



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

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PURPOSE

The Service recognises that its employees are fundamental to the provision of prevention, protection and response services to the community in which it serves.

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The purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to ensure that recruitment and selection procedures within the Service are:

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- fair and consistent;
- non-discriminatory;
- compliant with all statutory regulations and with good practice as laid down by the Chartered Institute of Professional Development;
- both efficient and effective at meeting the current and future needs of the Service, in line with its [Corporate Aims and Objectives – click here](#), as well as with its [People and Organisational Development Strategy – click here](#).

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This policy and its associated procedures apply to all employees and potential employees of the Service.

POLICY STATEMENT

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The Service's recruitment and selection processes are designed to ensure the fair appointment of appropriate individuals with the necessary skills and attributes to enable the organisation to fulfil its corporate aims and objectives.

The aim of this policy and its associated procedures is to achieve the following objectives:

- to recruit suitable candidates in an efficient and effective manner so as to fulfil Service needs;
- to ensure that the organisation's recruitment and selection processes are inclusive and attractive to a wide range of applicants;
- to make employment decisions based on merit, with due consideration of reasonable adjustments where required and appropriate;
- to recruit a workforce which reflects the communities that the organisation serves;
- to raise awareness of the Service as an equal opportunities employer of choice;
- to enhance the public image of the organisation as an employer and service provider;
- to raise awareness of the wide range of roles available within the Service;
- to provide current employees with opportunities for development and career progression.

In order to achieve these objectives, the Service will:

- require Line Managers regularly to review their department's responsibilities and the roles of those individuals working within it. This will be achieved by the following means:
 - the appraisal process;
 - reflection whenever a vacancy arises;
 - discussion at resource planning meetings;
- offer external and internal opportunities to meet its service delivery needs, and the usual recruitment and selection procedures or professional discussions will take place;
- endeavour to reach traditionally under-represented groups, and ensure that neither discrimination nor bias are involved at the recruitment and / or selection stages;
 - this approach will be supported by Positive Action events which will be arranged to attract a wider range of applicants, and will benefit from continuing guidance from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer;
 - all current and potential employees are made aware of the Service's Core Values and the commitment to diversity and integrity which must be demonstrated by Service employees;
- attend careers events and job fairs at locations across North Wales so as to attract, encourage and recruit people with diverse backgrounds and the required skills and abilities that will enhance the quality of service delivery;
- engage with local providers of training and education in order to promote apprenticeship opportunities;
- ensure that a [Job Requisition Form – click here](#) is completed in support of all recruitment and selection advertising for Green Book roles.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

When a Green Book or Corporate role falls vacant, it will not automatically be filled; Line Managers will be asked to consider whether the duties or activities need to continue, and will be asked to provide a rationale for their decision.

For the purpose of accurate reporting, all recruitment decisions should be recorded and stored confidentially for the appropriate length of time as specified in the Service's [Data Protection Policy – click here](#). If a vacancy recurs within six months of the date upon which interviews were held or the last day where interviews are held over an extended period, the Service may refer back to information on record and offer the post to the next most suitable candidate, if appropriate.

POSITIVE ACTION

The Service is committed to delivering programmes of positive action in order to encourage individuals from under-represented groups to consider a career in the organisation.

Nevertheless, the Service will not avoid or lower recruitment and selection standards to the benefit of individuals from under-represented groups; all candidates will have to achieve the required minimum standard in any assessments undertaken during the recruitment and selection process.

APPLICATIONS

The Human Resources (HR) Department and the relevant Line Managers involved in recruitment will handle applications fairly, consistently and confidentially.

The Service is committed to a policy of promoting equal opportunities in employment, and all applicants are asked to complete the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form which comes as part of the application form. This is separated from the rest of the application form prior to the shortlisting process and is retained by the HR Department. The information it contains is used for monitoring purposes only and it is treated in the strictest confidence; no reference will be made to this form during the selection process, and the manager undertaking the shortlisting will not have access to the information that it contains.

Applicants should be aware that social networking websites are a public domain, particularly if the individuals are part of a 'forum'; they should not assume that their entries on any website will remain private. Applicants should under no circumstances send abusive or defamatory messages about the Service and / or the selection process in which they are participating as this will represent a direct infringement of the Service's Core Values to which they have subscribed at the point of application. Any messages found which are deemed to be abusive or defamatory will result in the applications being withdrawn from the recruitment process.

