APPOINTING STAFF: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Human Resources Client Services
People and Culture

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INTRODUCTION

The University aims to appoint the most suitable people to vacant positions through an appointment process that is applied in a fair, consistent and timely manner. This Guide is designed to augment the University’s Appointment Policy and assist staff involved in recruitment, selection and appointment processes by providing good practice advice.

The Guide is not intended to constrain the chairperson of an appointment committee from applying commonsense and judgement, consistent with the Appointment Policy, which is involved in good practice implementation. Chairpersons may depart from the approaches described in this Guide provided that they conform to the principles enshrined in the policy and ensure a fair result. Further advice on the Appointment Policy and the use of the Guide can be obtained from the relevant Human Resources (HR) Client Services Adviser.

ACCESSING RESOURCES ON-LINE

To view this Guide on-line, or download it electronically, visit the Staff Appointment Resource Kit website at www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm

All forms and templates relating to the recruitment, selection and appointment of new staff can be downloaded from this site.
**PROCESS FLOW - EXTERNAL COMPETITIVE SELECTION**

**Note: 'days' means working days**

1-3 days

**Prepare Position**
Description including determining if position is 'Prescribed' (supervisor)

1-3 days

**Determine method of advertising**
(chairperson/Executive Dean/Portfolio Head)

Determine appointment committee members and arrangements (chairperson)

Obtain approval from Grants Office: grant-funded positions only (chairperson)

1-3 days

**Complete Request to Fill Vacancy and prepare draft advertisement**
(supervisor/Executive Dean/Portfolio Head)

Forward documentation to HR Client Services (tied vacancies) or appropriate approver (untied) (chairperson)

up to 10 days to publication

**Confirm classification and authorise Position Description (HRCS)**

Finalise advertisement and submit for publication (HRCS)

10-15 days (add extra time if advertised internationally)

**Receive applications until closing date (ESS system)**

Committee members access applications via ESS

1-5 days

**Short-list candidates and advise recruitment@flinders.edu.au of non-short-listed candidates** (committee)

Determine selection techniques and prepare for interview(s) (committee)

1-5 days (add extra 10 days if seeking written referee reports)

**Conduct interviews and other selection processes** (committee)

Check referees (chairperson and/or committee member/s)

Select candidate (committee)

10-15 days

**Complete Recommendation to Appoint and forward to HRCS (chairperson)**

Informally advise successful candidate that they are recommended for position (chairperson)

Make formal offer; advise unsuccessful candidates (HRCS)

10-15 days

**Candidate accepts offer, completes and returns necessary paperwork and commences in position**

Arrange induction (chairperson/supervisor)
Process Flowchart - Nomination

Note: ‘days’ means working days.

1. **Consult HRCS to ensure appointment is consistent with policy (supervisor)**
   - 1-3 days

2. **Prepare Position Description including determining if position is ‘Prescribed’ (supervisor)**
   - 1-3 days

3. **Obtain approval from Grants Office: grant-funded positions only (HRCS)**
   - Complete, endorse and forward Request to Fill Vacancy to HR Client Services (tied vacancies) or appropriate approver (untied vacancies) (supervisor/Executive Dean/Portfolio Head)
   - 1-2 days

4. **Confirm classification and authorise Position Description (HRCS)**
   - 1-3 days

5. **Determine whether to use expressions of interest (supervisor)**
   - 1-3 days

6. **Determine second person involved in decision-making process if relevant**
   - up to 10 days

7. **Call for expressions of interest (supervisor)**
   - 13-15 days

8. **Receive applications from candidates (supervisor)**

9. **Assess candidate(s) against Position Description (may include interview)**
   - 13-15 days

10. **Obtain referee report(s) (supervisor)**

11. **Confirm successful candidate**

12. **Complete Recommendation to Appoint and forward to HRCS (chairperson)**
   - 2-3 days

13. **Informally advise successful candidate (supervisor)**

14. **Advise other staff who expressed interest of outcome (supervisor)**

15. **Make formal offer (HRCS)**
   - 10-15 days

16. **Candidate accepts offer, completes and returns necessary paperwork and commences in position**
   - 10-15 days

These will be relevant considerations in the case of nominations under the following categories:
- required to meet immediate or unexpected need
- limited pool due to highly specialised skills/knowledge
- appointment of student to grant-funded position

Note: ‘days’ means working days.
A NOTE ON THE TIME-FRAMES
The preceding flowcharts show that when recruiting using competitive selection, it will typically take between six to ten weeks between beginning relevant approval processes and the successful candidate commencing in the position. In some cases it is possible to conclude the process more quickly.

To assist in facilitating recruitment, selection and appointment in the quickest reasonable time-frame, it may be useful to note the following points:

1. Confirm that the proposed recruitment strategy (competitive selection, nomination or lateral transfer) is appropriate and consistent with the Appointment Policy.

2. Be informed of key deadlines i.e. advertising schedule for externally advertised vacancies (run on a fortnightly cycle).

3. Commence preparing the advertisement (where relevant) and any required paperwork at the earliest possible time. Initial work on these documents can occur whilst the relevant approval processes are taking place.

4. Pre-arrange and plan for key appointment committee dates (e.g. short-list, interview).

5. Consider obtaining verbal referees’ reports as written referees’ reports typically add an additional 10 days to the process.
3.1 POLICY STATEMENT

The University aims to appoint the most suitable people to vacant positions through an appointment process that is applied in a fair, consistent, professional and timely manner.

The principles of merit and equal opportunity provide the foundation for this policy. The merit principle means that appointment decisions are:

- based on a candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to those genuinely required for the key responsibilities of the position, and
- free from discrimination or patronage.

Executive Deans/Portfolio Heads are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Appointment Policy is underpinned by five key principles. These principles provide the basis for all decisions and processes in relation to the recruitment, selection and appointment of staff. They are as follows:

- Appointment processes will be open and subject to appropriate scrutiny and review, having regard to the confidentiality rights of the applicants and the University.
- All reasonable efforts will be made to achieve a balance between open recruitment and facilitating career development opportunities for existing staff.
- Recruitment processes will, where appropriate to an area, actively seek out groups under-represented in the University’s staffing profile; for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, school leavers, women, people from a non-English speaking background and people with disabilities.
- As a general principle, all staff members holding a continuing position will have undergone a competitive selection process at that classification at some stage in their employment with the University.
- The University will strive to ensure that all actions taken in relation to recruitment, selection and appointment will be free from conflicts of interest.

The full Appointment Policy is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/appointment-of-staff/appointment.cfm
4.1 GENERAL
The merit principle and equal opportunity underpin the University’s Appointment Policy. The merit principle means that appointment decisions are both:

- based on a candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to those genuinely required for the duties of the position, and
- free from discrimination or patronage.

Consistent with the merit principle, all appointment decisions will be based on an assessment of the candidate(s) against established selection criteria and key responsibilities that define the position.

Equal Opportunity means that the merit principle is applied fairly and consistently in the workplace. In particular, some aspects of a candidate’s background or circumstances are not relevant to their suitability for employment i.e. race, sex, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, potential pregnancy, sexual preference or family circumstances and responsibilities. Assumptions made about a candidate’s suitability which are based on stereotyped views of these aspects may involve unfair discrimination and may be unlawful under the South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (see 4.2).


4.2 LEGISLATION
Every staff member has rights and obligations under various legislated Acts. It is therefore important that everyone has some understanding of the relevant legislation and its implications for workplace decisions and actions. Information on the key legislation pertaining to equal opportunity and anti-discrimination in employment can be found at: www.flinders.edu.au/equal-opportunity/tools_resources/legislation.cfm.

4.3 WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENTS
Employers should choose the best person for a position and the decision should be based on a person's ability to perform its inherent requirements. Many people have disabilities that are not obvious and they are not obliged to disclose the disability at the interview, unless the disability will prevent them from carrying out an inherent requirement (e.g. a back injury and a requirement to lift heavy loads).

When a person with a disability is considered to be the best person for the position, and that person requires some adjustment(s) to be made to enable her/him to carry out its inherent requirements, the employer is required to make such workplace adjustments as are "reasonable". The principle of reasonable adjustment allows that wherever it is possible, necessary and reasonable to do so, the usual policy or practice will be varied to meet the needs of a person with a disability.

Reasonable adjustments which may be required include modification of work premises or equipment, changes to job design, work schedules or work practices, and provision of training or other assistance. The Disability Discrimination Act does not require workplace changes to be made if the changes will cause unjustifiable hardship to the organisation i.e. major difficulties or unreasonable costs.

Further advice about affirmative action or discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act can be obtained from staff in HR Client Services or the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity.
5.1 EO DESIGNATED GROUPS
Executive Deans/Portfolio Heads who wish to redress the under-representation of women, or other EO designated groups including people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, people with disabilities, and people from non-English speaking backgrounds, may seek applications from suitably qualified persons from these groups as indicated below.

5.2 SEARCH PLAN FOR WOMEN
Developing and using a search plan is a way of broadening the field of well-qualified candidates for an advertised position, in this case, well qualified women. A search plan for women is particularly relevant where there is an imbalance in the ratio of male to female staff in senior positions, non-traditional areas and in continuing academic positions.

A search plan involves going beyond the normal advertisement procedures and uses less formal networks. Strategies to be adopted will vary with each area. When developing a search plan it is important to remember:

- The search process should occur either just before or at the same time as the position is advertised. It is not intended that a special search should be made after the short-list has been decided.
- Only women who are suitably qualified for the position should be encouraged to apply.
- All candidates are to be short-listed and selected on the basis of merit, which is in line with the University’s Equal Opportunity Policy and Appointment Policy.
- As a general principle, care should be taken in establishing the selection criteria so that the nature of women’s life experiences can be taken into account.

Recognising career interruptions
In assessing the merit of the candidates, an attempt should be made to avoid a stereotypical view of conventional career paths and to recognise that women’s career paths may have been interrupted by child rearing and other family responsibilities. For some women, their role may have been in supporting their partner’s career rather than their own which could account for their mobility or fewer years of service with an organisation. For academic women, the quality of experience, publications, or teaching may be of more value to the interview panel than the actual quantity of publications.

Reporting on search activity
If a search activity was undertaken in order to attract women to apply for the position, the chairperson of an appointment committee should outline this in their report. The success of the search process will be judged by whether or not suitably qualified women are included on a short-list.

Assistance and advice
Further assistance and advice on developing search plans for EO designated groups can be obtained from HR Client Services or the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity.
5.3 OTHER GROUPS
Where a particular need arises, a search plan should be prepared for staff in other designated EO groups including people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, people with disabilities and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Executive Dean/Portfolio Head should identify these circumstances prior to advertising the position. Further information and/or advice may be obtained from HR Client Services or the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

5.4 FLINDERS INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (FIEF)
The Flinders Indigenous Engagement Framework aims to increase the diversity of the Flinders workforce through the employment, retention and career progression of Indigenous people.

