

## Academic and Research Appointments Recruitment and Selection Guidance

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### Preamble

The purpose of this Guidance document is to provide an overview of the recruitment and selection process and to guide Departments, Research Centres and Institutes in conducting a fair and transparent recruitment process.

This Guidance document applies to all academic vacancies (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor), all vacancies of the education career track (Assistant Professorial Lecturer, Associate Professorial Lecturer, Professorial Lecturer) and all research vacancies from Grade 7 onwards (Research Fellow, Assistant Professorial Research Fellow, Associate Professorial Research Fellow and Professorial Research Fellow). Appointments at Grade 6 and below are organised and executed by Departments, Research Centres and Institutes with guidance from HR. Research Centres and Institutes that have authority to recruit independently of Departments are treated as Departments in this Guidance document. For such Research Centres or Institutes, the term 'Head of Department' in this Guidance document refers to the Head of Research Centre or the Institute Director.

### 1. Aim and Core Principles of Recruitment and Selection

The common aim of all faculty recruitment processes in the School is the successful appointment of the highest quality faculty (judged by the standards of the School's global peers) through an inclusive and fair process that has strong faculty support. LSE is therefore committed to hiring outstanding world-class faculty based on open, active and global searches that involve and are open to input from existing faculty at all grades. LSE is also

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committed to equality and diversity as well as the fair treatment of all applicants who apply for vacancies at the School.

Each Department is expected at the start of each academic year to issue a clear statement of its recruitment process which provides adequate detail (i) on why, in the Department's opinion, its process best enables it to meet the overall aim of School recruitment under the *particular conditions* affecting recruitment in the disciplinary areas and job markets where it makes appointments and (ii) on how the Department through its process addresses the *core principles* listed below.

Relevant *particular conditions* include (i) the nature of the job market(s) in which the Department recruits, (ii) the regular time cycles (if any) by which recruitment normally occurs in those markets, (iii) any prevailing expectations about recruitment processes in those markets, and (iv) the resources and size of the Department itself. Departmental resources and size should not however be a reason for failing to fulfil any of the core principles.

The following *core principles* should be regarded as fundamental to recruitment, whatever form of recruitment process a Department adopts:

- a) *Evidence-based appointments*: all appointments should be explicitly based on evidence, in particular evidence derived from the CV and the detailed reading of the research (published or unpublished) submitted by applicants in the context of their wider record and trajectory of research as well as their references.
- b) *Inclusivity*: all faculty who have a long-term stake in the appointment decision (including Assistant Professors) should be involved in appointment decisions. See also section 10. *School Selection Committees and the Process of Forming Departmental Recommendations*.
- c) *Equality and Diversity*: each appointment process should satisfy strong principles of equality and diversity and should generate evidence that enables monitoring of whether it has done so, including evidence about the criteria on which decisions for appointment and preliminary selection have been made. See also section 3. *Equality and Diversity*.
- d) *Engagement with applicants*: recruitment processes should demonstrate to applicants sufficient Departmental engagement with individual applicants. See also section 14. *Presentations and Informal Meetings*.
- e) *Broad definition of posts*: the relevant research/teaching specialism of posts should be defined as broadly as possible, subject to fulfilment of the strategic need on the basis of which the Department obtained approval for the post in question.

Where a member of the recruiting Department believes that any of the core principles stated above may have been breached or that a particular search is in conflict with the common aim of all faculty recruitment processes in the School, he or she is entitled to raise this matter directly with the VCAC or the Pro-Director (Faculty Development) who will consult further with the relevant Head of Department to see how this alleged breach, if existent, can be remedied. Where there is a significant breach that cannot be remedied, the VCAC or Pro-Director (Faculty Development) may terminate the search.

Detailed implementation of recruitment processes are left to each Department's discretion, subject to the common aim of all faculty recruitment processes in the School and the core principles stated above. This includes decisions as to (i) the exact timing of recruitment and advertisements and (ii) the modes of interaction between the Department and applicants that best meet the overall aim of recruitment under the Department's particular conditions. Departments are best positioned to judge the degree of social interaction that it is appropriate to offer applicants, and the exact timing of advertisements for particular posts. However, all advertisements require the authorisation by the VCAC or the Pro-Director (Faculty Development) who can decide that a recruitment campaign is initiated too late in the

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academic cycle and should therefore be postponed to the next academic year to guarantee an adequate search.

