

**Interim HR Guidance**

**Supplementary Covid19 Recruitment Guidance**

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| Version Control | Changes Made | Author |
| Version 1  May 2020 | Interim guidance to support recruitment practices during the COIVD19 outbreak | People Management |
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Introduction

The Covid19 outbreak and social distancing rules presents a number of challenges to the traditional methods for recruitment, appointment and induction. The temporary measures, set out in this interim guidance, will allow CCC to respect the social distancing measures currently in place by central government (commencing March 2020) whilst allowing us to recruit to roles across the organisation.

This guidance is supplementary to the existing recruitment, appointment and induction procedures in place. This guidance will be reviewed on a regular basis and as new guidelines emerge from central government around social distancing.

**Timescales and Essential Recruitment Only**

During the Covid19 outbreak it is possible that services may experience delays to the recruitment and appointment process.

HR01’s should continue to be submitted for authorisation in the normal way, to your DMTs / SMTs.

Recruitment teams will continue to process as many vacancies as possible. However if a delay is likely, this will be communicated with the respective DMT / SMT. The approved HR01 will then be placed in a priority queue which will be reviewed on a weekly basis, with the aim to get as many HR01’s processed as possible.

If delays are expected, vacancies will be processed in the following priority order:

1. The post is key to the Covid 19 emergency response or recovery
2. An ongoing vacancy poses a risk to the delivery of statutory duties
3. The post is dependent on funding that may be at risk if the vacancy is not filled
4. The post relates to an apprenticeship, or a career pathway for an apprentice

All vacancies must continue to be advertised through the proper means, via the service centre application and HR01 processes. Recruiting managers must not ask for “expressions of interests” from groups of employees in order to generate applicants for internal vacancies. Expressions of interest can only be sought where there is an opportunity for a pool of employees to undertake short term acting up responsibilities under formal acting up arrangements.

**Assessment Methods**

Social distancing guidance should be adhered to at all times. Assessment methods, including shortlisting, interviewing, technical assessments etc. should not take place in person, unless there is no other option. Instead, technology, such as video conferencing or tele-conferencing should be used to assess a candidate’s suitability.

In such circumstances where it is absolutely necessary to undertake a face to face interview in person, a risk assessment should be carried out and clear guidance provided to the candidate on what to expect and any prior preparations to be made etc.

Reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities will continue to be considered in the normal way, on a case by case basis.

It is important that on-line interviews are still conducted in a professional manner and scored in line with our usual procedures.

Video conferencing interviews are the preferred assessment method- this is especially the case where the role holds a safeguarding responsibility. Video conferencing allows the recruiting manager to “put a face to the name” and verify the new employee when they commence work on day 1.

Telephone interviews should be undertaken where video conferencing is not possible.

**Technology and troubleshooting issues**

Video Conferencing via Skype/Microsoft Teams should be used. Zoom conferencing can be used as a last resort.

Recruiting managers have the responsibility in checking what technology the candidates have access to prior to the interview and ensuring that they and all panel members are familiar with how to use this technology, have a good connection and have a quiet environment, free from interruptions where the on-line interview can take place.

Presentations can be delivered via skype or Microsoft Teams through the “share screen” facility. Presentations should only take place if all candidates have the technology that allows them to be undertaken.

If technology issues are experienced during the interview, interviews can be rearranged for another time if needed. Alternatively, telephone interviews /conference calls can be used, although this should only be used as a last resort.

**Video Conference Interviews**

When conducting a virtual interview via video conferencing all panel members should:

1. Pick a quiet, well-lit location that is free from distractions
2. Test and gain confidence in the technology being used, seeking advice where needed prior to the interview
3. Dress appropriately and as you would if this was an interview taking place in person.
4. Prepare for potential connectivity / technology issues by planning in extra time, having alternative arrangements and the candidate’s number to hand.
5. Mute your microphone when not speaking to reduce distractions for the candidate.
6. Turn off distracting or noisy background apps that may make alert noises during the interview

**Second Interview**

Recruiting managers may wish to undertake more than 1 interview when assessing candidates via these means. Second interviews do not need to take place with all originally shortlisted candidates. Instead, they should take place only with those candidates that scored highly during the first round of interview.

The second interview questions can be designed around the areas the panel wish to assess further following the first interview. However, interview questions should be consistent for all candidates, ensuring that everyone is assessed against the same questions and criteria.

**Arranging start dates and inducting New Employees**

It is important to ensure that new starters continue to be welcomed and inducted properly into the organisation and into their new role.

Whilst each role is different, a good induction in the current climate needs to balance the need to maintain social distancing measures and the need to welcome and integrate the new employee into their role and working environment. It is envisaged that new starters will work from both home and office / workplace during their introductory weeks.

Before agreeing a start date with new employees, it is essential that recruiting managers must ensure there is the capacity available within the building for the new starter and their line manager / colleague to physically work together during the introductory weeks. It is imperative that the number of people within buildings is kept at a safe level and therefore recruiting managers should contact the property team if they are unsure about the capacity available or arrangements at the relevant office / work location.

All other Induction arrangements, such as the ordering of ICT etc., must be in place before the candidate is due to start. Line managers must ensure that they allow sufficient time for equipment to be in place before a candidate starts.

At all times during an employee’s induction, social distancing measures must be adhered to. Line managers may need to consider delaying start dates if a proper induction cannot be undertaken, for example due to building or colleague availability.

Line managers must carefully consider and plan a new recruit’s induction, allowing time for training, integration into the team, the office environment and systems. It is also important to build in time to discuss and support the new employee’s wellbeing. Some may find integrating into a new organisation is more difficult when done virtually, or have feelings of isolation in a new job. It is important to ensure that new employees are engaged and get both the job and wellbeing support they need during this time.