Assistance and advice
Further assistance and advice is available from the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, People and Culture, or from the FIEF website.

CHECKLIST – SEARCH PLAN

☑ Is there an under-representation of women in the area?
☑ Is there an under-representation of other specific EO designated groups in the area?
☑ Seek further advice on possible options from HR Client Services or the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Vacant positions may be filled using one of three recruitment options:

1. Competitive Selection (refer to Section 9)
2. Nomination (refer to Section 10)
3. Lateral Transfer (refer to Section 11)

The merit principle applies to appointments under all three recruitment options. This means that, in all cases, a candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities will be assessed against those genuinely required for the position. In all cases, the successful candidate must meet the essential selection criteria.

**Who decides which recruitment option to take?**
The Executive Dean/Portfolio Head will determine the appropriate recruitment option, usually on the recommendation of, or in consultation with, the position’s supervisor.

**Do all vacant positions have to be advertised?**
No. Advertising generally applies to those positions filled through competitive selection. Advertisement is not required for lateral transfer or for appointment by nomination. The majority of vacant positions (including all vacancies to which a continuing appointment is intended) are filled using a competitive process (on either an internal-only or open basis). Appointment by nomination may only occur in specified circumstances. Refer to Section 10 for further information.

Regardless of which recruitment option is chosen, all vacant positions must have:

1. appropriate approval (refer to Section 7), and
2. a current authorised Position Description (refer to Section 8)
7.1 FIXED-TERM, CONVERTIBLE AND CONTINUING POSITIONS
The University's Recruitment and Vacancy Management Procedure must be used for all continuing, fixed-term (including extensions) and convertible untied* academic and professional vacancies (new and replacement). The following academic and professional positions are excluded from this process:

- casual
- temporary backfill of roles up to one year in duration (e.g. parental leave)
- tied** or split funded where no more than 20% of the position(s) is funded from untied sources

Comprehensive information about this process, including approval requirements, is available from: www.flinders.edu.au/flinders/ppmanual/staff/appointment-of-staff/recruitment-and-vacancy-management.cfm.

* Untied: Funding defined as recurrent in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement or non-recurrent sources excluded from the definition of 'tied' below.

**Tied: Grant and other funding received by the University that can only be spent for the purpose granted. This includes research grants, donations/bequests and student services amenities fees.

7.2 CASUAL EMPLOYMENT
Casual appointments are normally made by direct nomination (refer Section 10) or using an 'expressions of interest' process (refer Section 12).

Engaging casual professional staff
It is appropriate to consider the employment of a casual professional employee where work is to be performed on an *ad hoc* basis over an undefined period, or over a short but definite period.

Once a suitable candidate has been identified, the process outlined in Managing the Casual Professional Process (www.flinders.edu.au/hr/hrsp/casual-employment/information-for-managing-casuals.cfm) should be used for all casual appointments. The supervisor approves casual professional staff appointments at HEO Levels 1 to 5 inclusive, while the Faculty/Portfolio Head approves casual professional staff appointments at HEO Level 6 and above.

Although the policy does not define a formal limit on the duration of casual employment, supervisors need to be aware that where a casual professional staff member has been employed on a regular and systematic basis in the same or similar position in the same School/Division over the immediately preceding 12 months (depending on the average hours worked); or 24 months, they have the right to apply to have their employment converted to a non-casual (fixed-term or continuing) appointment.

For more information on casual professional staff employment, refer to the Casual Professional Staff policy (www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/types-of-appointment/cas-gen-staff.cfm).

Engaging casual academic staff
It is appropriate to consider the employment of a casual academic employee where the University requires some level of flexibility and/or particular expertise in relation to teaching and learning related duties. The type of work normally performed by a casual academic employee includes: lecturing on an occasional basis, seminar/tutorial/practical class
instruction, marking and assisting with the preparation of teaching materials and organisation of classes.

Once a suitable candidate has been identified, the process outlined in Information for Managing Casuals (www.flinders.edu.au/hr/hrsp/casual-employment/information-for-managing-casuals.cfm) should be used. The Faculty/Portfolio Head (or nominee) approves casual academic staff appointments.

For more information on casual academic employment, refer to the Casual Academic Appointments policy (www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/types-of-appointment/casual-acad-appoint.cfm).

CHECKLIST – APPROVING THE POSITION

✓ Draft Position Description. Determine whether the position is ‘Prescribed’ and the relevant screening(s) required.

✓ Obtain initial approval to fill the vacancy from the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head.

8.1 PREPARING A POSITION DESCRIPTION

A Position Description details key information about the position (such as working relationships and key responsibilities) and the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the role (selection criteria). All vacant positions, excluding casual positions, require a Position Description, prepared using the standard University format and authorised by HR Client Services.

Standard formats for all Position Descriptions

There are separate Position Description templates for professional staff and academic staff, the latter including two for Teaching Specialists (Academic, and Clinical/Practitioner respectively) and one for Scholarly Fellow. These can all be downloaded from: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm. The templates include notes to assist in their completion.

Who prepares the Position Description?

The position’s supervisor normally prepares the Position Description, usually in consultation with the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head.

Who authorises the Position Description?

With the exception of senior executive positions, the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head approves all academic and professional staff Position Descriptions, after HR Client Services has confirmed that the responsibilities and selection criteria are consistent with either the Academic Profiles or Professional Staff Classification Descriptors. Position Descriptions are not valid without HR Client Services authorisation.

Position Descriptions for senior executive positions, i.e. Vice-Chancellor, Deputy/Pro Vice-Chancellors, Vice-Presidents and Executive Deans/Portfolio Heads, are approved by Council.

Deadline for completing the Position Description

The drafting of the Position Description should commence at the earliest possible time (for inclusion with documentation required as per the Recruitment and Vacancy Management Procedure). The final version must be completed and authorised by HR Client Services prior to the position being advertised to avoid any delays in advertising.

Relevant documents

When preparing a Position Description, it will be helpful to refer to the documents identified in Table 1 below. These documents provide the basis on which positions are classified and paid and it is therefore imperative that the responsibilities and selection criteria are consistent with the provisions contained therein.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of employment</th>
<th>Relevant document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic (Teaching-and-Research)</td>
<td>Academic Profiles (Levels A-E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Specialist (Academic)</td>
<td>Academic Profiles (Levels A-E): Teaching Specialist (Academic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Specialist (Clinical/Practitioner)</td>
<td>Academic Profiles (Levels A-E): Teaching Specialist (Clinical/Practitioner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic (Research-only)</td>
<td>Minimum Standards for Academic Levels (Research Academic Staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional staff</td>
<td>Professional Staff Classification Descriptors (HEO 1-10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/classification/classification_home.cfm
Defining responsibilities for professional staff positions
When defining responsibilities, the focus is on identifiable outcomes and levels of accountability. This section will reflect the level of judgement, independence, knowledge and other specific skills that are required for someone to operate at a particular classification level.

When identifying key responsibilities for professional staff positions, it is often helpful for the incumbent and/or supervisor to start with a complete list of all the tasks that are performed within the position. It is also useful to notate which tasks are considered to be the higher level tasks and which tasks are the most time-consuming.

Once all the duties have been identified, the goal is to summarise the main duties so that the focus is on identifiable outcomes and ‘key’ responsibilities or, in the case of more senior positions, levels of accountability.

Prescribed positions
Consideration must be given as to whether a position is a ‘prescribed position’ as defined under the Children’s Protection Act 1993 (SA). The Act defines a ‘prescribed position’ as one that involves the performance of one or more of the following prescribed functions:

- Regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis, unless the contact or work is directly supervised at all times; or
- Supervision or management of persons in positions requiring or involving regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
- Access to records of a kind prescribed by regulation relating to children; or
- Functions of a type prescribed by regulation (currently only the provision of overnight care is prescribed).

In the case of universities and their non-adult students, a further circumstance is relevant on advice from the Minister, regarding where a service may be provided to any child/non-adult student on an individual basis.

Further information on Employment Screening, including how to assess if a position is prescribed, can be accessed at: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-screening/employment-screening_home.cfm.

Linked positions
A linked position, enabling a staff member to move from one classification level to the next higher classification level on successfully meeting defined criteria, may be established on vacancy. It should be considered in particular where the history of a position indicates that reclassification is likely with the development of skills and expertise and the resulting growth in position responsibilities. Advice on establishing linked positions should be obtained from HR Client Services before any formal paperwork is completed.

8.2 SELECTION CRITERIA
The purpose of selection criteria is to identify the skills, knowledge and qualifications/training/experience required to fulfil the responsibilities of the position. Each person appointed to a vacant position must be assessed against the selection criteria for the position.

Selection criteria will be either essential or desirable.

- **Essential criteria:** Typically, there will be between 5 and 7 essential criteria describing the skills, knowledge and competencies required in order for the job to be performed effectively. HR Client Services cannot approve a recommendation to appoint if the preferred candidate does not meet all the essential selection criteria; therefore, candidates who do not meet the essential criteria should not be short-listed.
Desirable criteria: These should include factors considered desirable but not necessarily essential for satisfactory performance in the position. The inclusion of between 1 and 3 desirable criteria is typical but there may not be any desirable criteria specified. Desirable criteria can be useful for distinguishing between closely ranked candidates.

Some useful points when developing selection criteria:
- Selection criteria should reflect the classification of the position, so it is important to describe the level of skill or knowledge required in realistic terms (for example: ‘competent’, ‘well-developed’, ‘sound’ or ‘high level’ rather than having all criteria described as ‘excellent’ or ‘exceptional’).
- Selection criteria should be written in a non-discriminatory manner and must not be changed once the position has been advertised.
- In cases where the selection criteria used to appoint the previous incumbent are again used, the supervisor should ensure that these criteria are still appropriate for the new appointment.
- For professional staff positions, tertiary qualifications are not a prerequisite for many positions unless there is a legal requirement (e.g. nurse, psychologist) or it is an inherent requirement of the position (e.g. the position is advertised as a graduate trainee or research assistant). Where there is a preference for a tertiary qualification, the selection criteria should also provide for equivalent experience and/or training.
- Work experience should not be so narrowly specified that only someone who has actually performed that particular job could satisfy this criterion. Any experience relevant to the duties of the position should be able to be taken into account and this may include both paid and unpaid work.
- It is important to note that the length of work experience or seniority is not necessarily a reliable indicator of whether someone is competent in the skills and knowledge required for the position. Therefore, care needs to be taken that experience is not defined in terms of “x number of years’ experience in…..” as this may indirectly discriminate against women and younger people who may not be able to meet the number of years specified, yet may be considered competent for the position.

