

Recruitment and Selection Policy

1. Policy statement

Recruiting and selecting the right people is of paramount importance to the continued success of IDS and to enable us to deliver our mission effectively - to produce cutting-edge research, knowledge and evidence in order to shape the changes needed for our broader vision to be realised, and to support people, societies and institutions to navigate the challenges ahead. This Recruitment and Selection Policy sets out how we recruit the best people based on merit and how our recruitment processes are free from unlawful and unfair bias and discrimination.

IDS recognises and values diversity and inclusion - by following this policy, we will fulfil employment law requirements and ensure that we uphold our commitment to equality and diversity and our values of respectfulness and inclusivity, excellence and resourcefulness. These are values and modes of behaviour that are an embedded, implicit part of the culture, ethics and professionalism of IDS.

This policy provides an overview of the IDS recruitment and selection process and should be read with reference to our policies on: equal opportunities/diversity; safeguarding; redundancy and redeployment; data protection; records management; relationships (in development); fellowship review and promotion Board procedures; casual workers; and the obligations to declare a conflict of interest set out in our financial procedures and in conjunction with relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, the requirements for compliance with UK Immigration legislation and the IDS Recruitment & Selection Guidelines (in development).

Advice on any aspect of this policy or corresponding procedures is available from the Human Resources Team.

2. Principles and approaches

Recruitment and selection will be undertaken in line with the following principles and approaches. We will:

- Treat all candidates fairly, equitably, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- Seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit.
- Promote good practice in recruitment and selection, and continuously develop recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- Handle and retain all documentation relating to applicants confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and our Records Management policy.
- Protect the confidentiality of applicants throughout the process.

- Provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities.
- Undertake the necessary checks where the role involves working with vulnerable adults or children, including one member of the interview selection panel who has received safeguarding training and who will be responsible for questions relating to safeguarding concerns.
- Expect all those involved in the recruitment process to declare any close personal or familial relationships with an applicant as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement subsequent in the recruitment and selection decision making process.
- Expect applicants to declare and those involved with recruitment to consider any external relationships with any government or funding agency which could give rise to real or perceived conflicts of interest following any appointment.
- Expect posts to be recruited to through open competition other than in exceptional circumstances where a head hunt or other non-competitive process may be agreed (such as where a grant awarding body approves funding for a named individual to work on a particular piece of research and the grant is dependent on that individual's contribution).
- Uphold our commitment as a disability confident employer and as such has an inclusive and accessible recruitment process, offering an interview to persons with disabilities who meet the requirements of the person specification and providing reasonable adjustments.
- Implement a range of measures to reduce the potential of unfair bias in the process, including the removal of personal information from applications, the use of structured interviews and supporting selection tests, mixed interview and decision making panels, removal of language and terminology in our documentation which could deter particular groups.
- Aim to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Abide by our code of conduct of behaviour and in accordance with our values.
- Comply with HM Government's business appointment rules.

3. New jobs and job vacancies

Financial approval for the establishment of a new post or the filling of a vacancy must be obtained before recruitment commences.

For the recruitment of Fellows and Post-Doctoral Researchers please refer to the Fellowship Review and Promotion Board (FRPB) guidelines alongside this policy.

For the recruitment of casual staff please refer to the Casual Worker Policy.

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade.

Where the duties of a post have changed significantly the recruiting manager must seek confirmation from the Human Resources team of the appropriate grade for the post. If the post is new then it may need to be reviewed by the IDS Job Evaluation Committee to ascertain the appropriate grade.

When a vacancy arises, consideration must be given to staff whose posts are being made redundant and for whom redeployment is being sought (please refer to the Redundancy and Redeployment Policy). Recruiting a redeployee can reduce both the time and the cost incurred in filling a vacancy as well as helping to retain employees and avoid redundancies.

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the process. Templates and generic job descriptions can be provided by Human Resources.

The person specification is of equal importance to the job description and informs the selection decision. The person specification details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job description and, with the job description, should inform the content of the advert. The person specification should be specific, related to the job, and not unnecessarily restrictive - for example only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified. The inclusion of criteria that cannot be justified as essential for the performance of the job may be deemed discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010, if these impact disproportionately to the disadvantage of specific groups. Particular consideration should be given to removing any potentially discriminatory language.

The person specification must form part of the further particulars of a vacancy along with the job description in order that applicants have a full picture of what the job entails. The person specification enables potential applicants to make an informed decision about whether to apply and those who do apply, to give sufficient relevant detail of their skills and experience in their application. The person specification forms the basis of the selection decision and enables the selection panel to ensure objectivity in their selection.

4. Advertising the vacancy

Before a role is cleared for advertising, approval needs to be obtained – currently from Human Resources, Finance, the Head of Department and Director. This is done through IDS' online recruitment system.

Once approved, vacancies will be circulated to those in the redeployment pool first. If there is no suitable match then the post will be advertised more widely.

Posts graded one to six will be circulated internally for approximately one week to allow for development opportunities for current staff. If there are no applications then the post will be advertised externally.

All posts must be advertised for a minimum of two weeks to help attract the best pool of applicants and for a total of four weeks if a certificate of sponsorship is required to ensure compliance with immigration rules. Please speak to a member of the Human Resources team if an international field of applicants is expected for the role.

5. Selecting the interview panel

All interviews must be conducted by a panel. The recruiting manager should select interview panel members prior to the closing date; this allows panel members to assist in the shortlisting process. Familiarity with the vacancy and preparation for the interview is a key to successful interviewing.

