

## **Appointment to Headship of College**

### **1. Introduction**

*1.1. Objective of procedures.* The overarching objective of these appointment procedures is to enhance the manner in which appointments are made in order to attract, recruit and retain high-calibre candidates. The position of Head of College has an important leadership role in regard to the development of the subject and its representation both inside and outside the University.

*1.2 Application of Regulation.* These procedures shall apply for all Head of College appointments.

*1.3. Initiation of the process.* The appointment process will be initiated during the academic year prior to the expiry of the term of office of a Head of College or when a vacancy otherwise arises.

*1.4. Eligibility for Appointment.* Eligibility shall be in line with required skills/competencies as outlined in Appendix 1

*1.5 Principles of equality and diversity.* The setting of selection criteria, short-listing, interviewing, and selection shall, in general, follow the recommendations set out in the document *Non-Discriminatory Interview Practice: Recommendations for Interviews*, and shall be conducted in a manner compliant with the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004 and other relevant legislation. No candidate shall be discriminated against on any of the nine grounds mentioned in legislation, i.e. Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability, or Membership of the Traveller Community.

### **2. The Selection Committee (“the Committee”)**

*2.1. Introduction.* A single committee will oversee the appointment throughout the entire process of search, advertising, and short-listing to final interview and assessment. The appointment process will be initiated during the academic year prior to the expiry of the term of office of a Head of College or when a vacancy otherwise arises. On receiving confirmation that the post has been approved for staffing, the Department of Human Resources shall request a list of members of the Selection Committee (other than the Chair) from the President.

*2.2. Composition.* The President or nominee shall Chair the Selection Committee. A nominee may only be appointed by the President to Chair a Selection Committee where such nominee has completed a training programme for Selection Committee Chairs provided by the Human Resources Department.

Ordinarily the President shall Chair all meetings of the Selection Committee.

The other members shall include:

- Registrar
- Bursar/Chief Financial Officer
- Vice President for Research and Innovation
- Vice President for Teaching and Learning
- Up to four members of the relevant College, representative of the breadth of the academic areas within the College.

- One external member of Governing Body
- Two external academic members with experience relevant to the College nominated by the President
- Director of Human Resources
- Human Resources Representative (in attendance, see below)

*2.3. Equality, diversity and conflict of interest.* The composition of the Selection Committee shall reflect the University's commitment to principles of equality and diversity. Gender representation in particular must be achieved on the Selection Committee. The University's *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions* shall apply to all members of the Committee, both internal and external.

*2.4. Selection of internal members.* Representation from within the relevant College will be nominated by the College as follows:

For the **College of Science, Engineering and Food Science**, this representation shall include one member from each of the existing three faculties.

For the **College of Business and Law**, this representation shall include at least one member from each of the existing two faculties.

For the **College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences**, the membership shall include at least one member from Arts and Celtic Studies and one from Social Sciences.

For the **College of Medicine and Health**, the membership shall consist of representatives drawn from amongst the five schools.

Internal members of the Committee should consult the University *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions* in relation to being cited as a referee for any of the candidates.

*2.5. Additional members.* In exceptional circumstances an additional school representative may be added subject to approval by the University Management Team (Operations).

*2.6. External Assessors: Selection.* External Assessors shall be identified at the commencement of the process, in advance of finalising the selection criteria and the commencement of advertising and search. A list of at least six names of possible External Assessors including a detailed biography shall be provided to the President for ranking by the relevant College. The Human Resources Department will then be informed as to the ranked listing of nominated External Assessors by the President, prior to the first meeting of the Committee taking place.

*2.7. Chairperson: Role.* The role of the Chairperson is to ensure the overall integrity of the recruitment and selection process. The Chairperson shall lead the short-listing and interview process, including the introduction of candidates to the Selection Committee and the explanation of procedures. In particular the Chairperson shall ensure that sufficient feedback is recorded in respect of unsuccessful candidates at both short-listing and interview. Appendix 3 of the *Regulation on Appointment to Professorial Posts* outlines in detail the role of the Chairperson.