When considering the selection criteria for a position, it may be useful to consider the position in terms of the following requirements:
- supervisory responsibilities (refer to Section 8.3 for further information);
- level and type of communication (e.g. written, oral, interpersonal);
- the level of problem solving or analytical skills;
- level of independence;
- capacity to work as part of a team or independently; and
- specific work experience and/or job knowledge (consider whether the knowledge requirement is essential or whether it can be acquired or learned in a reasonable time with reference guides or training).

Additional assistance – professional staff selection criteria
For professional staff vacancies at classification levels HEO2 to HEO8 inclusive, Guidelines for Establishing Selection Criteria are available. Although by no means exhaustive, these may be used as a guide in drawing up appropriate selection criteria for professional staff vacancies. Advice on selection criteria for levels HEO9 and above can be obtained from HR Client Services.
8.3 DEFINING SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

In selecting managers and supervisors, equal weight should be given to both:

- job knowledge and skills; and
- managerial/supervisory knowledge and skills.

When developing selection criteria for supervisory positions, it is important to consider the specific requirements relating to the supervisory aspects of the role. The types of responsibilities that may be identified for a supervisory position include the following:

- Ability to manage a team or group of staff including:
  - setting team direction;
  - providing leadership;
  - motivating and encouraging staff to improve performance and/or develop professionally;
  - managing and monitoring allocation of tasks and workload;
  - providing informal and formal feedback, and
  - managing performance.

- Ability to manage the financial and other resources available to the work area/unit.

- Experience of, and commitment to, staff development and training and career development for staff.

- Understanding of, and commitment to:
  - the principles of equal opportunity and work health and safety; and
  - the responsibilities of the supervisor in respect of these areas.

Questions asked by appointment committees should seek to establish evidence by asking candidates to draw on their experience as a manager/supervisor and to provide examples of instances where they have demonstrated managerial/supervisory skills. These examples can then be validated with referees.

Consideration should also be given to the requirement for ‘demonstrated’ experience versus a ‘capacity’ to undertake the duties, particularly if someone has the training and knowledge or the skills required for the position. Capacity to exercise these skills is one way of providing opportunities for career development at a higher level.

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**CHECKLIST – POSITION DESCRIPTION**

- ✔ Draft Position Description.
- ✔ Obtain endorsement from the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head to fill the position.
- ✔ HR Client Services will check the content, confirm the classification level and the local title of the position, and authorise the final version.
9.1 RECRUITING CANDIDATES

Choosing a recruitment strategy

The object of recruitment is to obtain a suitable pool of candidates from which to make an appointment decision. The chosen recruitment strategy will depend on the characteristics of the vacant position, the recruitment budget and the prevailing employment market. The most important issues to consider when choosing the appropriate recruitment strategy are:

- the nature and characteristics of the position (e.g. managerial, academic, technical, research, specialist);
- the anticipated size and location of the pool of candidates (within the University, local Adelaide, national or international);
- the preferences of “suitable” candidates (e.g. IT candidates are high users of the internet and increasingly this is a preferred means of looking for a job);
- the speed with which a vacancy needs to be filled.

Internal or open recruitment?

Appointment to vacant positions provides an important avenue for career development of current University staff members (particularly professional staff). Likewise, there is considerable benefit to the University in appointing an existing staff member to a vacant position, as that person will bring with her or him knowledge and understanding of the University environment – its culture, systems, policies and organisational structures.

The development of our existing talent is important to the University and considerable thought should be given to the decision to advertise internally or on an open basis. Further, there are no advertising costs for internal advertisements, and this option can avoid unnecessarily large candidate pools that must be managed by the appointment committee.

To be eligible to apply for an internal-only vacancy, candidates must be employed by the University on a continuing, convertible or fixed-term basis at some stage during the period the vacancy is advertised. Casual staff members are eligible to apply for an internal-only vacancy if they have worked at the University in the six months prior to the closing date of the position and are employed during the period the vacancy is advertised.

**TABLE 2: INTERNAL OR OPEN RECRUITMENT?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Recruitment</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>Open</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitates career development for existing staff</td>
<td>May lift employee morale</td>
<td>Facilitates fresh ideas into the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May lift employee morale</td>
<td>Lower cost method</td>
<td>Eliminates claims of favouritism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower cost method</td>
<td>Faster ‘start up/orientation - familiar with University's structure, policies, systems, etc.</td>
<td>Encourages existing staff to remain market competitive i.e. keep skills and knowledge up to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faster ‘start up/orientation - familiar with University's structure, policies, systems, etc.</td>
<td>Assists with succession planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assists with succession planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits introduction of fresh/external ideas</td>
<td>Can cause discontent among unsuccessful internal candidates</td>
<td>May reduce morale among those internal candidates ‘overlooked’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can cause discontent among unsuccessful internal candidates</td>
<td>Can elicit criticism from outside the University</td>
<td>Increases training costs and orientation period associated with induction of new recruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can elicit criticism from outside the University</td>
<td></td>
<td>New recruit may not ‘fit in’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where to advertise
The positives and negatives of a variety of recruitment strategies are identified in the table below. Wherever possible, digital media should be considered first as an effective and inexpensive method of reaching a wide audience.

**TABLE 3: RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES – POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment Strategy</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital media via Jobs@Flinders, other managed sites (e.g. seek.com.au) or managed email subscriber lists (e.g. ATEM, research lists).</td>
<td>• Can be very efficient and generate a quick response rate • May be more suitable for high demand markets (such as the IT market) • Inexpensive relative to mainstream press advertising • Global coverage gives access to wide audience, if key words are chosen carefully</td>
<td>• Although has ‘global’ coverage, may have less potential for reaching the wider ‘browsing’ public and non-internet users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream press (e.g. Adelaide Advertiser, The Australian and Campus Review)</td>
<td>• Familiar • Accessible to wide range of candidates • Reasonably quick lead times to publication</td>
<td>• Can be expensive, depending on placement • Not cost-effective if the target audience is known • May result in excessive numbers of applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative press (e.g. professional publications, ethnic, local or student press)</td>
<td>• May be useful for targeting specialist skills</td>
<td>• May not reach wide enough pool of candidates • Long lead times to publication may delay process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment agency</td>
<td>• Agency will match criteria with its database of resumés to identify a suitable pool of candidates • More useful for generic and/or high demand roles (e.g. administrative)</td>
<td>• Pool of candidates will be limited to those registered with the agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search firms</td>
<td>• May be effective where there is a very limited pool of candidates or the position is highly specialised • Will approach potential candidates who may not be actively job hunting • Typically do not advertise but rely on research and referral to source suitable candidates • Will short-list candidates</td>
<td>• Can be expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional associations, networks, word-of-mouth</td>
<td>• Inexpensive • May be useful for specialist positions where the pool is known to be small</td>
<td>• Reaches a limited pool of candidates and probably best done in conjunction with one or more of the other recruitment strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 GETTING A POSITION ADVERTISED
Advertising in the mainstream press
External vacancies are advertised in accordance with a published fortnightly cycle. Advertising Deadlines are available at: [www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm).
Is an advertisement required for internal-only vacancies?
No. Internal-only vacancies will be published at Jobs@Flinders. The link to the vacancy will take the user directly to the Position Description, which contains comprehensive information about the position. This will also be the case for open vacancies that are advertised on Jobs@Flinders only.

Who pays for the advertisement?
The cost of advertising is charged against the Faculty/Portfolio placing the advertisement. The cost of advertising in external publications can be expensive and a quotation from HR Client Services should be sought before proceeding.

HR Client Services will normally “block” an advertisement with those from other work areas in a composite University advertisement. This method of advertising reduces costs and increases visibility of the advertisement.

How do I arrange an advertisement?
To arrange advertisement of the vacancy, forward the following items to HR Client Services no later than noon on the Monday of a particular advertising cycle for publication within the following fortnight:

- an authorised Request to Fill Vacancy form*;
- the authorised Position Description**; and
- a draft advertisement (for externally-advertised positions only)**.

* either hard copy or electronic version
** electronic version required

Is there a standard University format for advertisements?
Yes. University advertisements are prepared using a standard advertising format. This template can be downloaded from: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm.

What makes a good advertisement?
The aim of the advertisement is to make readers aware that the vacancy exists and to convince them to take the next steps, that is, obtain further information about the position and ultimately submit an application.

When drafting the advertisement it may be useful to keep in mind the following points:

- The first few lines should be interesting, engaging and actively sell the position (What is the key purpose or contribution of the position? How does it ‘add value’ to the work area and the University at large?).
- The advertisement should contain enough information to interest the reader, but not so much that the reader is overloaded. Sentences should be short. The less copy used, the smaller the media space and lower the cost.
- Try to include only key information and use the Position Description to provide complete information about the position. (Don’t restate all of the key responsibilities and selection criteria, when that information is easily accessible through the Position Description.)
- Avoid the use of jargon.

How long should I allow for the closing date?
A two week period from the date of external advertisement to close of applications is typically considered reasonable. A four to six week period is normally provided in the case of internationally advertised vacancies. For internal vacancies, the closing date will usually be one week. Where advertisements are to be published in more than one place, the closing date must be consistent for all publications.
Publication and circulation
Once the advertisement has been finalised, HR Client Services will:

- liaise with the University’s advertising agency to have the advertisement placed in the relevant publication(s); and/or
- arrange for the vacancy to be listed on the Jobs@Flinders web site and upload the Position Description so that intending candidates can access position information direct from the web.

**CHECKLIST – GETTING A POSITION ADVERTISED**

- Obtain relevant approval to fill the vacancy i.e. Executive Dean/Portfolio Head.
- Ensure a current authorised Position Description is available.
- Choose a recruitment strategy (internal or open, where to advertise).
- Nominate an appointment committee.
- Draft the advertisement using the standard template.
- email the Position Description and draft advertisement to HR Client Services.
- Collate an information package (Position Description, Essential Information for Applicants, and any other information considered necessary or useful) for dissemination to intending candidates who cannot access the information from Jobs@Flinders.

9.3 APPOINTMENT COMMITTEES
An appointment committee will be established for each position to be filled through competitive selection. Each appointment committee must include at least one woman and one man, and should include as equal a mix of women and men as possible. The composition of appointment committees is outlined in the University’s Appointment Policy, at [www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/appointment-of-staff/appointment.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/appointment-of-staff/appointment.cfm).

Confidentiality
All information relating to the appointment process is confidential and should not be discussed with persons other than committee members, and staff in HR Client Services.

Who selects the Committee members?
With the exception of senior management staff, the membership of an appointment committee will be determined by the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head on the advice of the supervisor/head of the area. The names of the proposed appointment committee members
should be provided on the Request to Fill Vacancy form. The membership of an appointment committee may be made available to candidates on request.

