

Staff Recruitment and Development Policy

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Committee Approval

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The Staff Recruitment and Development Policy will be reviewed annually by the Document Lead. Any significant changes beyond the scope of an annual review will require the approval of the Board of Directors acting on recommendation from the Senior Management Team.

1. Introduction

Our continuing development and success is dependent on recruiting, engaging, developing and retaining staff who have the skills, knowledge, experience and dedication to deliver our Purpose and Values through our [Strategic Framework](#)¹. The Strategic Framework is developed through our [Annual Planning Cycle](#)².

This Policy provides a framework which supports equality of opportunity for job applicants and all our staff, and values the principles and requirements of our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)³ and the Equality Act 2010. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy affirms our commitment to ensuring that no applicant or appointee is discriminated against on the grounds of: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation.

Detailed guidance on staff recruitment within the Institute is provided in our [Staff Planning and Recruitment Guidelines](#).⁴

Section 2 of this Policy sets out our Purpose and Values.

Section 3 covers staff recruitment.

Section 4 covers our [Probationary Period Policy](#)⁵

Sections 5 and 6 cover our Strategic Framework and its link to our [Annual Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme](#)⁶ (ASADS).

Sections 7 to 9 cover staff development, how we support staff to engage in research, and how we support staff with a disability.

2. Our Purpose and Values

2.1 Purpose

Our Purpose is:

- Breaking down barriers together.

2.2 Values

Our Values are to:

- **Dare to be different.**
- **Make it happen.**
- **Don't be mean.**

¹ <https://lsbm.breathehr.com>

² <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

³ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

⁴ <https://lsbm.breathehr.com>

⁵ <https://lsbm.breathehr.com>

⁶ <https://lsbm.breathehr.com>

3. Staff recruitment

3.1 Job Description and Person Specification

A Job Description and Person Specification is produced or reviewed and, if necessary, updated for any vacant post that is to be filled. The Job Description sets out the main tasks of the job.

The Person Specification states the justifiable essential and desirable criteria in terms of qualifications, experience, skills and abilities, and personal qualities, all of which are directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Our Head of People and Development will review both the Job Description and Person Specification before finalisation in order to identify and address any issues that might prevent or deter people with a disability from applying for the job. The Head of People and Development's contact details are provided at the end of the Job Description should anyone need the documentation in a different format, to ask for support, to discuss any issues around reasonable adjustments, or to request a guaranteed interview (provided the conditions are satisfied; see **Section 3.3.1** below).

3.1.1 Pay grade

Each post will be allocated a pay grade that sets out the minimum and maximum salary for that particular post. Sessional Lecturers and other hourly paid staff are not attached to a pay grade.

Subject to financial performance, we have a non-contractual scheme whereby an employee will have their salary increased by one salary point on 1 October each year, until the maximum salary for the particular grade has been reached. This salary increase is conditional upon the employee having been employed before the previous 1 April in a permanent position and having a successful appraisal by the specified date – usually 30 September.

A successful appraisal requires the following:

- the appraisal documentation has been signed by both the appraiser and appraisee and uploaded to the appraisee's HR Online account
- the employee has completed all compulsory training and met any other specified requirements; and
- there are no causes of concern recorded by the appraiser within the appraisal.

3.2 Advertising

Posts will be advertised by the Head of People and Development in such media that are appropriate to the audience, that are likely to produce the best candidates (subject to budget considerations) and that will encourage applications from all sectors of the community, thereby reflecting our commitment to equality and diversity. All adverts will include the following statement: *We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer*. Some advertisements may also reference that we are under-represented in particular groups of individuals in specific areas of our Institute.

Details will also be posted on our website.

At the discretion of the Principal and Chief Executive Officer (or nominee), some posts will *only* be advertised internally, in order to provide staff with opportunities for career development. If a post is only advertised internally, the Head of People and Development will circulate an email to all staff with details of the post.

3.3 Applications

Applications are made by submission of a letter of application and CV. Within the letter of application and CV, applicants should set out how they satisfy the essential criteria (and, if applicable, any desirable criteria) as set out in the Person Specification and should set out their competence to undertake the

tasks associated with the post as set out in the Job Description. In addition, all applicants are requested to complete a confidential online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will not be shared with the selection panel. Completion of this form will enable us to monitor the effectiveness of our policy and related procedures.