## **2. Role of the VCAC (Vice Chair of the Appointments Committee) and Pro-Director (Faculty Development)**

The role of the VCAC is to act as the independent guardian of academic standards and quality on behalf of the Appointments Committee. Together with the Pro-Director (Faculty Development), the VCAC has overall responsibility for ensuring that recruitment and selection matters at the School are dealt with fairly, transparently and in accordance with the School's recruitment procedures.

## **3. Equality and Diversity**

To uphold the School's commitment to equality of respect and opportunity, as set out in the Ethics Code, we will treat all people with dignity and respect, and ensure that no one will be treated less favourably because of their role at the School, age, disability, gender (including gender identity), race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, or social and economic background. For the full Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy statement, please see the [EDI website](#). All applicants should be considered fairly and consistently and decisions on an applicant's suitability for a post are based on how he/she meets the published Person Specification for the post.

In addition to all other efforts to promote equality and diversity, the following is expected:

- a) The Human Resources Division will support Departments in the gathering of reference data about the gender and, if possible, ethnicity distribution in the disciplinary area and job market in which the Department appoints, for example through the regular collection of data from relevant professional associations and data on the distribution of PhD graduates from departments or faculties in institutions identified by that Department as their global peers.
- b) All Departments are encouraged to 'shake the trees' when recruiting in order to receive the widest possible applications for each post, and in particular to ensure a satisfactory balance of gender and ethnicity.
- c) Departments should, at the start of a selection process, be provided by Human Resources Division with data on the gender and, to the extent possible, ethnicity distribution in the applicant pool achieved for the post in question. Where any faculty member has concerns about the gender/ethnicity distribution in the applicant pool, then these should be raised with the VCAC or the Pro-Director (Faculty Development). In the case of serious concerns, consideration should be given in consultation with the Head of Department and Departmental search committee Chair (if different) to re-advertising the post.
- d) Departmental recommendations on shortlisting and recommendations for appointment should comment by reference to such gender and ethnicity data.
- e) At the end of each academic year, gender and ethnicity data on the pool of applicants and appointments made for each post advertised will be reported to the Appointments Committee.
- f) The School is committed to ensure that over time everyone who serves on Departmental search committees and School Selection Committees receives Equality and Diversity Training.

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- g) The School is accredited to the 'Two Ticks Scheme' which commits the School to good practice in employing and retaining disabled staff.

#### 4. Data Protection Act

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, the School has an obligation to process the personal data of all applicants in a fair and proper way. This means that applicant data should be treated confidentially and applicants have the right to request to see copies of all written shortlisting and interview notes in connection with their application for any vacancies at the School.

Therefore, Selection Committee members should be aware that the School is obliged to disclose shortlisting and/or interview notes on request, and these notes could be used to challenge a decision.

HR has summarised the main principles of the Data Protection Act in the *Data Protection Act Do's and Don'ts* document, which can be accessed at this link:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/staff/humanResources/joiningLSE/recruitingContracting/pdfs/dataProtectionAct.pdf>

#### 5. Conflict of Interest

Any faculty serving on Departmental search committees or on Selection Committees must declare if they have a conflict of interest. Affected faculty should therefore check the list of applicants to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. Conflict of interest arises where the search committee or Selection Committee member has (or has had) a personal or working relationship with an applicant, or is related to, or has prior knowledge of the applicant outside of the work environment which could in any way affect the decision they make.

Examples of conflicts of interest could include, but are not limited to the following:

- Where a search committee or Selection Committee member is involved in the shortlisting and/or interviewing of a candidate who is a spouse, partner, close friend or other family member
- Where a search committee or Selection Committee member is a supervisor or a co-supervisor of a PhD candidate who has applied for a job
- Where a search committee or Selection Committee member is a co-author on more than one journal article or publication with a candidate who has applied for a job
- Where a search committee or Selection Committee member has a close working relationship with a candidate who has applied for a job, such as previous line management responsibility or previous relationships as a client and/or consultant.

Please declare your conflict of interest to your designated HR Adviser who will pass this on to the VCAC for consideration. HR will provide the VCAC or the Chair of the panel with advice on the implications of the declared conflict of interest and make a recommendation on the next steps. The VCAC/Chair of the panel will consider this information and make a decision regarding the continued involvement of a faculty member with declared conflict of interest in the process.

Please note that it is your responsibility to notify HR of any conflict of interest at any stage during the recruitment process.

