.

- 11.4 The manager considering the appeal will investigate the case and reach a decision, as soon as possible.
- 11.5 PHSO employees have the right to be accompanied to formal appeal meetings by a colleague or a trade union representative. External applicants have the right to be accompanied by a friend or relative but not by an individual acting in a professional legal capacity.
- 11.6 The applicant will be informed of the decision in writing. If the appeal is upheld, any action to be taken will depend on the circumstances of the case. In most cases the vacancy in question will have been filled and PHSO will not be in a position to offer employment (or a change in post, for internal applicants) to the appellant.
- 11.7 The appeal manager's decision is final and there is no further appeal.

Secondments into PHSO

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure deals with secondments *to* PHSO. Guidance on secondments out of PHSO is available in the 'Leaving the Office' Policy.
- 1.2 A secondment to PHSO takes place when an employee transfers from another organisation into PHSO for a fixed period of time. For the duration of the secondment they remain the employee of the previous organisation. For the purposes of this procedure the permanent employer is the **home** organisation and the organisation to which the employee is seconded is the **host** organisation (PHSO).

2. Secondment guidelines

As a general rule, an individual on secondment to PHSO:

- will have the opportunity to discuss and agree any reasonable adjustments prior to the secondment being finalised
 - continues to be paid by their home organisation which is in turn reimbursed by PHSO;
 - is subject to the contractual terms and conditions of their home organisation;
 - is subject to PHSO employment policies, procedures and rules;
 - is line managed on a day-to-day basis by a PHSO manager;
 - will return to their home organisation at the end of their secondment unless they are appointed to a permanent post at PHSO through the recruitment process.
- 2.2 Secondments may take place between PHSO and:
- private sector organisations;
 - voluntary sector organisations;
 - local authorities;
 - government departments;
 - other public bodies.

3. When to use secondments

- 3.1 Secondment opportunities will generally arise because PHSO requires a set of specialist skills which are available in another organisation. A secondment may arise following an advertised vacancy where an employee wishes to join PHSO on secondment, subject to the recruiting manager's discretion.
- 3.2 Any vacancy can be considered for secondment; whether it is appropriate depends on the circumstances of the post and the proposed terms of secondment.

4. Arranging a secondment

- 4.1 If a manager wishes to initiate a secondment they should contact HR, People & Talent in the first instance.

PROTECT

- 4.2 Secondments are three-way arrangements between the home and host organisations and the individual. They are subject to negotiation of terms and conditions and of working arrangements with the home employer. Payroll arrangements (for example which budget the salary is paid from) depend on the circumstances and agreements made for each secondment.
- 4.3 Before agreeing a secondment the manager must consider whether any adjustments are necessary, as a result of disability, and liaise with the relevant corporate team in order to ensure that the adjustment is reasonable and can be provided.
- 4.4 In some circumstances, alternative arrangements may be put in place whereby secondees move onto the PHSO payroll and are subject to PHSO contractual terms and conditions. All other arrangements described above remain the same.
- 4.5 The duration of a secondment depends on individual circumstances but a secondment normally lasts not less than six months and not more than three years.