Internal Applicants

Only employees who have successfully completed their probation period are eligible to apply for internal vacancies, except in cases in which a Line Manager presents a strong business case to request discretionary authorisation from a Principal Officer.

Employees who are under investigation for disciplinary or capability issues are eligible to apply for internal vacancies; however, if they are successful, an appointment will not be confirmed until the investigation has been concluded with the award of no sanction, except in cases in which a delay in appointment would cause disruption to service delivery.

Employees who have received any warnings under disciplinary or capability processes will not be eligible to apply for an internal vacancy if the closing date of the respective application process falls within the currency of their warning period. In addition, individuals will not be eligible for temporary or substantive promotion during the currency of their warning period. This does not include circumstances whereby an informal warning or note for file is current.

Re-employment

The Service recognises that former employees may wish to return to employment with the organisation; whenever vacancies are advertised as part of a recruitment process, applications from former employees will be considered as part of a competitive process, and they will not receive preferential treatment.

Applications from previous employees may be withdrawn from a recruitment and selection process at the discretion of the Service. This withdrawal could be made on the basis that they have:

- previously been dismissed;
- left the Service under breach of contract;
- resigned in the course of a capability or disciplinary investigation;
- received financial compensation for their previous employment being ended prematurely, e.g. redundancy;
- received financial compensation from their previous public sector employment within a month of the application being submitted. This could include payments made under the public sector exit payments scheme and under pension regulations.

If employees have retired from a role within the Service, regardless of employment conditions or duty type of the role they have left or for which they wish to be reconsidered, the implications of any pension or taxation liabilities must be considered by both the Service and the employee.

Continuity of employment service will be reviewed and confirmed as being in line with employment legislation. A break of more than one week will result in continuity of employment being broken, and past service would not be counted towards any subsequent employment.

Personal Relationships

Whilst it is recognised that personal relationships may exist or develop within the workplace, the Service seeks to conduct its business with the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. Personal relationships are only of concern where there may be:

- an abuse of the employee's position of trust;
- a breach of the required standards of propriety;
- a compromise of standards;
- a conflict of interest;
- the potential for harm to occur to employees;
- a potential breach of confidentiality.

Where personal relationships are identified during the recruitment and selection process, the Service will ensure that the process is independent of bias towards the applicant on the basis of the personal relationship as declared.

Disability Confident

As a Disability Confident employer, the Service is committed to recruiting and retaining disabled people and those with health conditions. Applicants with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear that they will not be able to perform a duty or duties which are intrinsic to the role, once all reasonable adjustments have been taken into account.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways in which the brain can work and interpret information, and it highlights the fact that people naturally think about things differently. Each form of neurodivergence (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, autism etc) has a range of associated characteristics and these can vary from one individual to another. People with neurodivergent conditions may require reasonable adjustments during the acquisition of skills throughout their career lifetime. Each disability and / or ability brings psychosocial and emotional development considerations.

The Service is committed to promoting equality and fairness, and will consider all requests within the recruitment process for support and reasonable adjustments; the latter will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be agreed with Line Managers in relation to the job for which the application has been made.

Armed Forces Covenant

The Service is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant and, as such, special consideration will be given to applicants who identify themselves as members of the Armed Forces community (namely those who serve, have served, their families and the bereaved).

Subject to the provisions set out in the [Armed Forces, Reserves and Veterans Policy – click here](#) and its associated procedures, a guaranteed interview will be offered to the following:

- veterans and their spouses / partners;
- serving regular members of the Armed Forces who are approaching the end of their service;
- the spouses / partners of currently-serving regular members of the Armed Forces.

This is conditional upon the essential criteria of the job being met, and that no more than five years have elapsed since the candidate left the Armed Forces (subject to supporting information being provided by the individual upon request).

Apprenticeships and Work Experience Placements

The Service has committed to offering a range of apprenticeship and work experience opportunities in order to help to develop and secure the future of its workforce. The possibility of offering apprenticeships will be considered within each Job Requisition Form, while the possibility of offering work experience placements will be examined on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Line Managers, upon request.

Exemptions – Police Officers

According to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (Section 37), it is prohibited for any member of a police force (i.e. a police constable) to be employed concurrently as a firefighter. This restriction is in place in order to:

- ensure the clear separation of duties and responsibilities between the police and fire services;
- maintain the integrity and focus of each role, thus ensuring that both essential public services operate without any conflict of interest or overlap in responsibilities.