#### 6. Advertising

All academic and all research vacancies are advertised such that the search is open, transparent and global in reach. All vacancy advertisements and Person Specifications need

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approval by the VCAC (Assistant Professors, Assistant Professorial Research Fellows, Research Fellows) or by the Pro-Director (Faculty Development) (Associate Professors, Associate Professorial Research Fellows, Professors and Professorial Research Fellows) before the vacancy is published. No advertisements should therefore be placed in the press or on the School website until they have first been approved by the VCAC (or Pro-Director (Faculty Development)), who will also satisfy him/herself that the proposed advertising campaign will fully support an open, active and global search.

In addition to a CV and cover letter, applicants should submit up to 3 examples of their best published or unpublished work electronically at the time they submit their applications. Departments are encouraged to invite candidates to submit references at the application stage though references can also be taken up at a later stage (see section 15). The School wants to make its recruitment decisions on the basis of maximum information. The School is also committed to providing candidates with the information they need about LSE and to making them feel welcome at the School if they are called for interview. We are recruiting, not just selecting.

All recruitment campaigns are managed via an online recruitment system. Please refer to the crib sheets for information on how to create a vacancy:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/staff/humanResources/joiningLSE/recruitingContracting/onlineRecruitmentSystem/Home.aspx>

Please contact your HR Adviser in the HR Services Team to discuss your recruitment needs before the post is advertised.

All academic vacancies are published for **4 weeks** to meet visa requirements should the successful candidate require a Tier 2 visa.

Careful planning within the Department should take place at this stage, for example, agreeing on the membership of interview panel if applicable, confirming the timetable.

## 7. Advertising across more than one grade

Departments that wish to advertise one or more posts across different bands (Assistant/Associate Professor or Associate Professor/Professor or, exceptionally, Assistant Professor/Associate Professor/Professor) must follow the procedure outlined in the **Procedure for Advertising One Post Across Different Bands** document (HR can provide a copy) which will help to mitigate the risk of discrimination claims from applicants who argue that the decision was made on the basis of their personal characteristics, rather than the requirements of the post.

Departments are advised to consult with HR at the advertising stage for a discussion about the case before proceeding. The VCAC will take the final decision.

## 8. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Recruiting Departments should give careful thought to compiling the Person Specification. For both academic staff and research staff the Job Descriptions are standardized (please see Role Profiles) and should not be changed by recruiting Departments. If the Person Specification is too broad, the advert will attract a huge number of applications. If the Person Specification is too narrow, it may be difficult to find many suitable candidates with the skills that are sought.

Points to consider when creating Person Specifications:

- (i) Criteria should be specific and relevant to the job.

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- (ii) Consider the role carefully and analyse the skills, experience and qualifications that are required.
- (iii) Ensure that all criteria are captured from the outset. A thorough Person Specification will make it easier for the panel to assess the applications received and will also convey clearly to the potential applicant what you are looking for.
- (iv) Think about whether the criteria should be essential or desirable. Only applicants who meet all the essential criteria on the Person Specification should be shortlisted. For example, if the Person Specification states that it is essential for the candidate to have a PhD, only candidates who have a PhD at the time of application should be shortlisted.
- (v) Use a mixture of essential and desirable criteria to help make the shortlist manageable.
- (vi) A long-list of candidates should comprise all candidates that fulfill all the essential requirements. The shortlist is created on the basis of the long-list and should comprise the candidates that fulfill the essential and/or desirable criteria better than other long-listed candidates.
- (vii) Do not change the goal posts, or add new criteria that were not in your original Person Specification when shortlisting.
- (viii) Crucially, the School is committed to recruiting only outstanding candidates of proven or expected academic distinction. This generally means candidates for career-track jobs who are capable, or promise to be capable, on a consistent basis of producing significant work that is world leading, and who are committed to high quality teaching. This commitment should be signaled clearly in any advertisement and should be followed up in the process of recruitment and selection.

## 9. Closing Date/Late Applications

Vacancies will be removed automatically from the online recruitment system at midnight on the published closing date of the post.

Any applications received after this time will be deemed as 'late' and will not be passed to the Selection Committee for consideration, except in very exceptional cases, following consultation with HR. This is to ensure fairness and that transparency of procedures is applied to all applicants.

The decision as to whether to exceptionally accept a late application will be with the Chair of the Selection Committee, with advice from the HR Adviser.

## 10. School Selection Committees and the Process of Forming Departmental Recommendations

Once the post has been advertised, HR will work with a Department to ensure an appropriate Selection Committee is in place. All Selection Committees will ensure an appropriate measure of scrutiny from outside the hiring Department. Selection Committees can be set up in different ways so long as they ensure the School's overriding commitment to recruiting candidates of outstanding academic merit and in accordance with section 1, and so long as all candidates are treated fairly, symmetrically and in accordance with legal guidelines.