Within the spirit of our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)⁷ and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010, we do not ask applicants any questions about health or disability during the application and selection process. However, this is subject to the following exception:

- Where an applicant is shortlisted for interview and if, because of a short or long-term health condition or disability, require any reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to participate fully in the selection process, they should be asked to advise the Head of People and Development. Any information received, and any reasonable adjustments made, will only be shared with the selection panel should this be essential in order to fulfil the reasonable adjustment(s).

If an applicant is offered a post and the CV and / or detail within the letter of application does not contain their full career history for the three-year period prior to submitting their application, the conditional offer will include an additional condition whereupon the applicant will be asked to provide satisfactory details (and evidence, if necessary) of such gaps, which we acknowledge may occur for a variety of reasons. This is only undertaken after an applicant has been offered a post to ensure any gap which is due to health or disability does not have to be disclosed at an earlier stage.

3.3.1 Guaranteed Interview Scheme for applicants with a disability

We actively encourage applications from persons with a disability.

If an applicant with a disability⁸ meets the essential criteria for the job (as set out within the Person Specification), they will be provided with the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at an interview under our Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

In order to request a guaranteed interview, an applicant is required to contact the Head of People and Development, providing sufficient information to indicate that they satisfy the definition of 'disability' as set out in the Equality Act 2010⁹. The Head of People and Development will then follow the ongoing procedure noted below and any necessary communication with the applicant.

When the shortlisting has been completed, the shortlisting panel will provide the Head of People and Development with a list of all applicants: (i) who satisfy the essential criteria; and (ii) who have been shortlisted. The Head of People and Development will inform the shortlisting panel if an applicant who has not been shortlisted qualifies for a guaranteed interview (because the applicant has a disability and satisfies the essential criteria). No details of the applicant's disability will be disclosed to the shortlisting panel. The Head of People and Development will inform all applicants who have made a request for a guaranteed interview of the outcome of the request as follows: (i) selected for interview without considering the applicant's request for a guaranteed interview; (ii) selected for interview on the basis of the applicant's request for a guaranteed interview because the applicant satisfied all essential criteria set out in the Person Specification; or (iii) not selected for interview on the basis of the applicant's request for a guaranteed interview because the applicant did not satisfy all essential criteria set out in the Person Specification.

⁷ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

⁸ Disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as being: a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities. 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial, e.g. if it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed, this would be considered 'substantial'. 'Long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

⁹ See Footnote 1.

3.3.2 Criminal convictions

Criminal offence information is personal data and cannot be processed unless there is a lawful basis for doing so. We will only request information about an applicant's criminal convictions if and to the extent that the information can be justified in terms of the particular role being offered. Where a post involves working with children (i.e. below the age of 18), and if an offer of employment is made for such a position, the conditional offer made will include a condition for the provision of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate (Children's Barred list).

If any convictions are disclosed on the certificate, we would make an assessment to determine whether the convictions are such that, from a safeguarding perspective, the applicant could put the wellbeing of our students or staff in danger. If such a certificate is required, we will refund the certificate fee to the applicant. We will make clear in any job description and advertisement whether this exception applies. Currently, the enhanced DBS only applies to posts within our Disability and Wellbeing support team. Standard DBS checks also apply to staff within our Compliance function who are engaged in immigration matters.

3.3.3 Shortlisting

A decision on whether or not to shortlist an applicant is an open and fair one based exclusively on the information contained in the applicant's application. An assessment is made initially against the essential criteria in the Person Specification. If too many applicants satisfy the essential criteria, an assessment is then made against the desirable criteria in order to determine the shortlist.

To avoid any possible personal bias, shortlisting will be carried out by at least two people and one of these will normally be the Line Manager to which the successful applicant will report. However, when determining shortlisting (and selection) panels, due consideration will also be given to the promotion of equality and diversity.

3.4 Selection process

We will provide appropriate training, development and support (as necessary) to those involved in the recruitment and selection process. As a minimum, all such staff are required to have completed our internal interview training, Equality and Diversity training, Unconscious Bias training, and to have read our Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes. As stated in our [Staff Relationships Policy](#)¹⁰, if a member of staff has a close personal or familial relationship with a job applicant, it would be necessary for them to avoid any involvement in the recruitment / selection process, for example, as a member of an interview panel or acting as a referee.