**Can the committee chairperson co-opt members additional to those specified?**
The University encourages the use of small appointment committees and it is expected that most committees will comprise the membership noted above. However, additional members can be co-opted if this is appropriate to the characteristics of the vacancy (for example, senior academic and professional staff positions).

**Additional advice/support**
A staff member from HR Client Services will be available, on the request of a committee chairperson or a candidate, to act in an advisory capacity to appointment committees and to assist in proper observance of equal opportunity and selection principles.

**Is training compulsory for all members?**
All chairpersons must have participated in the University's Recruitment and Selection Workshop. In addition to the chairperson, it is expected that at least one other committee member will have participated in the workshop. The Appointment Policy notes that it is expected that at least half of the committee members will have attended training.

**Will training with a previous employer be recognised?**
While many of the practical aspects of the Recruitment and Selection Workshop will apply generally, committee members will ideally be trained through the Flinders University program. Many aspects of the workshop cover Flinders-specific issues and processes and this information will not have been included as part of training conducted by a former employer.

**How and when is training offered?**
HR Client Services conducts the Recruitment and Selection Workshop on a regular basis. A schedule of workshop dates is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/staffdev/index.php/course/EAC or from the Professional Development Unit. The workshop is normally three hours in length and is designed to familiarise staff with the legislative requirements and policies/procedures to be observed, as well as offering good practice advice on the practical aspects of selection (e.g. interviewing). The University encourages all committee members, or staff likely to serve on an appointment committee at some future time, to attend this workshop.

**How can I find out who's been trained?**
The Professional Development Unit maintains a register of all participants in the recruitment and selection workshop.

**Must each committee member be involved at every stage?**
Each committee member will normally be involved at each stage, from short-listing to selection and recommending the successful candidate. Members cannot be represented by proxies or alternates. Short-listing may be conducted on an individual basis, i.e. each member reviews the applications separately, draws up a short-list and the group comes together to discuss and agree on the final short-list.

**What happens if a member cannot fulfil their obligations?**
This will depend on what stage the appointment proceedings have reached. If the member’s inability to see the process through becomes apparent early on (i.e. final short-listing) it may be sensible to replace that person. In this case the replacement would need to review the short-listing decisions. If proceedings are more advanced, it may be impractical to replace the person. In this case, the chairperson should consult HR Client Services in relation to suitable options.
What’s the role of the chairperson?
The chairperson is responsible for the proper conduct of the appointment process. Responsibilities include:

- ensuring compliance with University policies and procedures, specifically those relating to the recruitment and selection of staff;
- ensuring that at least one other member of the appointment committee has attended a recruitment and selection workshop;
- ensuring that for external positions all members of the appointment committee have access to all applications prior to the short-listing meeting (applications are available on-line via ESS (refer 9.4) as they are submitted);
- ensuring that all members of the committee participate fully in the committee process;
- obtaining referees’ reports for short-listed candidates and advising referees about the University's Freedom of Information obligations;
- ensuring that timely and efficient interview arrangements are made;
- ensuring that the selection process has been free from unlawful discrimination, and that any issues that may arise are dealt with appropriately;
- completing the Recommendation to Appoint form and committee report;
- liaising between the appointment committee and HR Client Services; and
- ensuring that the feedback that will be given to each candidate, if requested, is discussed and agreed upon by the committee.

How should a committee member deal with a real or perceived conflict of interest?
Appointment processes and decisions must be free from real or perceived conflict of interest. Should appointment committee members consider that they have a close relationship with a candidate, which could unduly affect the selection process, they should withdraw from the committee.

What does a ‘close relationship’ with a candidate mean?
‘Close relationship’ means a significant personal interest, generally of a financial, familial or sexual nature. The presence of a close relationship is likely to emerge early in the process (usually when conducting an initial short-list). When determining whether this relationship represents a real or perceived conflict of interest, ask “will the relationship prevent the committee member from making an objective decision in relation to the candidate?”

If there is any doubt about whether a close relationship may constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest, it is best to err on the side of caution and withdraw from the committee. The member should inform the chairperson as soon as the problem is identified; a replacement committee member may be nominated depending on the stage the process has reached.

Is it ok to be a committee member if I am also an applicant’s supervisor?
Yes. This situation occurs from time to time and is not a conflict of interest if the working relationship does not prevent the committee member from making an objective assessment of the candidate.

9.4 APPLICATIONS AND ENQUIRIES FROM CANDIDATES
How (or where) should applications be lodged?
Job seekers will apply for vacancies on-line through Jobs@Flinders. Further information on the recruitment process can be obtained from www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/recruitment_home.cfm.
**Does the University acknowledge applications?**

Applications lodged receive an immediate email acknowledgement. Further information about Flinders’ recruitment procedures is available from [Essential Information for Applicants](#).

All candidates will also be formally advised by HR Client Services, Recruitment team, of the outcome of the appointment process once this is finalised. This often takes place in two stages. A list of candidates not short-listed should be forwarded to recruitment@flinders.edu.au as soon as possible after the short-listing meeting so that they can be advised that their application was unsuccessful. Short-listed candidates who are unsuccessful after interview will receive advice once an offer is made and accepted.

**How and when will committee members receive the applications?**

*Internally Advertised:* All members of the appointment committee will receive an email with the downloaded applications attached once the position is closed.

*Externally Advertised:* All members of the appointment committee have access to each application for the position on-line immediately following its submission via Employee Self Service (ESS) i.e. they do not have to wait for the position to close. Documents are then downloaded individually by the appointment committee.

**The role of the contact person**

All advertisements should identify an appropriate contact person who can provide further information about the position, re-direct more detailed enquiries as required, and who is responsible for arranging access to applications by appointment committee members. This person is not always the committee chairperson. The contact person may also provide further information about the position to interested people on request. Most intending applicants should be able to access this information via the Jobs@Flinders site and should be encouraged to do so. Some candidates may, however, request that the information be mailed, emailed or faxed.

In some cases, potential candidates seek more detailed information about the position, the University or working conditions to help them make an informed decision on whether to apply. The contact person should be able to either respond to these questions, or readily refer the candidate to the appropriate person (normally the committee chairperson). Such discussions are often time well spent – both for wavering candidates and candidates who are ultimately not in a strong position to win the appointment.

**How to deal with enquiries from candidates**

The following advice is provided to assist contact persons in responding to enquiries from potential candidates.

- All intending candidates must obtain the Position Description and the [Essential Information for Applicants](#). These documents can be downloaded from the Jobs@Flinders site. The organisational area will be responsible for providing this information to interested people who cannot access it on-line.
- Potential candidates should be given information about the skills and experience necessary for the position so that they can make an informed decision about whether to apply.
- Contact persons should not set out to discourage any person from applying, especially people from EO designated groups; nor should they ask discriminatory or offensive questions of the candidates.
- Contact persons may respond to general questions relating to salary or general conditions of appointment or, alternatively, refer callers to HR Client Services for advice.
- Candidates should be reminded that they need to address the selection criteria in their applications.
Can an intending candidate meet with the committee chairperson?
Occasionally, an intending applicant requests a meeting with the supervisor or a tour of the work area prior to submitting a formal application. The University generally supports such requests if they will assist the candidate to make an informed judgement about their suitability for the position.

Can a committee invite applications from identified individuals?
Yes; however, invited applications will be subject to the same appointment process as all other candidates. Care should be taken to ensure that a person who is invited to apply is not given an expectation that they will automatically win the position.

9.5 SHORT-LISTING
The purpose of short-listing is to select from the entire group of candidates a smaller group who best meet the requirements of the Position Description and who warrant interview.

Who should be involved in short-listing?
All members of the appointment committee will normally be involved in the short-listing process. Where there are a very large number of applications, the committee may agree that a sub-group will short-list.

When should short-listing occur?
Short-listing should be carried out as soon as possible after the closing date for receipt of applications and preferably within two weeks of that date.

What should be considered when assessing applications for short-listing?
Short-listing should be based on the qualifications, skills and abilities listed by candidates in their application, measured against the requirements specified in the Position Description, which includes the selection criteria (both essential and desirable) and the key responsibilities.

Candidates should initially be considered against any pre-determined formal educational qualifications or training specified in the essential criteria. Candidates who do not meet all the essential criteria should not be short-listed.

Must all candidates who meet the essential criteria be short-listed?
No. If there are too many candidates who meet the essential requirements for the position than it is feasible to interview, the committee should try to separate the candidates by ranking them individually against each of the essential criteria. The desirable criteria may be used as a final means of separating the candidates. In addition, referees may be approached at this stage to comment on the candidates’ ability to meet each of the essential criteria.

Who advises short-listed candidates about interview/other selection processes?
Once short-listing is completed, the chairperson should advise those candidates who have been short-listed as soon as possible of the interview arrangements and any other selection processes to be used.

Who advises candidates who have not been short-listed?
HR Client Services will advise unsuccessful candidates that they have not been short-listed. To enable this to occur, the chairperson should forward to recruitment@flinders.edu.au a list of those candidates who have not been short-listed as soon after the short-listing process as possible.

What happens to the applications?
The applications and supporting documents that the committee members have downloaded from the web must be saved or printed in a way that preserves confidentiality, and then deleted or destroyed within six months of the position closing.
9.6 SELECTION TECHNIQUES
There are a number of selection techniques that can be used by appointment committees to assist them in determining the most suitable candidate for a position. Most commonly used are the interview process, referees' reports, and for academic senior positions, conducting a public seminar. In addition, the committee may wish to consider whether the following options are appropriate to the position and will add value to the final selection decision:

- presentation to the committee or to a larger public group;
- the tabling of work samples and a follow up discussion;
- practical skills testing (e.g. word processing, technical skills testing); and
- hypothetical case studies/scenarios.

9.6.1 THE INTERVIEW
The interview is an exchange of information between the interviewers and the candidate. It is a crucial stage in assessing a candidate's suitability for a position and gives members of the appointment committee an opportunity to:

- provide candidates with information about the University and the work area including any specific requirements for the role e.g. the requirement to undertake a Child Related Employment Screening;
- ensure that candidates understand the tasks and responsibilities of the position; and
- personally assess candidates against the selection criteria and key responsibilities.

Scheduling the Interview
Short-listed candidates should be given adequate notice of interview arrangements and whether they are required to give a presentation/seminar or to undertake a test or some other activity as part of the selection process. At this time, candidates should be asked whether any special arrangements, assistance or reasonable adjustments need to be made e.g. for those with a disability.

What if a candidate is unable to attend at the nominated time or date?
The chairperson may make alternative arrangements if they believe that such a request is reasonable based on the case that is made by the candidate. Ideally, the interview will be scheduled within a week of the other interviews.