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With this in mind, there are two fundamental recruitment systems a Department can use for their recruitment activity:

- System A: 'Interview Selection Committee': Selection Committee to interview all shortlisted candidates, typically on the same day
- System B: 'Paper Selection Committee': Shortlisted candidates visit the Department individually. The Committee selects candidates on the basis of written documentation and feedback from Departmental visits of candidates only with no interview of shortlisted candidates.

Within system B, candidates generally spend more time in the recruiting Department (although this is also now happening in some variants of System A). It is important to note that in system A, the interview forms only one part of a much broader process of acquiring information about candidates during the recruitment process. The VCAC, the Pro-Director (Faculty Development) and HR will work with Departments to deliver the recruitment system that best serves the needs of the Department and School.

In both systems A and B, the Selection Committee comprises a Chair (normally, the VCAC or Pro-Director (Faculty Development)), two Departmental panel representatives (normally, one of which is the Head of Department), one member from a related Department with appropriate specialist knowledge (the 'Relate') and one member who represents the School's broader interests without necessarily having appropriate subject knowledge (the 'Remote'). Selection Committees at the Professorial and Professorial Research Fellow level typically also comprise External Experts.

Departmental recommendations on longlisting and shortlisting can be made either by a Departmental search committee or by the whole Department (the Relate member is involved in the shortlisting decision and can be involved in the longlisting decision). Where Departments employ a search committee to help them in the recruitment process, it should be comprised of at least 3 members from the Department and include (i) at least one member of each gender (though Departments are encouraged to seek gender balance or at least meet the School's 30% gender target for Committees), (ii) where existent, the departmental equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) advisor or a representative of the departmental EDI committee (iii) a reasonable balance between full Professors and other faculty, and (iv) in Departments with research clusters or groupings at least one member of a research cluster or grouping other than the one to which appointment is being made. All faculty who have a long-term stake in the appointment decision (including Assistant Professors) should have the opportunity to see applicants' documentation (with the exception of reference letters) and provide input to decisions on preliminary selection (longlisting and shortlisting). Departmental recommendations to the School Selection Committee should be formed on the basis of a meeting of all such faculty at which all such faculty have the opportunity to attend, speak and vote (or alternatively lodge their view electronically in case they cannot be present at the meeting).

The VCAC or Pro-Director (Faculty Development) will also expect to receive consideration of the major writings of the proposed candidate for appointment and confirmation that significant elements of the candidate's work are at least internationally excellent or, ideally, world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour. For Professorial and Professorial Research Fellow level appointments significant elements of the candidate's work must be world-leading. This is a high bar, but not an unreasonable aspiration for LSE. The School is committed to strengthening its faculty over time. The VCAC or Pro-Director (Faculty Development) reserve the right to ask for this consideration being submitted in writing before the Selection Committee decides on candidates. The Selection Panel will also want to be assured that a proposed appointee will teach to a high standard and contribute purposefully to the broader life of the School.

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For Professorial and Professorial Research Fellow appointments, the Director reserves the right to chair selection committees but will normally delegate this to the Pro-Director (Faculty Development), or in exceptional circumstances this Pro-Director's nominee, normally another Pro-Director or the VCAC. For Associate Professor or Associate Professorial appointments, the Chair is normally the Pro-Director (Faculty Development), or this Pro-Director's nominee, normally the VCAC. For all other appointments, the Chair of the Selection Committee is normally the VCAC, or his/her nominee.

Selection Committees should comprise both men and women to ensure gender balance.

The role of the Chair is to oversee the recruitment and selection process and ensure that proceedings are conducted fairly and transparently.

Departments need to ensure appropriate practical arrangements are made for candidate visits and presentations. HR will help with the organisation of interviews where applicable. HR will also advise Committee members of the materials that they will need to read in advance of the interview and/or bring with them to the Selection Committee.

## **11. Longlisting and Shortlisting**

All applications are received via the online recruitment system and will be available for review by selectors after the closing date. The recruiting Department will receive a PDF and one printed copy of all applications (CV, application letter and, if submitted at the point of application, references). Where there is a 'Relate' member of the Selection Panel, s/he will receive a PDF as well as, on request to HR, a hard-copy of the applications. Writings of candidates will only be made available electronically. The Departmental panel members and the 'Relate' will also receive an electronic shortlisting grid, containing the names of all applicants who applied for the post.