The primary selection process is an interview, the format of which will be the same for all candidates. Similarly, the same core interview questions will be consistently applied to all and will be based solely on the selection criteria. This ensures that all applicants are given the same opportunity to demonstrate that they are the best candidate for the post.

In addition, depending upon the post, a shortlisted applicant may be required to make a presentation and/or complete other forms of assessment.

Where the Head of People and Development receives information from an applicant advising that they have a disability, we will make reasonable adjustments as necessary to the interview (and, if applicable, the presentation and/or test/exercise) process.

3.5 Pre-employment checks

We normally make conditional offers for employment. The following condition(s) are included in any employment situation:

¹⁰ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

3.5.1 Right to work check

At the outset of recruitment onboarding, right to work checks will be completed. The Head of People and Development will manage checks and will seek advice where necessary from the Compliance team to ensure that the Institute fully complies with UKVI immigration and right to work requirements. The Compliance Manager has full responsibility for Sponsored Worker compliance matters [the Skilled Worker route].

3.5.2 References

The conditional offer will include a condition for the reference(s) to be deemed satisfactory. Two references are normally required, one of which will be from the current or most recent employer. For hourly paid staff, for example Sessional Lecturers and Invigilators, we will seek two references but provided a satisfactory reference is received for the current or most recent employer, this will satisfy the condition within the offer. References are only requested after an applicant is offered a position and has accepted the offer.

3.5.3 Other pre-employment checks

In addition, for both academic (including Sessional Lecturers) and professional services staff (but excluding casual hourly paid staff such as Invigilators), we attach a further condition for the company to receive a copy or copies of the qualification(s) certificate(s) that satisfies the requirement under "Essential Criteria" (and, where this becomes necessary from the shortlisting exercise, also to satisfy the "Desirable Criteria") within the Job Description and Person Specification. Additionally, to satisfy statutory data reporting requirements, we will also require academic staff to provide certificated proof of their highest qualification together with certificated proof of any higher education teaching qualifications where held.

3.5.4 Non-standard checks

The following checks will be made in limited circumstances:

- Pre-employment medical clearance. In some circumstances we may require a candidate made a conditional offer of employment to also complete pre-employment medical clearance with our Occupational Health Provider.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced checks (Children's Barred List). Currently, the only posts that are relevant to this condition are within our Disability and Wellbeing support team.
- DBS Standard checks. Currently, the only relevant posts are within our Compliance team.
- Obtaining proof to support identified employment gaps.

3.6 Complaints

Any selection or appointment decision made is final and cannot be challenged. Any complaints made can only be in relation to the processes followed and should be sent to the Head of People and Development (antony.charles@bil.ac.uk) for review. This review can only result in possible changes to processes and not a change in selection or appointment decisions.

4. Probationary Period Policy

Our [Probationary Period Policy](#)¹¹ notes that all newly appointed employees (with the exception of Sessional Lecturers or other hourly paid workers) are normally subject to a probationary period of six months.

Our policy allows both the new employee and their manager to objectively assess the employee's suitability for the role. The Institute believes that probationary periods increase the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.

The aim of the policy is to provide a clear framework for managers and new employees to assess the employee's capability, reliability and suitability for a post, as well as setting clear expectations for the employment relationship.

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that all new employees are effectively monitored and supported during their probationary period, and that any issues are addressed promptly in consultation with the Head of People and Development, as required.

5. Annual Staff Appraisals and Development Scheme (ASADS)

All staff participate in an Annual Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme. Staff reflect on their performance over the current year, set targets for the next year, and identify any staff development needs to enable them to achieve their targets. Individual targets align with the Strategic Goals and Outcomes set out within the Strategic Framework. Reviews are undertaken to discuss progress and to identify any further staff development needs.