Who meets the interview travel costs for interstate or overseas candidates?
Reimbursement for travel-related costs for interviews associated with recurrent (untied)-funded professional staff vacancies at Higher Education Officer Level 8 and above and academic staff vacancies at the level of Lecturer (Level B) and above is provided from a central fund. The limit of such reimbursement is $5,000 per vacancy, with the maximum amount per candidate normally being $2,500. Travel and any other expenses associated with interviewing which exceed these limits will be met by the Faculty/Portfolio concerned. Costs associated with interviews for tied e.g. grant-funded positions are not reimbursed centrally.

The chairperson of the appointment committee is responsible for making all travel arrangements for interstate and overseas candidates. Travel and accommodation should be booked through a University-accredited travel agent (refer to the policy on University Travel, Accommodation and Subsistence). Normally the relevant Faculty/Portfolio makes and pays for the necessary travel arrangements directly. Occasionally (particularly in the case of overseas travel) it may be more cost effective for the candidate to make her or his own arrangements and be reimbursed by the Faculty/Portfolio. Further advice can be sought from HR Client Services.
Overseas or interstate candidates may be interviewed using video- or tele-conferencing facilities. For further information on this, contact staff in Information Technology Services or HR Client Services.

Planning the Interview
Planning is an important part of the interview process. The following table identifies the planning considerations that the committee should consider and agree on prior to the interviews taking place.

**TABLE 4: PLANNING THE INTERVIEW**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Planning considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Time and date**            | • Agree on the time, date and location for the interviews.  
• Ideally, all interviews will be held on the same day, or, if this is not possible, over as short a period of days as possible.  |
| **Length of interviews**     | • The length of the interviews will vary depending on the level of the position but will be substantially the same for each candidate (as a guide, anything from 20 to 60 minutes may be appropriate).  
• Allocate sufficient time to enable candidates to ask questions, to provide additional information, or to clarify any matters relating to the position that may not have been covered in the interview. |
| **Location**                 | • Choose a location with easy access.  
• Ensure the interview room provides comfortable seating and that the candidate can be seen and heard by all members of the panel.  
• Avoid seating candidates where they can be distracted e.g. by the glare from windows.  
• Choose a location that will be free from interruptions or distractions. |
| **Special requirements**     | • Prior to the interview candidates should be asked if they require any special assistance or aids.                                                                                                                   |
| **Position Description and applications** | • The Position Description, selection criteria, applications and referees’ reports (if obtained prior to interview) should be reviewed to identify any particular points which committee members wish to explore with the candidates. |
| **Interview questions**      | • All members of the appointment committee may be given the opportunity to contribute to the formulation of the interview questions which should address the selection criteria and key responsibilities for the position.  
• All interviewees should be asked to respond to the same pre-determined questions relating to key criteria/responsibilities although questions may be expanded to explore an individual’s case. Follow-up questions will obviously vary between candidates.  
• Questions need to be open-ended, clear and concise and, if applicable, phrased in such a way as to encourage candidates to identify specific examples.  
• It is not appropriate to ask questions relating to personal circumstances (e.g. marital status or family commitments). However, if there are genuine occupational requirements then it is acceptable to ask each candidate regarding their availability to travel, work overtime or undertake shift work. |
| **Discussing outcomes**      | • Agree whether the merits of candidates will be discussed after each interview, or whether such discussions will take place only at the completion of all the interviews.                                                   |

Is there a standard format for interviews?
There is no University standard format for interviews. However, the following section outlines a ‘typical’ framework for conducting interviews.

- At the commencement of the interview, the chairperson introduces the candidate to all members of the committee and advises if notes will be taken throughout the meeting.
• The chairperson provides information about the University and the work area to assist the candidate to understand the context of the position.

• The committee asks the same set of initial questions of each candidate. It will almost always be necessary to probe or seek further clarification from candidates and these questions will obviously differ from candidate to candidate.

• At the end of the question time, an opportunity is given to the candidate to seek or provide any additional information that may not have been covered in the interview.

• The date of the candidate’s availability, should they be successful in the selection process, is confirmed.

• At the end of the interview, the candidate is advised when and how they are likely to be notified of the decision.

At the end of each interview, committee members typically make a brief individual written assessment (against the selection criteria and key responsibilities) of the candidate. An Interview Guide & Evaluation Form template is available from: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm to assist with this process. The discussion of the relative merits of candidates is, however, best done at the completion of all the interviews.

9.6.2 PRACTICAL SKILLS TESTING
For academic and professional staff positions, written or other tests may be used to assess the candidate’s depth of knowledge and/or level of skills. Candidates need to be informed in advance if tests are to be conducted and if they need to bring documentary evidence supporting their qualifications. It is suggested that performance tests be conducted prior to the interview to enable the committee to discuss the test with the candidate if appropriate.

Academic staff may be required to demonstrate teaching skills or they may be asked to present documentary evidence to support claims made in their application, e.g. student evaluation of teaching forms.

Candidates for a professional staff vacancy may also be asked to present a seminar or presentation if this is relevant to the type of role and key responsibilities of the position.

9.6.3 SEMINAR OR PRESENTATION
A suitable location will need to be booked for presentations/seminars. Ensure that equipment requested by the candidate (such as PowerPoint facility, whiteboard, microphone etc.) is available for use. Candidates should be advised whether the seminar/presentation will be made to members of the committee only, or open to other interested staff of the University to attend as well.

9.6.4 WORK SAMPLES
The committee may request that work samples be provided as a way of demonstrating that the candidate meets the essential criteria or responsibilities of the position. Examples may include: research papers, financial reports or briefing papers.

9.6.5 HYPOTHETICAL CASE STUDIES/SCENARIOS
These are useful in more senior management positions which require high level interpersonal and/or problem solving skills. They can be included as part of the interview process, or outside of the interview. For example, a written scenario may be presented to the candidate prior to the interview. The interview would then provide an opportunity for the candidate to address the committee about how they would deal with this scenario.
9.7 REFEREES’ REPORTS

Why use referees’ reports?
Referees’ reports serve two main purposes. Firstly they provide a means of testing the candidate’s ability to meet the selection criteria and key responsibilities of the position. Secondly, referees’ reports provide an opportunity to verify information that has been presented by the candidate in their written application and/or interview. It is not appropriate for referees to be family members or close friends who have not had a working relationship with the candidate.

How many referees’ reports are required?
The University requires that at least one referee’s report (either verbal or written) is obtained to confirm the suitability of the recommended candidate before a recommendation to appoint is made. The Essential Information for Applicants requests that each candidate nominate three referees, thereby allowing the committee to choose to contact all three.

Particularly for external candidates, it is good practice to contact more than one referee in order to obtain a range of comments on the candidate’s work performance against the selection criteria. To ensure a thorough process, two or more references should be sought from appropriate people, including current or most recent supervisor. This will ensure that informed selection decisions are made for the benefit of both the area and the University; and subsequent performance issues are avoided.

Does an internal candidate require a referee’s report?
Yes. The University requires a minimum of one referee’s report for all appointments, including those applying to internal candidates. If an internal candidate has been in their position for a time period that is sufficient to fully assess performance and conduct in that role, one report should be sufficient from the current or most recent supervisor. One exception to this may be where an internal candidate is applying for a position in a work area in which they are currently employed and have been for some time. However, if the employee has been in the position for a relatively short period (i.e. a few months), it is advisable to approach the preceding supervisor so that any performance or other concerns not raised by the new supervisor due to insufficient opportunity for full assessment can be identified.

When are referees’ reports obtained?
The referees’ reports are required before the committee proceeds with a recommendation to appoint. Reports may be obtained either prior to or after the interview process. However, the normal practice is that references are obtained only for those candidates likely to be the main contenders for the position.

Who is responsible for obtaining the referees’ reports?
The committee chairperson is responsible for seeking referees’ reports. However, they may delegate this responsibility to another member of the committee.

Can I contact someone not listed as a referee?
The chairperson may only contact someone not listed as a referee with the candidate’s consent.

What if the person hasn’t nominated their current supervisor as a referee?
There are many reasons why a candidate may prefer not to nominate their current supervisor as a referee; for example, they may fear losing their current job or there may be a history of personal conflict between the candidate and supervisor. It is suggested that in the first instance, the appointment committee determines what information it still requires and whether it is possible to obtain this information from the candidate’s nominated referees.

If this is not possible and the committee considers it essential to have a referee report from a current supervisor, the chairperson should ask the candidate to reconsider her or his
position. The chairperson may also need to explain any possible consequences if this request cannot be met. Complex matters may need to be referred to HR Client Services for further advice.

**Will a verbal reference be ok?**
Verbal references are fine, as long as the discussion between the interviewer and the referee is documented and reported accurately to all committee members. The appointment committee has discretion as to whether it requests verbal or written references. Verbal references:

- allow the interviewer to probe for more information and to tailor questions after the interview;
- require less time and effort on the part of the referee; and
- often allow referees to provide more candid and detailed information about candidates.

A suggested template that can be used when contacting referees for a verbal report can be downloaded from: [www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm). All verbal referee reports tendered to the committee (and potentially included in a recommendation to appoint) must be signed by the person conducting the discussion.

**What information can/should be given to referees?**
Referees should be advised of the following information:

- the position for which the candidate has applied;
- the selection criteria and the key responsibilities of the position;
- in the case of verbal reports, that notes of the discussion will be made and provided to other committee members;
- referees' reports (verbal or written) are treated as confidential and will only be shared with other members of the appointment committee and provided to relevant HR Client Services staff; and
- that the University is bound by the South Australian Freedom of Information Act 1991 and as such may be required to produce documents to third parties if an application is made under the legislation.

It should be noted that if one referee has been asked to comment on two different candidates, their role is not to compare the two candidates against each other nor should they be asked to rank the candidates in order of preference. In these instances, the referee should be asked to assess each candidate separately against the selection criteria and key responsibilities.

**Is there a standard letter for written references?**

**Must a referee comment on every criterion?**
It is not necessary to ask the referee to comment on every criterion, nor is it necessary to ask different referees the same questions about a candidate. The committee may be selective about the criteria on which it needs more information in order to make an informed decision about the candidate’s suitability for the position.

It is also important to ask the right questions when seeking references, either verbal or written, as the information obtained and the quality of the reference will generally depend on what is asked of the referee.
Can a committee member also be a referee?
Concern is sometimes expressed that a member of an appointment committee has also been nominated as a referee by a candidate and that the referee may act as an advocate for a particular candidate, unfairly disadvantaging other candidates. Ideally, referees should not be members of an appointment committee. However, it is acknowledged that in certain circumstances, it may not be possible for candidates to nominate appropriate referees who are not members of the appointment committee, and to require them to do so may disadvantage them.

In order to minimise any potential conflict of interest, it is suggested that the committee discuss the situation and ensure that all members are comfortable with the manner of dealing with the situation. It is suggested that in such cases, the committee member concerned provides a written referee report for transparency. Additionally, it may be appropriate to obtain all other referees’ reports first and the committee member’s report last.