A long-list of candidates is drawn up first. It should comprise all candidates who, with the information available at this stage, fulfill all the essential requirements for the post. The long-list can be established based on the candidates' application letters and CVs only, but Departments are encouraged to read the writings of candidates and/or ask for reference letters to be submitted at the point of application so they can be taken into account at the long-listing stage. Where the long-list is drawn up by a Departmental search committee it should be shared with all faculty members.

The shortlist is also constructed on the basis of the candidates' application letters and CVs, but will crucially involve a reading of the candidates' submitted writings by members of Departmental search committee (where existent) and the Departmental representatives on the Selection Panel. (The Chair, the Relate and the Remote will be given access to the writings and they may or may not choose to read a selection of them.) It follows that candidates who were deemed to fulfil all the essential requirements for the post at the long-listing stage may be deemed to no longer fulfil all the essential requirements with the updated information set at the shortlisting stage. Note that in accordance with the School's commitment under the "Two Ticks Scheme", any disabled candidates who have opted into the Scheme at the application stage are guaranteed to be shortlisted and therefore guaranteed an interview as long as they fulfil all the essential requirements of the post, i.e. even if other candidates fulfil all the essential requirements of the post better.

Departments are free to require reference letters at the longlisting stage for letters to be available in time for shortlisting candidates. However, Departments must keep in mind that this will imply that at least two to three weeks have to pass between the longlisting and shortlisting stage since it takes time for referees to write their letters. Reference letters should only be solicited via HR if they are not already submitted by candidates at the application stage.

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Some Departments may, in accordance with common practice in their field, interview selected applicants at job market fairs taking place at international conferences (considered as the longlist stage). In such cases, in order to speed up the process and given potential candidates receive simultaneous invites from competing universities, the Chair of the Selection Committee may decide to confirm that after the job market interviews the Department can proceed to invite shortlisted candidates for Departmental visits without further approval needed, though they need to keep HR informed about their shortlisting decisions.

#### 'Pause for Thought'

When shortlisting, panel members should refer to the essential criteria on the Person Specification.

In cases where there is an all male or all female shortlist, panel members should 'pause for thought' to ensure that they have given due consideration to all applications and double-check that there are no suitable male/female candidates that should be added to the shortlist. However, panel members should be aware that only those who meet the essential criteria should be included in the shortlist and so it is not necessary to include males and/or females in the shortlist if they do not demonstrate they are suitable for the role.

Panel members should complete their shortlist electronically, assessing applicants against the role's published Person Specification, and return it by email to HR. The normal expectation is that Departments provide HR with one consolidated shortlist recommendation. In case of conflict, the two Departmental panel members may provide HR with two separate shortlist recommendations. The Relate may return his/her shortlist to HR directly or may, alternatively, seek an agreed shortlist with the Head of Department or (if different) the Chair of the Department's search committee.

#### Key Points to Note When Shortlisting

- (i) Always shortlist in accordance with the criteria on the role's published Person Specification for the post. Do not change the criteria, or create new ones, as this could be interpreted as unfair discrimination
- (ii) Provide clear, justifiable reasons for both shortlisting and not shortlisting all the applicants in the 'reasons for shortlisting' column on the electronic shortlisting grid
- (iii) Applicants can request access to the shortlisting notes. Do not write anything that could be misinterpreted or lead to a challenge of discrimination
- (iv) Only candidates who meet all the essential criteria should be shortlisted for interview
- (v) If a high number of applicants meet all the essential criteria, use the desirable criteria and/or who fulfils the essential criteria better to reduce the number of shortlisted applicants further
- (vi) The reasons you provide on the shortlisting grid will be used as feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Therefore, please ensure that it is clear. This will minimise the need for HR to contact you for clarification on your reasons for not shortlisting the applicants
- (vii) 'Pause for thought' if there is an all male or all female shortlist. Check to make sure that all candidates have been given due consideration, but only shortlist those who do meet the essential criteria.

It has been normal practice at LSE for panels to shortlist up to five candidates for one post and up to eight candidates for two posts. However, this practice has mainly evolved in relation to selection System A. It is perfectly reasonable for Departments to bring in a smaller (or larger) number of candidates where they have first discussed the matter with the chair of the Selection committee, normally the VCAC or the Pro-Director (Faculty Development). Also note that the shortlist might increase as a consequence of the School's commitment to the "Two Ticks Scheme" – see above.

