



Guidelines for Confined Recruitment and Selection of Temporary Higher Appointments

This document is for local Service Managers recruiting and selecting for Temporary Higher Appointment (THA).

HSE recruitment is subject to the provisions of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004 and is regulated by the [Commission for Public Service Appointments Code of Practice](#)

Before you recruit

1. Ensure all aspects of the appointments process are confidential.
2. Develop a job specification outlining the exact requirements of the role. The template and sample job specifications can be found on the – [HSE Job Specification Repository](#)
3. Agree with local HR the confined pool eligible to apply for the THA role. Specify this clearly on the job specification and in the advertisement.
4. Check if there are national eligibility criteria that apply. Agree the eligibility criteria with the recruiter.
5. Decide what clearances or screening are required for the appointment.
6. Develop an application form. This means that you will receive the same standard of information from all candidates and will allow you to examine them consistently.
7. Familiarise yourself with the [HSE recruitment standards and procedures](#) and ensure you understand your responsibilities under the relevant legislation and code of practice including:
 - Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004
 - Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Amendment Act 2013
 - Employment Equality Acts 1998–2011
 - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014
 - Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation 2016(GDPR)
 - Freedom of Information Acts 1997–2014
 - Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022
 - Commission for Public Service Appointments Code of Practice
8. Comply with the requirements of the circulars on THAs, including :
HSE HR Circulars 001/2018, 08/2016, 018/2016, 08/2016, and 017/2013

Advertisement

1. Advertise the vacancy naming the confined pool of applicants.



2. Use the standard [HSE advertising template](#).
3. Clearly state the closing date and the expected form of application (e.g. a dedicated application form).
4. Specify a name and contact details for informal enquiries about the post.
5. Advertise the vacancy for a minimum of 2 weeks.
6. Use a specified email address or system to receive all applications and maintain confidentiality.

Screening applications.

1. Screen all applications for eligibility using the eligibility criteria, experience and skills outlined in the Job Specification. Only those applicants with the required essential criteria can progress to the next stage of the selection process.
2. A shortlisting exercise may apply.
3. Inform all applicants if they will progress to the interview stage or not.
4. Inform all candidates who have not been short-listed and tell them the reason why. Use the [candidate score sheet](#) to do this.
5. Invite candidates that have been shortlisted to interview. Ideally a notice period of one week would apply.

Preparing to Interview

1. The interview board usually comprises three people including a chairperson; a representative of the hiring service / discipline; and one person from outside the unit/ department.
2. Review the job specification, including the eligibility criteria and the role's duties and responsibilities as preparation for the interview.
3. The most common areas examined at interview are:
 - Experience and knowledge relevant to the role.
 - Planning and organising skills.
 - Team working / leadership skills.
 - Commitment to providing a quality service.
 - Problem solving and decision-making skills.
 - Communication and interpersonal skills.
 - Technical Skills
4. Create a marking sheet to [evaluate and score candidates](#).

Interview

1. Make sure, for both in-person and video interviews, the interview room is quiet and you will not be disturbed.
2. Mute notifications for email messages and put phones on silent.
3. The chair opens and closes the interview, and explains the interview process to the candidate.
4. One board member should take notes while others are asking questions.



5. Ask candidates a similar range of questions to allow them each to show their experience is relevant to the role.
6. Record any extraordinary events on the interview notes.
7. Invite the candidate to make any comments or ask questions at the end of the interview.
8. Assess each candidate after the interview and record a constructive comment for each competency area to support the score on the marking sheet.
9. Summary comments are shared with candidates and should be descriptive, accurate and clearly relate to a candidate's performance for each competency area. They represent a consensus view of the interview board. In order that feedback is meaningful use performance indicators and details of the assessment criteria.
10. Interview board members individually decide on the strength of evidence provided in each skill area and award a score.
11. After individual scoring, board members discuss their scores and reach a consensus on a final score and summary comment for each competency.
12. Significant score differences require board members to revisit behavioural indicators and discuss the evidence in order to agree on final scores and summary comments for each competency.
13. Produce an order of merit.
14. Return all interview notes, marking sheets and order of merit to the recruiter.

Post interview

1. Maintain the confidentiality of the appointment process and do not discuss interviews or results with anyone outside the local HR Department.
2. Agree with local HR if you, or HR, will inform the candidates of the results. Do not discuss the results with the successful candidate until all candidates have been informed.
3. This can be a sensitive time with colleagues from the same team competing against one another for a role. It is important to be respectful of the disappointment a candidate may feel if they are not successful.
4. If a candidate requests feedback, engage with them as soon as possible to give them relevant, meaningful feedback about the interview and their performance.

Appointment to post

1. Engage with HR regarding appointing the successful candidate to the post.
2. Give the successful candidate a letter confirming the details of the temporary higher appointment.
3. Inform your team of the date of appointment and new role of the appointee.
4. Make any relevant payroll/personnel administration changes.
5. Ensure Garda vetting is in place if this is a relevant role.
6. Occupational health clearance may apply.