

## SECTION 6: RECRUITMENT STAGE 3 - PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

This section covers:

- Responding to enquiries
- Shortlisting/a checklist for shortlisting
- Planning for the interview
- Applicants with a criminal record

### Responding to Enquiries

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When enquiries are received, each one should be answered by sending out an acknowledgement letter and an application form.

Enquiries should be answered promptly.

It is recommended that applications received after the close date should not be considered. Sometimes there are reasons for doing so but you should be aware that this practice could be found to have resulted in discrimination.

### Shortlisting

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Wherever possible, all members of the interview panel should be involved in the shortlisting process. If it is not possible for everyone to be present then panel members should send their recommendations to the chair of the panel, who will be responsible for collating the information and drawing up the shortlist. It would be helpful if all panel members had a copy of this section of the pack.

Shortlisting Checklist

#### DO

- ✓ Check all the applications and eliminate any that do not meet the essential criteria in the person specification.
- ✓ Identify any that declare a disability. Check whether the applicant meets the essential criteria in the person specification. It is good practice to include these applications in the shortlist even if there are other applicants who meet the desirable requirements of the specification more fully than the applicant who has a disability.

- ✓ Look for evidence that the applicant meets or appears to meet the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification.
- ✓ Keep a record of your decisions and rationale.
- ✓ Score applicants against the criteria in the person specification if there are more applicants who meet the criteria than you can interview. Rank the scores and invite the candidates in rank order to interview. A form is enclosed which may be used as a guide ([Appendix 6.1](#)).

## DO NOT

- ✗ Vary from the criteria in the person specification.
- ✗ Introduce new criteria at this stage.
- ✗ Be influenced by personal knowledge of an applicant, or by any personal details (for example, name, address, sex, or age).
- ✗ Exclude an applicant who declares a disability if the applicant meets the essential criteria in the person specification.
- ✗ Make assumptions from information given or not given in the application.
- ✗ Exclude an applicant who declares a conviction unless the conviction is relevant and a satisfactory disclosure has been specified in the person specification.

## Planning for the Interview

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Thought should be given to how the panel will assess candidates against the criteria that can be explored at interview. This may already have been described when the person specification was drawn up. It may be appropriate to supplement questions with other assessment techniques for example:

- Presentation
- In-tray exercise
- Typing or other kind of aptitude test

Aptitude tests must be relevant to the job and produce information that relates to one or more of the criteria in the specification. Tests must be administered and assessed to the same standard.

Intelligence tests should not be used.

There are two reasons for using a presentation:

- To allow the candidates to 'set out their stall' unrestricted by the interview structure.
- To assess presentation technique (only relevant if the ability to make presentations is referred to in the person specification).

The administrative arrangements should be considered: what rooms will be needed; who will be available to meet the candidates; how you will administer any tests to be used.

Candidates should be advised of the time, date and venue of the interview, where to report and how long to allow. It may be helpful to provide information about:

- The interview panel
- Car parking and bus services to the interview venue
- Whether expenses can be claimed
- What equipment is available if they are expected to give a presentation, and what the purpose of the presentation is
- The fact that they will be expected to do a test
- Any evidence of qualification or proof of identity which they should bring
- Any special needs regarding facilities, or, if food is to be provided, regarding dietary requirements

Panel members should be asked to convene 30 to 60 minutes before the first interview to ensure the panel has time to prepare for the interviews.

## **Applicants with a Criminal Record**

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An applicant who declares a criminal record during the application process should be given due consideration and not rejected out of hand. See Section 2, [Appendix 2.2](#): Guidelines for the Appointment of People with a Criminal Record and [Appendix 8.8](#): Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Unless the post is covered by the Church's policy on Safeguarding the applicant need not declare any convictions or cautions that are 'spent'.

If a candidate declares an unspent conviction the panel should assess the relevance of the conviction to the post. The panel may decide to interview the candidate and then explore the circumstances which led to the conviction or caution. The panel may decide to take up further references before reaching a decision, may decide to appoint subject to a longer probationary period or may decide the risk is not acceptable.