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In all cases, HR will send the proposed short-lists to the Chair of the Selection Committee for review and possible confirmation. The Chair will look to ensure that the correct procedures have been followed. It is the responsibility of the committee members doing the shortlisting to ensure that shortlisted candidates do meet the published criteria on the Person Specification though the Chair will also do some checks. In cases of difficulty in agreeing a final shortlist, a meeting of the Department and the 'Relate' will be convened by the Chair. The ultimate decision on the final shortlist will be the Chair's.

## **12. Overseas Applicants**

The School expects to give fair and equal consideration to applicants from overseas, however some candidates may experience practical difficulties in attending an interview. This should be discussed with HR at an early stage in the process.

Where an overseas applicant is unable to visit LSE for an interview in person, exceptionally Departments can conduct the interview by telephone, skype, or video conference facility in order to allow the Selection Committee to take place on the scheduled day.

If an applicant cannot attend an interview in person, and cannot conduct their interview by video, Skype, or telephone conference, please consult with HR.

The School has an interview expenses policy, which sets out the items a candidate can claim for their interview expenses:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/intranet/staff/humanResources/joiningLSE/recruitingContracting/pdfs/interviewExpenses.pdf>

HR can only reimburse candidates for expenses as set out in the Interview Expenses policy and on submission of receipts.

## **13. Confidentiality**

All applications received in connection with a vacancy should be treated with confidentiality. Curriculum Vitae of candidates can and normally should be circulated to all members of academic staff on the understanding that these be treated confidentially and not passed to others. References can be shared with the Departmental search committee (where existent) but not with all members of academic staff.

All members of staff should be mindful to respect confidentiality at all times during the recruitment and selection process.

## **14. Presentations and Informal Meetings**

Presentations should normally be of a minimum length of 1 hour, including questions and answers, keeping in mind that many Departments already host presentations of 90 minutes. Departments are encouraged to consider further provisions in accordance with best practice in their field, for example a requirement to demonstrate sample teaching (whether in the form of a written lecture outline or the delivery of a sample lecture) or the offer of a meeting with the Department's PhD students. Each candidate should be offered similar opportunities for informal meetings, at least with the Head of Department individually and with other Department members in small groups, including in all cases key faculty involved in the expected teaching responsibility connected to the post. Departments should be critically aware of and openly discuss potential unconscious biases developing during informal meetings with candidates.

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Departments are responsible for arranging presentations and liaising with candidates about the details of the presentations. Departments should ensure that HR is kept informed of the date and times of the presentations.

For Interview Selection Committees, informal meetings and research presentations should normally take place on the day prior to the Selection Committee or on the morning of the Selection Committee, so that the outcome can be taken into account by the Selection Committee at the end of the interviews. (This requirement can be modified where candidates are brought in one at a time). For Paper Selection Committees, informal meetings and presentations can take place at any point between the confirmation of the shortlist and the meeting of the Selection Committee.

Presentations are primarily intended to provide relevant information for the Departmental panel members in relation to the Person Specification criteria and it is their responsibility to relay any relevant information to the full Selection Committee when it meets. The 'Relate' is invited but not required to attend the presentations.

The Department, and/or the Departmental panel members, cannot make any final decisions on the suitability of any applicant. It is the role of the Selection Committee to make the final decision of who to appoint, once all the shortlisted candidates have been interviewed (System A) or considered (System B).

## 15. References

References are provided on a confidential basis. As such, the content of the reference should not be relayed to the applicant, but discreet use of the information contained within the reference should be made to probe the applicant's knowledge and previous experience. References are available to members of the Selection Committee and can be made available to members of a Departmental search committee (where existent), but for confidentiality reasons cannot be made available to all members of academic staff.

References can be required at any point – at the point of submitting applications, at the point of longlisting candidates (for references to be ready for the shortlisting stage) or at the shortlisting stage. If references have not been solicited before, they are at the latest solicited after the shortlist has been confirmed. Whilst every effort is made to obtain at least three references in advance of the Selection Committee meeting, this cannot be guaranteed if referees are unable to respond in time, or if the recruiting department has not allowed enough time between shortlisting and the interview to gather references.

## 16. Selection Committee Meetings

Selection Committee meetings start with a pre-meeting, in which all Selection Committee members meet to agree the format of the proceedings and take care of formalities.

The Chair will lead the pre-meeting and will ask all panel members to confirm that they have read and understood the School's EDI Statement, and the *Data Protection Act document*. This is to help the School comply with its legal obligations and also to emphasise the importance that the School places on equality and diversity.