6. Staff development

We are committed to the development of all our staff to ensure each can play their part in enhancing our students' educational experience. Individual staff development needs are identified through the ASADS (see **Section 5** above). Our commitment to staff development is evidenced by the following:

- all our staff participate in an Annual Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme which includes the completion of a Personal Development Plan to inform on developmental and training needs for the coming year
- as a member of Advance HE, we support our academic staff to achieve individual membership of the HEA either through the individual recognition route (for experienced academics) or by completion of a HEA-accredited teaching and learning qualification
- we have developed and are delivering a Bloomsbury Institute Fellowship Programme (In-Bloom) which has been accredited by Advance HE. This Fellowship Programme will provide:
 - professional services staff who support teaching and learning with a route to achieving HEA Associate Fellowship
 - academic staff who do not have a relevant teaching qualification or prior teaching experience with a route to achieving HEA Fellowship
 - academic staff who have prior teaching experience with a route to achieving HEA Fellowship

¹¹ <https://lsbm.breathehr.com>

- Advance HE provide staff development and training opportunities for all our staff
- staff within our Registry Division and Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success are supported to become active members of the Association of University Administrators
- our [Peer Observation of Teaching Scheme](#)¹² provides our academic staff with a confidential development activity which has a clear link to the improvement and enhancement of the student experience
- our academic staff may be required to participate in our [Managed Observation of Teaching Guidance](#)¹³ primarily for development purposes
- all our academic staff are required to engage in scholarship to ensure they have an up-to-date and current knowledge of their discipline, with appropriate breadth and depth to enable them to create high-quality experiences for our students
- we provide comprehensive internal staff development and training opportunities for all our staff
- we provide all permanent staff with an annual £500 allowance (£250 for permanent staff on a contract of less than 0.5 FTE) to enable them to attend external staff development and training events
- we normally convene an Annual Teaching and Learning Conference which all our staff are encouraged to attend and also to present a paper
- we ensure that new staff are properly onboarded and tailor induction programmes according to the needs of a role.

7. Research

Our Research Strategy 2023-26¹⁴ sets out three Research Goals and Objectives, and our definitions of research and scholarship, impact and research environment.

Our Research Strategy places the development and empowerment of our staff and students at its core in supporting their efforts to engage in research. This helps us to ensure that we retain and continue to recruit highly qualified, experienced and motivated members of staff who recognise and embrace the importance of research-informed teaching to enhance the student experience.

Whilst we recognise that most of the research activity will be undertaken by our academic staff, our Research Strategy will create an environment that encourages and supports all staff members to engage in research that has internal and/or external impact.

We recognise that being research active is something that takes time to achieve' and staff need to be provided with opportunities to start their research journey. As such, this strategy outlines the support we give to new researchers as well as that provided to those with more experience.

¹² <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

¹³ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

¹⁴ <https://www.bil.ac.uk/qem/policies/>

8. Staff with a disability

We are committed to providing a working environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff. As a [Disability Confident Employer](#)¹⁵ and a [Mindful Employer](#)¹⁶ we are aware, therefore, of our responsibilities in terms of making reasonable adjustments in support of disability equality. Adjustments might involve changes to working patterns, adaptations to premises or equipment and provision of support packages etc.

Should a staff member develop a disability whilst employed with us, or should an existing disability or health condition worsen, we will make every effort to enable them to continue in their current job or, where possible, an alternative one. Staff should, where possible, make their line manager aware of their conditions so that appropriate adjustments can be made and, if appropriate, medical opinion sought.

Staff responsible for running any internal training events are required to ask staff to provide details of any special requirements they might have so that these can be taken into account when designing and delivering the training. The Head of People and Development is available to provide advice on alternative delivery methods, the best format for handouts etc. and, additionally, there is an Accessibility Module available on our Canvas VLE.

Our [Staff Disability Policy](#)¹⁷ provides full information on our policy and procedures.

9. Related policies and procedures

- Annual Planning Cycle
- Annual Staff Appraisal and Development Scheme
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Research Strategy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Strategic Framework
- Staff Relationships Policy
- Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes
- Probationary Period Policy
- Performance Improvement Procedure
- Staff Disability Policy

¹⁵ The Disability Confident Scheme aims to help employers make the most of the opportunities provided by employing people with a disability. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>

¹⁶ Bloomsbury Institute has signed up to the Mindful Employer Charter. See <https://www.mindfulemployer.dpt.nhs.uk/>

¹⁷ <https://lsbm.breathethr.com>

10. Review

The Staff Recruitment and Development Policy will be reviewed annually by the Document Lead. Any significant changes beyond the scope of an annual review will require the approval of the Board of Directors acting on recommendation from the Senior Management Team.