What happens if a referee gives an adverse report?
Referees’ reports are most useful when given in an honest and constructive manner. Occasionally the committee may receive an adverse report. In this case, the committee will need to determine how much weight it wishes to give the report. In doing so, the committee may take into account a variety of factors including, for example, relevant contextual factors, the credibility of the referee, consistency between this and other referees' reports and consistency with members’ own observations and perceptions. For complex matters, please seek advice from HR Client Services.

9.8 ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATES AND SELECTION DECISION
After all interviews have been completed, committee members will discuss the relative merits (strengths and weaknesses) of each candidate. This assessment will take into account all selection techniques used (i.e. written application, any work samples, referees’ reports and interview). The chairperson will normally give her or his assessment last. Reference to irrelevant personal characteristics of candidates should be avoided.

Ensuring all candidates can fulfil the requirements of the position
All candidates must be evaluated on merit against the requirements of the Position Description. It is prudent for the committee to ask all candidates to verify that there is nothing that would prevent them from fulfilling the inherent requirements of the position. For example, a person with a back injury may have difficulty fulfilling a role involving heavy lifting. A person with a learning disability may have difficulty fulfilling a role involving the editing of complex written material. For further information on workplace adjustments for people with a disability, refer to Section 4.3 or contact the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, or a HR Client Services Adviser.

Cultural considerations
Where an interviewee is from either an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-English speaking background, committee members will also need to take into account any cultural differences which may affect the candidate’s performance during interview. These differences will vary depending on the candidate’s background.

Further information or advice on any aspect of employing people from a different cultural background can be obtained from HR Client Services or the Manager, Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

Dealing with prior knowledge and hearsay
There are times when members of an appointment committee may have prior knowledge of one or more of the candidates for a position. They may also be privy to additional or different information to that contained in the application or referees’ reports.
To avoid undue bias in the selection process, it may be helpful to note the following:

- Concerns about a candidate which result from prior knowledge or hearsay should be discussed outside of the appointment committee meeting and in private with the chairperson in the first instance. The reason for this is that public disclosure of this information may influence the decision of the committee before being properly tested or validated. In some instances, it may be appropriate to seek further advice from HR Client Services.
- Only information which is capable of being checked in some way should be disclosed. Information that is not pertinent to the candidate's ability to perform the job as described in the Position Description or which cannot be verified is not relevant and may lead to a claim of discrimination and/or unfair treatment.
- Where verification of any additional information is sought in relation to a particular criterion or aspect of the Position Description, it is best that this is done through a specific question to a referee, to a manager, or supervisor or to the candidate during the interview process.

**Unconscious bias**

It is important for committee members to recognise that unconscious thinking can influence recruitment decisions and compromise equality. The best way to mitigate against unconscious bias is to recognise different types of bias and to create safeguards against them at the time that the committee first communicates or meets. Some biases that may impact on recruitment processes are:

- stereotyping;
- groupthink (where a committee member's personal beliefs are set aside or conflict is minimised in the interests of consensus);
- in-group bias (the favouring of candidates seen to be in the same “group” such that they are given preferential treatment); and
- confirmation bias (only using information that confirms or is consistent with a committee member's particular belief or view).

**Achievements relative to opportunity**

Candidates may provide information about professional or personal circumstances that have influenced their employment history – either their productivity or the types of activity may have been impacted. In these instances, committees should avoid inadvertent assessment against a notional standard of full-time, uninterrupted career progression where this does not apply. Committees should recognise where opportunities to accrue merit have not been evenly distributed amongst candidates and consider the overall quality and impact of achievements rather than the quantity, rate or breadth that may relate to time available rather than talent, merit or excellence.

**What is taken into account when making the final decision?**

Candidates should be deemed to be either *appointable*, in which case they are ranked on merit, or *not appointable*. The following should be taken into account with regard to the preferred candidate(s) when making the final decision:

- whether they meet *all* the essential criteria (they must do so to be eligible for appointment);
- the outcomes of *all* selection techniques (i.e. written application, any performance tests, referee reports and interview) - it is not appropriate to make a recommendation to appoint a candidate which is based only on the interview performance; and
- at least one confidential referee’s report (either verbal or written) to confirm the suitability of the recommended candidate.
The committee needs to be mindful that deeming any of the candidates appointable means being prepared to offer them the position, irrespective of whether they are the first-ranked candidate (i.e. in the event that the first-ranked candidate declines the offer). Equally, deeming any candidate not appointable means exactly that – they cannot be offered the position.

**What if there is more than one appointable candidate?**

If there is more than one candidate considered appointable to the position, the committee should rank each of the candidates against all of the elements of the selection process (i.e. written application, any performance tests, referees’ reports and interview). Desirable criteria should be used as a final means of separating the candidates. Ranking the candidates can also prove useful if the committee needs to make a subsequent recommendation should the first-ranked candidate decline the offer of employment.

**What if there are no appointable candidates?**

If the committee finds that there are no appointable candidates, it will be unable to make a recommendation to appoint. In this case there are a number of options open to the committee. For example, it may wish to revisit the recruitment strategies to try to obtain a better pool of candidates. Alternatively, the committee may decide to invite applications from other potential candidates. Further advice on these and other options is available from HR Client Services.

**Is a unanimous decision required?**

No. The final decision to appoint is based on a majority of votes cast by those members of the committee who are eligible to vote including the chairperson.

**What if the successful candidate declines the appointment or resigns soon after commencing the appointment?**

Where the successful candidate declines the offer of employment or resigns within six months of the completion of a competitive selection process, the next ranked appointable candidate may be offered the position.

**The right not to appoint**

It should be noted that the University reserves the right not to appoint to a position where a valid reason exists for doing so. For example, the circumstances surrounding a vacancy might change during the course of the appointment process or adequate funding may no longer be available to support the appointment.

**Feedback to candidates**

Following the interview process, the appointment committee should agree on feedback to be given by the chairperson to unsuccessful interviewed candidates if it is subsequently requested. When providing feedback, the chairperson must ensure that the confidentiality of the appointment process is maintained.

The following guidelines may assist the chairperson in giving feedback:

- be aware that all candidates are potential customers/employees and therefore advice to unsuccessful candidates should be provided with tact and diplomacy;
- give feedback which is an accurate and agreed summary of the committee’s deliberations regarding the candidate in relation to the selection criteria and key responsibilities;
- focus on the skills/experience gap and not the person;
- it may be appropriate to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the written application, e.g. whether it lacked real evidence;
- ensure that the feedback is constructive so that it may assist them in their career development. For example, point out any areas where it was
considered that their skills and/or experience were not yet adequate in terms of the position applied for and, if possible, suggest ways of enhancing them;

- do not comment on the candidate's work performance in their current position unless it was a factor in the committee's decision; and
- do not comment on other candidates' ranking or performance.
Appointment by nomination is where an individual is invited to fill a vacant position outside of the typical competitive processes (e.g. advertisement). These arrangements are usually made in the case of appointments of 12 months or less or to take advantage of highly specialised skills, knowledge or experience.

**TABLE 5: CIRCUMSTANCES FOR APPOINTMENT BY NOMINATION AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

1. The nomination is required to meet an immediate or unexpected need.
   - Appointment should not exceed 12 months
   - Typically applies in the case of project work, replacement purposes or managing peak workloads
   **Comments:**
   - Requires a two-person decision process, i.e. normally the position’s supervisor and one other
   - If there is a reasonable possibility that the position will extend well beyond 12 months, it is advisable to advertise it up-front and appoint through competitive selection rather than conduct a competitive selection process once a person has been performing in the position for 12 months

2. The specialised skills/knowledge required for the position so limits the ‘pool’ of candidates that the person making the nomination is reasonably aware of all possible appointable candidates.
   - Highly specialised role
   - Approving officer has reasonable knowledge of the labour market
   - Appointment is not expected to exceed three years in duration
   **Comments:**
   - Under this circumstance, information in respect of the preferred candidate’s specific skills/knowledge/experience will be required as part of the Recommendation to Appoint
   - Requires a two-person decision process, i.e. normally the position’s supervisor and one other

3. Appointment of a currently enrolled student to a grant-funded research position of 12 months or less.
   **Comments:**
   - The student need not be enrolled at Flinders University
   - Requires a two-person decision process, i.e. normally the position’s supervisor and one other

4. In the case of research-only appointments, where the individual has been named in the grant.
   **Comment:**
   - Appointment can be for a period up to that specified in the research grant

5. To mitigate the effects of restructuring or changing work requirements, where the staff member meets the requirements of the position.
   **Comment:**
   - Appointments in this circumstance should be made in consultation with HR Client Services

6. To facilitate a staff member’s redeployment, consistent with University policy.
   **Comment:**
   - Appointments in this circumstance should be made in consultation with HR Client Services

**Consulting HR Client Services**
False expectations can be very damaging to both the candidate and the University. If there is any doubt that the nomination is consistent with the Appointment Policy, HR Client Services should be consulted before the appointment is discussed with the proposed candidate. HR Client Services can advise whether a nomination complies with the policy.
What is the role of the ‘second person’?
The involvement of a second person will assist in ensuring transparency and objectivity in relation to appointment by nomination. This general principle should be taken into account when selecting the second person. This person will be involved in assessing the candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities against the essential criteria for the position.

(Note that a second person is not required for nominations under categories 4, 5 and 6 above.)

Can the second person be from the same work area?
The policy does not place any restrictions on who should or should not fill this role, as this will depend on the characteristics of the position and its location. By way of example, the second person may be a peer, a manager of a related work area or a staff member from a ‘client group’. In the interests of transparency and objectivity, it is worth considering having a second person who is sufficiently removed from the position to provide an independent view. Gender balance should also be taken into account when choosing an appropriate second person.

Dealing with real or perceived conflict of interest
Appointment processes and decisions must be free from real or perceived conflict of interest. Should one of the staff members involved in making the nomination consider that they have a close relationship with a candidate, which could unduly affect the selection process, they should withdraw from the nominating process. Generally, it is not appropriate for a supervisor to nominate a candidate with whom they have a close relationship.

What does ‘close relationship’ mean?
Close relationship means a significant personal interest, generally of a financial, familial or sexual nature. When determining whether this relationship represents a real or perceived conflict of interest, ask “will the relationship prevent the committee member from making an objective decision in relation to the candidate?” If there is any doubt about whether a close relationship may constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest, it is best to err on the side of caution and withdraw from the nominating process.

Is a referee's report required for an appointment by nomination?
The University requires that at least one referee's report (either verbal or written) is obtained for all appointments to confirm the suitability of the recommended candidate before a recommendation to appoint is made. For further information on referees' reports, please refer to Section 9.7.

Assessment of candidates, selection decision and feedback
Reference should be made to Section 9.8 for principles concerning the assessment of candidates, making the selection decision, and providing feedback.