The Chair will also ask panel members to declare any interests, such as close professional and/or personal relationships with any of the candidates, which could lead to allegations of bias/partiality. However, all involved in the selection process should declare an interest according to Section 5.

The Chair will remind the Selection Committee of the selection criteria which were agreed for the job, against which shortlisting has been conducted and the applicants will be measured, which the Selection Committee should bear in mind.

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## 17. Interview Selection Committees

The Selection Committee will agree the broad pattern of questioning at the pre-meeting. While the School must ensure that all applicants have the same opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the post and how they meet the Person Specification criteria, the main purpose of any academic job interview is to have a serious intellectual exchange with the candidate. We should not allow procedures to so dominate that interviews become anodyne – and thus not especially useful to either the candidate or panel members.

Interviewers can help candidates to perform well by making their questions brief and clear, and the Chair should ensure that discussions remain relevant. An interview is neither a presentation nor a seminar and the temptation for other members of the Selection Committee to share their own detailed views should be prevented by the Chair. Equally, the Chair should do his or her best to facilitate robust intellectual exchanges during an interview.

By convention, interviews for non-Professorial posts have normally been thirty minutes long, while Professorial and Professorial Research Fellow interviews have lasted for 50 minutes. Do note, though, that whilst also the default, this has been past or conventional practice. So long as all candidates are treated equally the time slots can be varied upon agreement with HR. Common sense suggests that longer interviews can be accommodated where there are fewer shortlisted candidates.

Departmental panel members (and the external experts in cases of professorial level appointments) are expected to have acquainted themselves with the applicant's written work before the interview. They carry the main responsibility for probing the applicant's suitability for the job.

The main role of the non-Departmental members is to ensure that, as far as possible, similar standards are applied throughout the School. They are not expected to ask technical questions (though they may do so if they wish) but should concentrate on matters such as the applicant's commitment to academic life and breadth of interests in the social sciences.

The allocation of time is the responsibility of the Chair who is also responsible for seeing that adequate time is left for the candidate's answers and questions to the Selection Committee.

## 18. Paper Selection Committees

With the candidates not being present for interviews, Paper Selection Committees have the responsibility to comprehensively review the shortlisted applicants on the basis of the CVs, application letters, references, writings and the information provided by the Departmental representatives on the candidates' visit and presentations to the Department and the quality of their writings.

This process starts by the Chair asking the Departmental representatives to comment on the process followed (not the conclusions) of the recruitment process. The Chair then invites the Relate and Remote to ask questions on the process.

Following this, the Chair asks the Departmental representatives to report in detail on the Departmental visits of each candidate in turn. The Departmental representatives comment also on the written work and on the candidates' presentation at his/her Departmental visit. The Chair invites the Remote and Relate to ask questions. No decisions are made at this stage.

## 19. Making the Decision

After all shortlisted applicants have been interviewed (System A) or comprehensively considered (System B), the Selection Committee will discuss the candidates' suitability for the post. An HR Adviser will be present to advise panel members and also to record the outcome of the Selection Committee. For Paper Selection Committees, an HR Adviser is present during the entire meeting. In all cases, discussion of candidates will not be confined to performance at interview, but should take proper and full account of the reading and grading of candidates' work, their presentations and discussions with Departmental members (including PhD students, where they have been consulted following a presentation to the Department).

The Chair will lead the discussion, and ask the panel members to agree if there are any unappointable candidates. The term 'unappointable' is used to describe a candidate who did not demonstrate the criteria of the Person Specification needed for the post and should, therefore, not be made an offer of appointment. The views of Committee members are requested by the Chair in the following order: Remote, Relate, Departmental representatives. The Chair states his/her view last.

If there are any candidates that were considered to be 'unappointable', this will be recorded, along with the reasons why the candidate was 'unappointable'. Reasons should relate to the Person Specification.

The Selection Committee should then consider if any appointment could be made. If in doubt the Selection Committee should not appoint. Instead, the Department should begin the search process again, possibly with a revised Person Specification.

The Selection Committee should then rank the applicants who are considered potentially suitable. The views of Committee members are requested by the Chair in the following order: Remote, Relate, Departmental representatives. The Chair states his/her view last. It is not essential to vote on an applicant's appointment if there is an agreement. If a vote is taken, the Chair may vote as a member of the Selection Committee and if there is a tie, the Chair has the casting vote.

In the event the top-placed applicant does not accept the offer, the VCAC, Pro-Director (Faculty Development) and the Head of Department should discuss first whether any further offers should be made and review whether appointment of such lower-placed applicants is consistent with the overall aim of recruitment.

