



Recruitment tips for Section 1

Contents

Writing adverts, job descriptions and person specifications.....	2
Adverts	2
Where to advertise?	2
Job descriptions	2
Person specifications	2
Planning your recruitment timetable	3
Fixed-term contracts	3
Interview panel composition	5
Panel eligibility	6

Writing adverts, job descriptions and person specifications

All published documents should be presented in the School's standard format using the School's standard templates in order to present a professional and consistent image of the School externally. Refer to the HR website for the latest [advert](#) template, [job description](#) template and [person specification](#) template. Please note that the HR Division does periodically amend and update the templates and so please use the latest versions on the HR website to ensure that any changes are reflected in your documentation.

Adverts

The advert is the first thing that applicants will see when searching for a job and so it is important to give the right impression. Concise adverts that give a flavour of the role, the skills needed and the benefits on offer are usually the most attractive to applicants and will encourage them to read the job description and person specification to help them decide if the role is right for them. Be sure to include the key shortlisting criteria as this will help applicants understand exactly what you're looking for straight away and will help them to decide if they are suitable or not. Remember, for roles that may require Tier 2 visa sponsorship, for example academic and research roles, you will need to ensure that your advert covers the following information:

- The job title
- The salary or an indication of the salary package on offer
- The main duties and responsibilities of the post
- The skills, qualifications and/or experience you need
- The closing date (which must be at least 4 weeks from the date the advert was first published)

Where to advertise?

There are a wide range of advertising possibilities and you may already have an idea of where you would like to advertise based on previous experience and/or the typical media used in your area/discipline. www.jobs.ac.uk is the most popular website for higher education roles and LSE pays the cost of advertising there from a central budget managed by HR. In addition, LSE will pay for an advert to appear on www.jobs.theguardian.com. The costs of any additional advertising will need to be met by the department/centre/institute/division and you will be asked to provide the budget code and the details of where to send the invoice for authorisation at the time of creating the vacancy on the online system.

Job descriptions

A good job description will summarise the key elements of the role in a clear and concise way. The job description will enable candidates to find out more about the job so that they can decide whether they would like to apply. Try to be specific about the tasks wherever possible so that candidates have a good understanding about what the role involves. If it contains routine elements it is important to include this so that the job description is an accurate reflection of what the job is. This will help manage the expectations of the successful candidate when they start in the role.

Person specifications

A good person specification will clearly set out all the essential and desirable criteria that the successful candidate will have in order to perform the role.

A useful tip is to put *Knowledge and Experience* as your first competency heading on the person specification, and include a justifiable and measureable criterion as your first on the list. This will help you when shortlisting because if a candidate does not demonstrate they meet this criterion

you do not need to consider them against the other criteria and you can eliminate them from the shortlist quickly.

It is important to take time to consider what the essential criteria should be for the role because this is what you will be using when you come to shortlist the applications.

Essential criteria should be the skills, qualifications or experience that a successful candidate should have from day one in order to perform the role.

Desirable criteria should be the skills or qualifications that are relevant but would be useful for the candidate to have already, or that you can train them on when they arrive.

Candidates should only be shortlisted if they demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria.

It is important not to change the criteria or add new ones after the process has commenced as this could be seen as unfair and discriminatory to candidates.

Planning your recruitment timetable

Recruiting staff can be a time-consuming task and having a vacancy in the team can mean additional pressure for everyone to cope with. However, taking the time to plan the recruitment campaign and putting key dates in the diary from the outset can make the process go more smoothly.

Top tips for planning:

- Start working on the advert, job description and person specification as earlier as possible. If it is a new post, remember to factor in time for HERA evaluation and get as much feedback as possible from your team, HR Partner or HR Adviser
- Put the advertising date and closing dates in your diary. You'll get system notifications when these dates are reached, however putting time aside for shortlisting as you go along will help make the task less onerous
- Confirm the interview date as soon as possible. This includes finding panel members and confirming arrangements with them, as well as deciding if you would like to include tests, presentations or other activities at the interview stage.

Fixed-term contracts

Fixed-term contracts can be a useful way to get additional help for a fixed period or to make use of limited funding. Fixed-term posts should be advertised in the normal way and can be of any length. However, according to fixed-term contract legislation, care should be taken to ensure that they are used in justifiable cases.

The law states that there should be a clear and justifiable reason for using fixed-term contracts.

These are:

- Covering staff absence, for example maternity leave
- To work on a specific project
- To provide a career development opportunity, for example when using the School's graduate internship scheme or when appointing an LSE Fellow.

In cases of temporary funding, the School took the decision to offer contracts that are 'open-ended, subject to funding'. This helps to make it clear to employees that the post would otherwise be permanent if the funding was in place to support it.

If you would like to advertise for a fixed-term post, it is good practice to clarify the expected end date of the post and state why the post is fixed-term, for example, to cover maternity leave for 12 months. This helps to manage applicants' expectations and helps them decide if they would like to apply for the role or not.

Another option to consider is advertising the role as a secondment. A secondment can give a career development opportunity to internal staff, enabling them to undertake the role and then return to their existing role at the end of the contract. Secondments can be used within departments, or across the School.

Do contact your HR Adviser or HR Partner for advice on fixed-term contracts and/or secondments.

Interview panel composition

It sounds obvious, but it is the interview panel that will make the decision of who to appoint to the role and so it is important to choose the right people to be on it. To help you to decide, LSE has some guidance to help you choose the right panel members.

This table shows the minimum number of panel members on an interview panel and an indication of who they should be.

Vacancy	Minimum Number of Panel Members	
Professional Services Band 1 - 5	2	E.G. The line manager of the post and 1 other in the Department/Division/Centre
Professional Services Band 6 - 10	3	E.G. The line manager of the post, 1 other in the Department/Division/Centre and 1 'external' for example a user of the service
Research Assistant (Band 5)	2	E.G. The line manager of the post and 1 other in the Department/Division/Centre
LSE Fellow/Course Tutor	3	E.G. The line manager of the post, 1 other in the Department/Division/Centre and 1 'external' for example a user of the service
Research Officer (Band 6)	3	E.G. The line manager of the post, 1 other in the Department/Division/Centre and 1 'external' for example a user of the service
Academic and Senior Research Roles		
Assistant Professor/Assistant Professorial Research Fellow	5	The VCAC as Chair, 2 departmental panel members, 1 'Relate', 1 'Remote'
Associate Professor/Associate Professorial Research Fellow	5	The VCAC as Chair, 2 departmental panel members, 1 'Relate', 1 'Remote'
Professor/Professorial Research Fellow	7	The VCAC as Chair, 2 departmental panel members, 1 'Relate', 1 'Remote' and 2 'External Experts'

Panel eligibility

Panel members should be at least the grade above the post that is being recruited to. For example, if the post is a band 5, only those who are band 6 and above should be on the panel. Panel members should also be full members of staff, and so agency staff, contractors, visiting staff and those who have resigned from the School are not normally permitted to serve on panels. You should ensure that your panel is made up of men and women to achieve a gender balance. In addition, you should ensure that **at least one person** on the panel has been on the School's in-house [recruitment and selection training course](#).

The panel will normally be chaired by the line manager of the post, or the Head of Department/Institute/Centre or Service Leader if he or she is present.