Can an appointment by nomination be extended?
From time to time, there may be valid reasons for approving the extension of a nomination for a short period beyond the time-frame established in categories 1 to 4 above, for example, where an additional period is required to complete a project in progress, or if there are exceptional circumstances.

The Director, People & Culture will consider requests for extension on a case-by-case basis. Such requests should be discussed with the relevant HR Client Services Adviser in the first instance, and require the support of the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head. Where an extension is approved, it will normally be limited to three months. In the absence of approval for extension, advertisement will normally be required.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtain relevant approval to fill the vacancy i.e. Executive Dean/Portfolio Head (if required).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consult HR Client Services to ensure that the nomination is appropriate and consistent with the terms of the policy.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>For nominations under categories 1, 2 and 3, approach a second person to be involved in the decision-making process. (A second person is not required for nominations under the other categories.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that a current authorised Position Description (including the essential selection criteria) exists for the position.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider calling for ‘expressions of interest’, particularly for professional staff positions falling within categories 1, 2 and 3. This will ensure that relevant staff have the opportunity to be considered and also provides an opportunity for the supervisor to test the internal market. More information on ‘expressions of interest’ is contained in Section 12.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess the candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities against the essential selection criteria and key responsibilities. The appointee must meet all of the essential selection criteria. This may be done using the candidate’s curriculum vitae or using any of the selection techniques detailed in Section 9.6 (e.g. interview, work sampling and public seminars).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Obtain at least one referee’s report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete a Recommendation to Appoint form (available at: <a href="http://www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm">www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm</a>) and forward the form with relevant attachments to HR Client Services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Client Services will arrange for an offer of employment to be drawn up, as per Section 13.2 ‘Making the offer’.</td>
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What is a lateral transfer?
A lateral transfer occurs when a current staff member takes up an appointment in a different role at the same classification level. In order to facilitate a lateral transfer, the normal recruitment and selection techniques are waived and the candidate is appointed without advertisement. A lateral transfer is usually arranged at the initiative of the supervisor, but may also follow a request from a staff member.

Why use lateral transfer?
Prior to advertising a vacancy, and with the approval of the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head, a supervisor may invite or call for ‘expressions of interest’ from staff who wish to transfer into the vacancy at their substantive level. A lateral transfer may be useful to:

- facilitate a career development opportunity for an existing staff member;
- manage an immediate or unexpected work need; or
- achieve structural efficiencies or cost savings.

Can lateral transfer apply to a continuing vacancy?
Yes, with the proviso that the successful candidate must have previously been through a competitive selection process (consistent with the guiding principles of the Appointment Policy). If the proposed candidate currently holds a continuing appointment this will not be an issue. If they hold a fixed-term position, their eligibility for transfer will depend on whether they were appointed to that position through a competitive selection process. Competitive selection does not include ‘expressions of interest’.

Does lateral transfer apply to academic staff?
Lateral transfer is available to both academic and professional staff vacancies, but the nature of academic work, and discipline specialties, mean that this will be relatively uncommon.

When might lateral transfer be appropriate?
There is a wide range of situations in which appointment by lateral transfer may be appropriate:

- **Career Development: Professional Staff**
  Areas across the University may require their staff to change position at intervals determined by the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head and supervisor. The purpose of these moves is to provide staff with opportunities to broaden their experience and to allow the area to respond to new priorities. Transfers are made within the current classification.

  Lateral transfers may also be initiated by professional staff who request that, for career development opportunities, they be allowed to transfer into a different work area or Faculty/Portfolio when a vacant position arises so that they may broaden their knowledge of and skills in a particular area. These requests would normally form part of the staff member’s formal performance review and if acted upon, should be negotiated between supervisors and approved by the Director, People & Culture.

- **Immediate or Unexpected Need**
  There may be occasions for staff to be transferred to provide immediate and short-term support elsewhere in the University. In these instances, lateral transfers are required because a vacancy is created suddenly and unexpectedly due to illness or some other form of absence/leave.

- **Restructuring of a Work Area**
  The restructuring of a work area may create an excess number of positions required for that area. The incumbent could be transferred to a vacant/new position within the Faculty/Portfolio.
- **Structural Efficiency**
  A ‘floating’ position may be created to improve efficiencies across a Faculty/Portfolio, designed to provide temporary relief to different areas when staff are on extended leave (e.g. annual recreation leave, long service leave, parental leave, sick leave). By mutual agreement between the staff member and the supervisor, and with the approval of the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head and Director, People & Culture, an existing staff member may be transferred into this ‘floating’ position and the position vacated as a result of the transfer is then advertised throughout the University.

- **Conversion to Part-time**
  There may be occasions where a staff member wishes to convert to part-time for family reasons but this may be difficult to facilitate in the current position. A lateral transfer within the same area/Faculty/Portfolio may be possible if all other options (e.g. job-share) have been discussed and determined not suitable. Such transfers must be approved by the Director, People & Culture to ensure that such staff are not disadvantaged by the process.

- **Where no appointment is made at the end of a competitive selection process**
  If, at the end of a competitive selection process, no appointment is made, the chairperson and/or supervisor may consider a lateral transfer in order to fill an immediate need while the recruitment process continues.

**Is a referee's report required for a lateral transfer?**
Yes. The University requires a minimum of one referee's report for all appointments, including those applying to internal candidates. One exception to this may be where an internal candidate is being appointed to a position in a work area in which they are currently employed and have been for some time.
CHECKLIST – APPOINTING BY LATERAL TRANSFER

☑ Consult HR Client Services to ensure that the lateral transfer is appropriate and consistent with the terms of the policy.

☑ Determine the second person to be involved in the decision-making process.

☑ Ensure that a current authorised Position Description exists for the position.


☑ Consider calling for ‘expressions of interest’. This will ensure that relevant staff have the opportunity to be considered and also allows the supervisor to test the internal market. More information on ‘expressions of interest’ is in Section 12.

☑ Assess the candidate’s knowledge, skills and abilities against the Position Description. The appointee must meet all of the essential selection criteria. This may be done using the candidate’s curriculum vitae or using any of the selection techniques detailed in Section 9.6 (e.g. interview, work sampling and public seminars).

☑ Obtain at least one referee’s report.

☑ Complete a Recommendation to Appoint form (available at: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm) and forward the form with relevant attachments to HR Client Services.

☑ HR Client Services will arrange for an offer of employment to be drawn up, as per Section 13.2 ‘Making the offer’.
What is an ‘expressions of interest’ process?
An ‘expressions of interest’ process is an informal competitive process that enables existing staff members to apply to be considered for a vacant position. ‘Expressions of interest’ are particularly encouraged for lateral transfers or appointments by nomination involving professional staff. It provides an opportunity for relevant staff to be considered for the vacant position and also provides an opportunity for the supervisor to test the internal University market.

‘Expressions of interest’ can be used as vacancies arise or to establish a list of suitable candidates who can be drawn on to fill vacancies as they arise during the year or semester.

How widely must a call for ‘expressions of interest’ be made?
A call for ‘expressions of interest’ can be restricted to the relevant organisational area (e.g. School, Faculty/Portfolio) or circulated on a University-wide basis. A call would usually be made via noticeboards, email, internal publications or the Jobs@Flinders website.

Who approves an ‘expressions of interest’ process?
The Executive Dean/Portfolio Head is responsible for ensuring that such vacancies are authorised in accordance with the Vacancy and Recruitment Management Procedure and that the funding and classification is approved prior to ‘expressions of interest’ being called. It will be necessary as part of this process to obtain advice from HR Client Services regarding the classification of a position.

Will candidates need to submit a full curriculum vitae?
Candidates can submit an abbreviated curriculum vitae, and must also address the selection criteria so that their knowledge, skills and abilities can be assessed against the requirements of the position.

Will an ‘expressions of interest’ process require a formal committee process?
No. Lateral transfers and appointments by nomination do not require a formal appointment committee process. Some appointments by nomination do, however, require the involvement of a second person in the decision (refer to Section 10 ‘Appointment by Nomination’ for further information).

Who receives the ‘expressions of interest’?
All expressions are received by the person nominated in the call for ‘expressions of interest’, normally the supervisor of the vacancy.

What format should the call for ‘expressions of interest’ take?
The content of a call for ‘expressions of interest’ is very similar to that used in an advertisement. The call will typically include:

- the details of the position (e.g. fixed-term, duration, full- or part-time, classification, salary);
- a brief description of the position;
- 2 to 3 essential selection criteria;
- the name of the person from whom interested staff can obtain further information and/or an authorised Position Description;
- the procedure for submitting ‘expressions of interest’ (submit curriculum vitae and statement addressing the selection criteria);
- where ‘expressions of interest’ should be lodged, and
- the closing date for receipt of ‘expressions of interest’.
Will candidates’ applications be acknowledged?
‘Expressions of interest’ will not be formally acknowledged. It is suggested, however, that the supervisor informally acknowledge receipt of an application.

Assessment of candidates, selection decision and feedback
Reference should be made to Section 9.8 for principles concerning the assessment of candidates, making the selection decision, and providing feedback.

Who advises the unsuccessful candidates?
The supervisor is responsible for advising unsuccessful candidates of the outcome. This is often done verbally and may be confirmed in writing (e.g. email).

CHECKLIST – ‘EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST’

- Refer to the Recruitment and Vacancy Management procedure for Appointment by Nomination (refer checklist at end of Section 10).
- Make the call for ‘expressions of interest’.
- Rank the ‘expressions of interest’ according to the selection criteria and key responsibilities.
- Obtain at least one referee’s report.
- Select the appropriate candidate.
- Advise the successful candidate that they will be recommended for appointment. Advise unsuccessful candidates of the outcome.
- Complete a Recommendation to Appoint form (available at: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm), obtain approval from the Executive Dean/Portfolio Head (or nominee) and forward the form, the Position Description and the candidate’s curriculum vitae to HR Client Services.
- HR Client Services will arrange for an offer of employment to be drawn up, as per Section 13.2 ‘Making the offer’.

Expressions of interest
The process for recommending and offering the appointment to a successful candidate is similar for appointments by competitive selection and nomination/lateral transfer. References to ‘appointment committee’ should be read as “supervisor and, where relevant, the second person involved in the nomination/lateral transfer decision”.

13.1 MAKING A RECOMMENDATION

Once the appointment committee has agreed on the most suitable person for appointment, it is the chairperson’s responsibility to complete and forward the relevant documentation to HR Client Services as soon as possible after the selection process.

**Documentation – Internal Competitive Selection**

Once the appointment committee has determined the most suitable person for appointment, the chairperson must forward the following documents to recruitment@flinders.edu.au:

1. The *Recommendation to Appoint* email, which was emailed to the chairperson by recruitment@flinders.edu.au;
2. Referees’ report(s), signed by the referee or the person taking a verbal report; and
3. Any supporting documents.