**2.8. Selection Committee: Role.** The role of the members of the Selection Committee is to ensure that all candidates are impartially and objectively assessed against the selection criteria for the post at both short-listing and interview. At interview the members of the Selection Committee should ask each candidate the same set of core questions to provide a consistent basis for comparison. The Selection Committee is at liberty having posed the core questions to ask whatever follow on questions it deems appropriate in accordance with this policy. All candidates should be treated in an equal and uniform manner consistent with the *Principles of equality and diversity* as set out above.

Selection Committee members shall at the time of invitation be given details of the University's *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions*. In particular a Selection Committee member with a conflict of interest **must** declare so both at short-listing and (if relevant) interview. Thereafter the provisions in relation to conflict of interest will apply. The attached Appendix 3 outlines in detail the role of Selection Committee members.

**2.9. External Assessors: Role.** The role of external assessors is as objective specialists, who advise the Committee during the process, including review of the documentation prior to advertising and other pre-advertising activity, and participating in the assessment of candidates at both short-listing and interview stage. Ordinarily, at least one of the two external assessors should be internationally based. The external assessors shall be at full professorial level within their own institutions.

External assessors shall at the time of invitation be given details of the University's *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions*. In particular, they shall be advised that **they shall not be referees of any candidates**. Appendix 3 of the *Regulation on Appointment to Professorial Posts* outlines in detail the role of External Assessors.

**2.10. Human Resources Representative: Role.** The role of the Human Resources Representative shall be to provide advice and support to the Committee, to ensure fairness and equity in the conduct of the overall process, to provide advice and support in the application of procedures and relevant legislation governing recruitment and selection, and to act as a conduit between the Committee and the Department of Human Resources. The HR Representative shall raise any matters of concern regarding the conduct of the recruitment process with the Chair in the first instance. If concerns persist, the HR Representative will raise the matters at issue with the Director of Human Resources.

The HR Representative shall attend all Selection Committee short-listing meetings. The HR representative will, prior to the commencement of interviews, brief the members of the Selection Committee on policy, procedures, relevant legislation, scoring, format of questions and will be available throughout the course of the process in a support and advisory role. The HR representative will be available to advise the Chairperson on matters relating to the operation of these regulations and on any other relevant matters.

Appendix 3 of the *Regulation on Appointment to Professorial Posts* outlines in detail the role of the HR representative.

**2.11. Training.** With effect from the date of approval of this regulation any individual nominated as Chair of a Selection Committee must have participated in training in Recruitment and Selection for Chairs of Selection Committees, as delivered by the Department of Human Resources. With effect from one year from the date of approval of this regulation at least 50% of the internal members of the Committee must have participated in training in Recruitment and Selection for

Members of Selection Committees, as delivered by the Department of Human Resources. With effect from two years from the date of approval of this regulation 100% of the internal members of the Committee must have participated in the relevant training.

### **3. Responsibilities: pre-advertising stage**

*3.1. Documentation for advertising.* The Committee shall prepare and agree the documentation for advertising including the advertisement, Candidate Information Pack and particulars of post which detail the responsibilities of post and person specification/selection criteria. See Appendix 1 The particulars of post **must state both essential and desirable criteria** for appointment to the role.

*3.2. Additional materials.* The Committee shall agree other materials to be included in the Candidate Information Pack; these may include a profile of the relevant College, data relating to specialised areas of research activity, reports, plans etc., and any other relevant and appropriate information which may be useful in attracting high calibre candidates to apply for the post. The Department of Human Resources shall make information available to candidates in relation to Cork and available relocation support. All of the foregoing shall be included in the Candidate Information Pack.

*3.3. Advertising and search strategy.* The Committee shall agree the advertising strategy and search strategy. The purpose of the search strategy is to optimise the range, diversity and quality of applications, and shall require the Committee to consider, document and carry out search methods which go beyond the normal advertising processes, prior to advertising. The strategy will vary for each competition, and may include:

- notifying relevant academic contacts, professional and discipline associations and advertising in their newsletters, websites, at conferences etc.;
- identifying suitable print and web resources in countries which the University wishes to target;
- seeking expert knowledge from existing and former staff members as to the sourcing of candidates;
- identifying potential candidates or individuals who may assist in the process within such groups as extern examiners (present and past), senior alumni, former visitors, presenters of conference papers, conference/forum participants;
- engaging a specialist recruitment agency to identify appropriate candidates where this is considered advantageous;
- contacting external experts in the area to identify potential candidates; and searching online for potential candidates.