The Chair should summarise the decisions of the Selection Committee in respect of each applicant and this is recorded by HR as the final outcome of the committee.

It is essential that the Selection Committee agrees reasons as to why applicants are or are not successful, as this will be used as feedback should a candidate request it. It will also form the official record of the proceedings in the event of a challenge of the decision.

## 20. Offers

Once the Selection Committee has decided who it would like to appoint, the Chair, the Head of the Department (or a nominee if the Head of Department is not present on the Selection Committee) and the HR Adviser will agree the salary and other aspects of the offer, based on the individual's current salary, skills, experience, salary opportunities outside LSE, salary relativities within Departments and the range in which the salary was advertised. Therefore, all other Selection Committee members should be asked to leave at this point.

The HR Adviser will present a recommendation of a suitable salary to offer the candidate. If the Department wishes to propose a higher salary, this will need to be justified. The salary offer should be agreed by the Chair of the Selection Committee before any offer is made.

If the successful candidate wishes to negotiate the salary that is offered or other aspects of the offer, the Head of Department should liaise with HR and the Chair, in order to agree whether the salary can be raised. Any increase in the original salary must be agreed by the Chair before contacting the candidate.

At professorial level, the salary and any subsequent increase as well as other aspects of the offer, is agreed by the Director or the Pro-Director (Faculty Development) with the approval of the Director.

## **21. Interim Review and PGCertHE (Assistant Professor appointments only)**

The Chair of the Selection Committee for Assistant Professor appointments must decide, in consultation with HR and the Head of Department, on whether an appointment is made subject to Interim Review and obtaining the PGCertHE, in which case its successful completion is a requirement to pass Major Review. Where a candidate has an established record of teaching and research, the appointment may be made post-Interim Review. Where, in addition to an established record of teaching, a candidate can provide verifiable evidence of teaching excellence, the condition to obtain the PGCertHE can be waived. This should only be done in exceptional circumstances.

The normal requirement will be that Assistant Professors should be subject to an Interim Review in the third year of their appointment and a Major Review at a point not exceeding the eighth year of appointment, in accordance with the School's Review and Promotion Guidelines.

## **22. Making the Offer**

The Head of the Department (or a nominee) should contact the successful candidate(s) to make the offer. The content of the offer should be as agreed by the Chair of the Selection Committee.

If the candidate wishes to carry forward some of their sabbatical leave entitlement, this should be approved by the VCAC, and the Director or Pro-Director (Faculty Development) in cases of Professorial appointments.

## **23. Visas**

All offers are subject to entitlement to work in the UK. If the successful candidate is a national of a non-EEA country, he/she will need to obtain a visa to work in the UK. Applicants are asked to specify their visa status at the application stage and so an HR Adviser will be able to advise Departments if any of the shortlisted candidates require visas and the support that LSE can provide. For up-to-date information on visas, please refer to the [visas](#) page on the HR website.

## **24. Appointment Letter**

Once the Head of the Department has made the offer, the Department should complete a [Post Interview Scoring Form](#) on the online system for the successful candidate(s), in order to initiate the appointment letter.

The Department should ensure that HR has all the necessary information about salary, sabbatical leave and review periods that is required to ensure that the appointment letter is sent to the candidate accurately and promptly.

Academic and Research Appointments: Recruitment and Selection Guidance  
Update - June 2016  
Approved by Appointments Committee 8 June 2016



Heads of Department or their delegates may wish to inform non-successful shortlisted candidates of the outcome of the selection process. Alternatively, the Department should confirm that it is happy for HR to notify all unsuccessful candidates of the outcome of the selection process.

## **25. Temporary Faculty**

The School's policy is to only appoint temporary faculty in very exceptional circumstances when there is evidence that it is not possible to fill the temporary appointment with either an LSE Fellow (at Band 5 or Band 6) or a Course Tutor (at Band 7). For further information please refer to the [Temporary faculty policy](#).

## **26. Single Nominations**

The School's policy is to recruit by open selection, unless there is an objective justification for not advertising. For further information, please refer to the [Single Nomination Policy](#).

## **27. Irregularities**

The Chair has the responsibility to see that the recruitment and selection procedure is carried out in full. If at any stage, it appears that a significant breach of the School's procedures has occurred, the Chair should refer the matter to HR, in the first instance, who will discuss the situation with the VCAC, or the Director or Pro-Director (Faculty Development) for advice, if necessary.