**Documentation – External Competitive Selection**

Once the appointment committee has determined the most suitable person for appointment, the chairperson must forward the following documents either in hard copy to HR Client Services, or by email to employment@flinders.edu.au:

1. The *Recommendation to Appoint* form, which is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm;
2. The recommended candidate’s application, including curriculum vitae and statement addressing the selection criteria;
3. Referees’ report(s), signed by the referee or the person taking a verbal report; and
4. Any supporting documents.

**Documentation – Nomination/Lateral Transfer**

In the case of a vacancy filled through nomination or lateral transfer, the following documents must be forwarded either in hard copy to HR Client Services, or by email to employment@flinders.edu.au:

1. The *Recommendation to Appoint* form, which is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/hr/employment-staffing/staff-appointment-resource-kit.cfm;
2. A copy of the call for ‘expressions of interest’ (if used);
3. The recommended candidate’s application, including curriculum vitae and statement addressing the selection criteria;
4. Referee’s report(s), signed by the referee or the person taking a verbal report; and
5. Any other supporting documents.
What if the committee does not agree?
A recommendation to appoint is made by a majority of votes made by the members of the committee. Ideally, appointment recommendations will be by unanimous agreement of the committee. On occasion, there may not be consensus amongst committee members. If these differences cannot be resolved through further discussion, the dissenting member(s) can record her or his views as an attachment to the Recommendation to Appoint. Alternatively, the chairperson can document the different views in her or his summary document. It may be appropriate to seek advice from HR Client Services in these instances.

Endorsing a recommendation
A recommendation to appoint will be endorsed by the Director, People & Culture (or delegate).

A recommendation may not be endorsed if:
- any of the essential criteria are not met by the recommended candidate, or
- there is any concern raised by an appointment committee member that the selection process has not been conducted in accordance with the principles of the Appointment Policy.

Recommending a salary level
It is important to note that no employment commitment or salary offer should be entered into or implied by the chairperson or the supervisor to the position without prior consultation with HR Client Services. For academic appointments, please refer to Determination of Commencing Salaries for Teaching Staff (www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/remuneration-benefits/determin-commence-salaries-acad-staff.cfm).

New appointees are typically offered a salary at the first step of the relevant classification level. Where a recommendation is made by the appointment committee for a higher salary level to be offered, justification for this recommendation must be provided where indicated on the form.

Do junior rates apply?
Junior rates of pay apply to HEO levels 1, 2 and 3 for appointees aged between 15 and 20 years. The chairperson will be required to highlight this in the Recommendation to Appoint form where it is relevant.

Allowances or clinical loadings
There are various allowances which may be payable to staff in addition to salary, e.g. shift, language and industry allowances for professional staff. Medically-qualified academic staff in the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences may be entitled to a loading for clinical responsibilities. Information on allowances/loadings is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/remuneration-benefits/remuneration-benefits_home.cfm.

If an allowance or loading is applicable to the appointment, the chairperson should state this where indicated on the Recommendation to Appoint form.

13.2 MAKING THE OFFER
Verbal advice to the recommended candidate
The chairperson may advise the first-ranked candidate verbally that they have been recommended as the preferred candidate. The chairperson should also advise that this is a recommendation only and subject to endorsement by the Director, People & Culture. Before making contact it is important to note the following:
- no undertaking, or assurances, in respect of conditions or terms of employment should be given by members of the appointment committee to the candidate;
all correspondence regarding salary and conditions of appointment must be conducted by HR Client Services; and

the candidate should be advised not to resign from their current employment until the formal offer from the University has been received and formally accepted.

Determining commencing dates
Commencing dates are typically negotiated with the recommended candidate at the time that the chairperson verbally advises that they will be recommended for appointment.

The proposed start date for local candidates should be ideally no sooner than three weeks from the time that HR Client Services receives the Recommendation to Appoint. This allows time for HR Client Services to issue the offer of employment, receive the appointee’s formal acceptance and completed documentation, and allow Payroll Services to complete necessary formalities to enable access to University facilities. Interstate or overseas candidates will usually require a longer lead time to arrange relocation and, where appropriate, visa formalities.

If it is essential that the staff member commences work earlier than the recommended two weeks, the chairperson should consult with HR Client Services. However, appointees must usually not commence duties until all formalities have been completed to ensure that they have access to University IT facilities and are covered by workers' compensation insurance, and that their superannuation membership is valid.

Preparing the formal letter of offer
Following receipt of the Recommendation to Appoint and relevant attachments, HR Client Services will forward a written offer of employment to the successful candidate.

Who advises unsuccessful short-listed candidates?
It is good practice for the chairperson to informally advise the unsuccessful interviewed candidates that they have not been recommended for appointment, particularly 'internal' candidates. These candidates will also receive formal notification from HR Client Services that they have not been successful.

What will be in the offer of employment?
The offer of employment issued by HR Client Services will include:

- the classification and title of the position;
- the term and type of appointment;
- the salary range applicable to the position;
- the commencing salary offered;
- the staff member's supervisor;
- the staff member's location; and
- the probationary period.

Terms and Conditions
The terms and conditions of employment are set out under the prevailing Flinders University Enterprise Agreement, which is the written agreement made between the University and the relevant unions. All relevant documentation will be included with the offer of employment.

Concurrent appointment of an internal candidate
There are instances where an internal candidate who is normally employed on a continuing basis is successful in their application for a secondment elsewhere in the University. In such cases, the letter of offer will make reference to the arrangements that will apply to the candidate at the cessation of the secondment period.
It is thus the responsibility of the candidate to negotiate with their supervisor to obtain release for the duration of the fixed-term appointment. As a general principle, areas are encouraged to release staff to facilitate career development without impacting on the staff member’s substantive position. HR Client Services will assist in this process and ensure that the current supervisor remains informed so that appropriate arrangements can be made to backfill the vacated position.

**Supervisory arrangements – conflict of interest**
There may be occasions when a staff member has an interest due to a financial, familial, sexual or other relationship with a successful applicant, and is to supervise, or be supervised by, the successful applicant. In such cases, alternative arrangements for supervision must be negotiated and included in the letter of offer to the successful applicant. This must be done in consultation with HR Client Services.

**13.3 OBTAINING VISAS AND RELOCATING NEW APPOINTEES**
Information about obtaining visas for candidates who do not have appropriate visa status, or relocating domestic or overseas candidates, is available in Relocation Information.

It is the chairperson's responsibility to notify HR Client Services if there is a requirement to nominate the successful candidate for permanent or temporary residency in Australia. A section relating to immigration matters is contained in the Recommendation to Appoint form.

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**CHECKLIST – RECOMMENDING AN APPOINTMENT**

- ✔ Committee determines most suitable candidate for recommendation.
- ✔ Chairperson completes the Recommendation to Appoint form.
- ✔ Chairperson verbally advises successful candidate of recommendation and negotiates commencing date.
- ✔ Chairperson forwards the Recommendation to Appoint form to HR Client Services.
- ✔ Chairperson verbally advises unsuccessful candidates of outcome.
- ✔ HR Client Services arranges the formal offer of employment and formally advises unsuccessful candidates.
Probation offers a period of mutual testing for the employer and employee during which decisions about on-going employment can be made. Each staff member is normally required to serve one probationary period with the University. This means that a second or subsequent appointment with the University will not normally require a further probationary period unless it is significantly different in duties and/or classification from the original appointment. If a separate period of probation is required in a subsequent appointment, it will be specified in the new contract of employment.

**Academic staff**
An employee in a continuing, convertible or fixed-term academic appointment with the University will be required to serve a probationary period. The probationary period will differ according to the type of academic appointment.

**Continuing appointment** - The probationary period for an employee in a continuing appointment will normally be 24 months but, where relevant experience and/or skills warrant, may be of a shorter duration. A probationary period may be extended once only by a maximum of 12 months from the initial expiry date.

**Convertible appointment** - The probationary period for an employee in a convertible appointment (including Scholarly Fellow) will normally be 24 months, and may be extended once only, but not beyond the initial contract expiry date.

For continuing and convertible appointments it is important, when determining the term of the probationary period, to take into account that confirmation of on-going employment is dependent upon the employee’s satisfactory performance *in the period since appointment or promotion to their current position in the University* against the relevant academic profile – sufficient time therefore needs to be allowed to enable evidence of this performance.

**Fixed-term appointment** - The probationary period for an employee in a fixed-term appointment will be up to three months for appointments of 12 months or less, and up to six months for appointments greater than 12 months. A probationary period will not be required for employees appointed to a fixed-term appointment for the reasons of either "distinguished scholar" or "pre-retirement/resignation".

**Professional staff**
A probationary period of six months will normally apply to all continuing and fixed-term appointments. The nature and circumstances of the employment offer and the appointee’s relevant experience should be taken into account when determining the length of the probationary period.

**Offer of employment**
The appropriate probationary period will automatically be included in each letter of offer prepared by HR Client Services. Please consult HR Client Services for further information on probation.

**Policies and Guidelines**
There are a number of components to the induction and orientation process for new staff at Flinders University. The Orientation Snapshot (refer: www.flinders.edu.au/profdev/staff/staff_home.cfm) provides an overview of this process. More detail about some of the components can be found below.

**Employment Conditions Information Session**

HR Client Services will contact new staff members shortly after commencing their appointment to arrange for them to attend an *Employment Conditions Information Session*. These short information sessions run regularly and provide information on employment conditions such as leave, pay and entitlements and how to use the Employee Self Service (ESS).

**Orientation Workshops**

During their first three months new staff are required to participate in a mandatory Orientation Workshop organised by the Professional Development Unit. The workshop deals with:

- equal opportunity at Flinders University;
- work health and safety at Flinders University; and
- security on campus.

Further information about this workshop is available on-line at: www.flinders.edu.au/staffdev/index.php/course/FAA.

Further information about mandatory training for *all new staff* is available at: www.flinders.edu.au/profdev/staff/newtraining.cfm.

**Mandatory Orientation/Induction Training Programs**

New academic staff members are required to satisfactorily complete mandatory orientation/induction training (refer: www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/quality/mandatory-courses.cfm) in order to fulfil probationary requirements, as follows:

- **Flinders Foundations of University Teaching (FFOUT)** (www.flinders.edu.au/cilt/workshops/mandatory/ffout.cfm). This course comprises a core set of workshops delivered over an intensive four-day period, and an ongoing portfolio (Personal Learning Portfolio) consisting of attendance at workshops, engagement in peer review of teaching, and development of a philosophical statement on teaching approach.

- **Postgraduate Research Supervision Program** for all academic staff new to the supervision of higher degree research students (www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/support/research-education/postgraduate-supervision.cfm).


**New staff website**

Information relevant to new staff and links to other parts of the Flinders website is available from the Professional Development Unit website.