Panels should:

- consist of a minimum of three people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post, a colleague who is familiar with the area of work and a third person, preferably from outside the department to balance the panel's perspective.
- be chaired by one panel member.
- be of mixed gender.
- reflect an ethnicity balance wherever possible.
- declare if there is a conflict of interest and withdraw from the process.
- declare if they already know a candidate or have prior knowledge of them and how this will be disregarded in the process.
- be willing and able to attend all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

All IDS staff on panels must have received recruitment and selection training and, when applicable, at least one panel member should have received safeguarding training.

6. Shortlisting

After the closing date has passed the interview panel should assess the applications to determine which applicants are to be called for interview. At least two members of the interview panel, including the recruiting manager, should undertake the task of shortlisting. Where the panel has an external member, that person should take part in the shortlisting wherever practicable. Shortlisting decisions should be based on evidence that the applicant has met the requirements of the person specification.

The process can also include a longlisting step or telephone interview in the event of a large field of candidates.

7. Interviews, selection exercises and presentations

Interviews at IDS follow a structure, with questions directly relating to the person specification and job description. This structure ensures that we ask the same question of all the candidates and by doing this can make a fair assessment of the best suited candidate.

In an effort to mitigate the nature of unconscious bias in interviews, IDS strongly recommends that all recruitment and selection processes include a job-related assessment in addition to interview. Depending on the role, this could be a presentation, scenario questions, written submission, etc. In all cases care should be taken to ensure that job-related exercises are well explained in writing for candidates, in plain language, that all candidates are subject to the same assessment under exactly the same conditions, (excluding any allowances made as 'reasonable adjustments' to candidates with disabilities) and that presentation topics do not favour any one candidate. It is very important that selection tests are not unfairly discriminatory. Advice, templates and examples are available from Human Resources.

8. Decision making

The information obtained from the application, interview, and selection exercise will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made. The Chair of the panel must ensure that a written note of the reasons for selecting the successful candidate and rejecting others is made and handed back to Human Resources, together with the original applications and notes of all panel members. These documents will be kept for a minimum of 12 months after the appointment decision has been notified to the candidates.

Feedback is normally offered to unsuccessful interview candidates and to all internal candidates.

If a member of a selection panel feels that there has been any irregularity in the recruitment and selection procedure and the panel cannot resolve the matter at the time, they must report the matter without delay to the Director of Human Resources.

Interview proceedings are confidential and interviewers should not divulge to others the decision reached until the successful candidate has accepted the post, and should not share any information about other applicants.

Provisional offers may be made, subject to right to work checks, Occupational Health clearance and references. When appropriate other background checks maybe required such as a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. Provisional offers constitute a verbal contract.

The salary offered should normally be at the first point of the respective grade. On some occasions it may be necessary to consider the applicant's experience or expertise and in these circumstances IDS will normally offer at or above the incremental point equivalent to the applicant's present salary. The salaries of other staff doing similar work within the organisation with similar experience should also be taken into account to ensure equity.

In most cases references must only be taken up once a preferred candidate is selected.

Appropriate referees are those who have direct experience of a candidate's work, education or training: preferably in a supervisory capacity and a reference must be obtained from the current or previous employer.

When requesting references, it is helpful to seek precise information and confirm facts, such as length of employment, relationship of the applicant to the referee, job title, brief details of responsibilities, reasons for leaving, any unauthorised absence, performance, and any other relevant information. It is helpful to the referee to include a copy of the job description and person specification of the post to which you are recruiting.

References are confidential and must be sought 'in confidence'. Any request for disclosure of references must be forwarded to the Data Protection Officer. References should only be used for the purpose for which they were intended and their confidentiality must be maintained.

The Human Resources team will issue offer letters and contracts of employment. If the job offer is conditional on completion of a qualification, right to work, satisfactory references or occupational health screening, this will be made clear in the offer letter. When applicable this may also include a DBS check and other background checks as required.

New employees must not begin work until their right to work documentation has been verified and confirmed.

Academic qualifications, professional registration and any other specifics considered essential for the post must be verified by the Human Resources team before work commences.

If the person to be appointed is a national of a non-EEA country, a Certificate of Sponsorship may be required. The process can take up to three months and staff cannot under any circumstances be employed until permission is given.

9. Induction and probation

It is IDS policy that all staff who are new to the Institute undergo a structured induction and successfully complete a probationary period. Please liaise with a member of the Human Resources team for guidance on organising an induction. Human Resources will be in touch with the line manager prior to the new employee starting regarding the probation policy and probation review dates.

10. Monitoring and record keeping

IDS monitors the ethnic origin, sex and disability status of applicants for all posts, those shortlisted and appointees. In addition IDS also monitors the age, sexual orientation and religious belief of applicants, where declared. This informs IDS as to whether its recruitment practices are having a discriminatory effect on any particular groups. Applicants will complete equality monitoring information as part of their online application, which will be kept separate from and is not used in the selection process.

The original applications for all applicants, together with a written note of reasons for shortlisting or rejecting applicants must be retained for a minimum of 12 months from the date that an appointment decision is notified, in case of complaint to an Employment Tribunal and to satisfy UK Visa and Immigration requirements where a certificate of sponsorship is required. Data such as applications contained within the online recruitment platform is automatically kept for 12 months before being deleted.

Any possible conflicts of interest declared by the any member of the recruitment panel shall be recorded within an appropriate register within Human Resources. Any conflicts of interest (real or perceived) relating to an appointee's relationship to external agencies including governments or funding bodies should be shared with the Contracts and Compliance manager who will maintain a register and consider conflict of interest risk relating to funding awards and external contractual arrangements.

11. Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains current and fit for purpose.

Revision History

Issue Number	Date	Changes Made	Owner	Approved By
1	June 2018	First Issue	Jo O'Reilly, HR Officer	Isobel Pearce, Director of HR