With regard to North Wales Police, a Memorandum of Understanding is in place to permit the employment of:

- Police Community Support Officers as Retained Duty System (RDS) / On-Call Firefighters and vice versa;
- members of the Special Constabulary (SC) as RDS / On-Call Firefighters or Wholetime Duty System (WDS) Firefighters and vice versa.

However, provided that a local agreement is in place between the Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Constable of the relevant Police Force, a Special Constable can be employed in Retained or Whole-time Firefighter roles.

Further information may be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

Exemptions – Agency Workers

The Service does not offer casual employment or zero-hour contracts; however, should the need arise to fill ad-hoc and / or additional duties, solutions will be found by means of offers of overtime / an Additional Responsibility Allowance to current employees (if appropriate), or via an approved recruitment agency. The Service will be compliant with the Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and will offer the same pay from day one as comparative employees (namely those doing the same or an equivalent job, employed either directly or on a permanent contract).

Whenever agency workers are appointed to undertake a work placement, the agency will be required to confirm that the appropriate pre-employment checks have been carried out prior to the individuals' taking up their roles.

Politically-Restricted Posts

In an initiative to secure the impartiality of local government employees, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced the concept of Politically-Restricted Posts, and therefore places restrictions upon certain categories of local government employees. Fire and Rescue Authorities are considered to be local authorities for the purposes of the Act, and therefore its provisions cover all members of the Service.

The Service is required to establish and maintain lists of politically-restricted posts as defined under the Act; where vacancies arise for posts covered by the Act, reference will be made to the post being politically restricted at all stages of the recruitment process.

CHECKING PROCESSES

Safer Recruitment Principles

This is a set of practices which help to ensure that employees and volunteers are suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. These practices will ensure that employees and volunteers are recruited safely and fairly, and that the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults is considered at every stage of the recruitment process. For further information see the [Safer Recruitment Procedure – click here](#).

Disclosure and Barring Service and Vetting Checks

All new employees will be required to complete a Standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check as a minimum requirement prior to employment with the Service. If it is identified as being necessary for relevant roles, an Enhanced DBS Check or Security Vetting will be undertaken. Regardless of the level of checking being carried out, no candidates will be allowed to start work in their role until satisfactory results from the check(s) have been received and evidence of the results provided.

The Service is fully compliant with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 when making decisions relating to the recruitment and retention of employees.

Medical Clearance

All conditional offers of employment are subject to satisfactory medical clearance being approved or declined in consultation with the Service's Occupational Health provision.

The Service does not operate a 'blanket ban' on the employment of people with certain health conditions or disabilities, but considers each applicant individually, taking into account its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Right to Work in the United Kingdom Checks

It is the policy of the Service to comply with all of its legal obligations in relation to the employment of its personnel. The Service will not employ individuals unless they have a legal right to work in the United Kingdom (UK). All employers in the UK have a responsibility to prevent illegal working and must conduct right to work checks before employing individuals so as to ensure that people are not disqualified from working by reason of their immigration status.

All offers of employment are conditional upon applicants providing documents to enable the Service to verify that they have the right to work in the UK. The requirement to provide evidence as to the right to work in the United Kingdom will apply to all appointed candidates regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

The Service will comply with the requirements of the Home Office's points-based system for employing foreign workers. Where the intention is to recruit a candidate who is subject to immigration control and who does not have the right to work in the UK, the HR Department will take steps to assess whether sponsorship is appropriate or not. If the Service does not hold a sponsor licence at the time of the recruitment process, this will not prove to be a bar to the recruitment of a foreign national in a role that would otherwise qualify for sponsorship.

The Service is under an obligation to do all that it can to avoid race discrimination in the workplace, and to ensure that no job applicants are excluded from a position because of their colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins. The organisation will treat all job applicants in the same way at each stage of the recruitment process, and no assumptions will be made on the basis of, for example, appearance or a foreign name. There will be no assumption that a foreign national or someone from an ethnic minority has no right to work in the UK.

The Service will recruit candidates who are most suited to the position in question, and it will comply with its [Equal Opportunities Policy – click here](#) at all times. In this context (although subject to eligibility for sponsorship where necessary), the nationality of the most suitable candidates will have no bearing upon whether or not they are selected for the post.

WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

The Immigration Act 2016 (Part 7) relates to individuals working in the public sector and seeks to ensure that there is no language barrier to members of the public who wish to access public services. It is therefore vital that those working in public-facing roles in Wales can communicate in Welsh and English.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 states that the Welsh language must have equal legal status with English and must not be treated any less favourably. In that they are covered by this legislation, public bodies in Wales have a statutory duty to comply with a set of national Welsh Language Standards listed (along with the compliance date) in the 'Compliance Notice – Section 44 Welsh Language (Wales) Language Measure 2011' as issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner. For further information, see the [NWFRS Compliance Notice – click here](#).

As a general principle, the Service seeks to promote a bilingual ethos across the organisation as a whole; the foundation of this ethos is that in Wales, Welsh is an official language which holds equal status with English in the eyes of the law. In line with its core values, the Service aspires to reflect and to respect the diverse communities that it serves, and in so doing, the organisation acknowledges the importance of demonstrating linguistic courtesy to Welsh-speaking members of both the public and its employees.

The Service has long aimed to provide services equitably in all areas of North Wales and has additionally acknowledged its duty towards its employees, the majority of whom are residents of North Wales, and therefore reflect the linguistic and cultural composition of the local communities.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Service has developed an [Implementation Plan – click here](#) which illustrates the way in which it intends to comply with the Welsh Language Standards. Furthermore, guidance on the internal use of Welsh is available for Service employees to help to ensure that high standards are reached in delivering a bilingual service.

The minimum Welsh language requirement for all vacancies is Level 2 Welsh speaking and listening skills, requiring the individual to have the ability to hold a simple or basic conversation through the medium of Welsh, with the emphasis on being able to express the appropriate courtesies. If the person who has been appointed has not demonstrated this level during the recruitment process, it is acceptable for this to be achieved during the probation period, with support and training being provided whenever appropriate. A Welsh language assessment must be completed and passed before probation can be accredited as successful.

Level 3 Welsh speaking and listening skills may be required for middle manager roles and above, and will be identified on the job advertisements as appropriate. If the person who has been appointed does not already hold this level of Welsh language ability, it must be reached during the probationary period; in the case of an internal appointment, it must be achieved within an individually-agreed and reasonable timescale. Support and training will be provided where appropriate to assist the individual in achieving this level.

INTERVIEW FEEDBACK

The Service will provide appropriate interview feedback in a timely fashion to all **internal** applicants who request it on conclusion of the recruitment and selection process.

Feedback may be provided to **external** candidates at the Service's discretion, this depending upon the resources available. For larger-scale recruitment campaigns (such as those for Full-time [Wholetime] Firefighters), generic interview feedback may be offered on account of the number of candidates involved in the process.

INDUCTION

This is the process of integrating new employees into the Service, and helping them to settle in and to learn about the organisation, its values and its culture, as well as understanding their new team and role. As a key part of employees joining the Service, this can make the difference between losing or retaining them in their first year of employment.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

'Agency Workers Regulations 2010' (HM Government, October 2011);
'Data Protection Act 2018' (HM Government, May 2018);
'Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011' (Welsh Government, April 2010);
'Equality Act 2010' (HM Government, April 2010);
'Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004', Section 37 (HM Government, July 2004);
'Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002' (HM Government, October 2002);
'Flexible Working Regulations 2014' (HM Government, March 2014);
'Immigration Act 2016', Part 7 sections 77-84, English Language Requirements in the Public Sector (HM Government, May 2016);
'Local Government and Housing Act 1989' (HM Government, November 1989);
'Local Government Modification Order' (HM Government, undated);
'Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000' (HM Government, July 2000);
'(Public Sector) Equality Duty 2011' (HM Government, April 2011);
'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974' (HM Government, July 1974);
'Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006' (HM Government, November 2006);
'Recruitment - Welsh Language Considerations' (Welsh Language Commissioner);
'UK General Data Protection Regulation' (UK GDPR) (HM Government, May 2018)

(the retained EU law version of the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018); 'Working Time Regulations 1998' (HM Government, October 1998).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

All Wales People and Organisational Development Strategy;
 Armed Forces, Reserves and Veterans Policy and Procedure;
 Data Retention Policy;
 Discipline Policy;
 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
 Job Evaluation Policy;
 Personal Relationships in the Workplace Policy;
 Probation Policy.
 Recruitment to Operational Full-Time (Wholetime) roles including substantive promotion Policy;
 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

This document forms part of a suite of information covering this subject area; hyperlinks to all the documents are available by clicking back to the home page.

It is recommended that this document be reviewed on a triennial basis; however, it might require earlier revision in the light of any regulatory change which comes into effect in the interim.			
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