The report of the first meeting of the Committee shall detail the search strategy to be adopted. Committee members will be tasked with assisting with different elements of the search, and the Department of Human Resources can assist with particular aspects of the search e.g. contacting identified potential candidates to advise them of the forthcoming vacancy. Where possible, when vacancies are identified, advertising and search should take place at the earliest opportunity, thus ensuring that the University can compete for high calibre international candidates.

*3.4. Settling dates.* The Committee shall agree closing dates and (where possible) indicative dates for short-listing and interview. This information shall be made available to candidates in the particulars of post, if agreed in advance of advertising. The time period between advertisement

and closing date shall be of at least 6-8 weeks duration, to assist in ensuring that vacancy information reaches the widest possible audience. In exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the Director of Human Resources the time period between advertisement and closing date may be 4 weeks duration.

*3.5. Settling of criteria.* The Committee shall agree a process in relation to the verification of publications and other relevant criteria in relation to each application received.

*3.6. Report.* The criteria meeting may take place via email, but in the event that a physical meeting takes place, the Committee shall prepare a short report (Criteria Meeting Report) on the decisions made at the pre-advertising meeting in relation to advertising and search strategy, in addition to confirmation as to the additional documentation which shall be made available to candidates in the further particulars of post. In the event that the criteria meeting takes place via email, the email correspondence shall serve as the Criteria Meeting Report.

*3.7 Canvassing.* Candidates for a position may be advised, on request, as to the membership of the Selection Committee. However, canvassing, i.e., making an approach to secure an unfair advantage, or any other form of interference in the process by a candidate, will lead to disqualification. It is entirely reasonable for candidates to seek information about the University, school or department and it follows that candidates who wish to make inquiries about the University prior to interview should be facilitated. Where this facility is offered, it must be made available to all candidates both internal and external. However, this contact is not in any sense part of the selection procedure and care must be taken to ensure that individuals are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by the contact. It must be remembered that the interaction has no formal standing and no impression formed as a result of the contact should be made available to the rest of the Selection Committee. A decision to exclude a candidate under this provision shall be made by the Director of Human Resources following consultation with the Chair of the Selection Committee.

*3.8. Informal Enquiries.* Candidates will apply in writing to the President. Informal enquiries about an application can be made to the President.

#### **4. Responsibilities: short-listing stage**

*4.1. Shortlist.* The Committee shall short-list candidates for interview (normally a maximum of six candidates per post). Advertisements for the post and the post details will notify candidates that late applications will not be accepted. Applications received after the advertised closing date and time for the position will not be considered by the Committee. A reserve list may be made to include candidates who meet the criteria but who are ranked below the top ranked candidates.

*4.2. Re-advertise.* In the context of a limited field of suitable applications the Committee may decide, for the robustness and validity of the process, to attract a wider field of candidates through extending the advertising period or re-advertising the position. Any candidates shortlisted prior to re-advertisement will be included as a shortlisted candidate for the re-advertised position.

*4.3. Dates.* The Committee shall finalise seminar and interview dates.

*4.4. Seminar arrangements.* Any seminar will be conducted as part of the interview process. The Committee shall decide at short-listing whether to:

(a) hold a seminar which would include an audience of the academic staff of the College;  
(b) hold a seminar which would be made to members of the Selection Committee only; or (c) decline to hold a seminar.

If (a) or (b) are chosen all Selection Committee members must attend the seminar presentation. If (a) is chosen the seminar audience may ask questions as part of the seminar process but may not provide feedback to members of the Selection Committee and members of the Selection Committee must not discuss the seminars with any of the audience other than other members of the Selection Committee.

The Committee shall agree details of seminar including the title, nature and subject duration.

*4.5. Contact with College/Campus Visits.* The Committee shall agree the name of appropriate College contact for candidates wishing to visit the College prior to interviews. Short-listed candidates shall be offered an opportunity to visit the relevant College prior to interview to meet relevant staff of the University. There will also be an opportunity for those short-listed candidates to be given a guided tour of the campus and meet with relevant University staff, which shall be arranged via the Department of Human Resources.

*4.6. Report.* The Committee shall prepare a short report (Shortlist Meeting Report) on the outcome of the short-listing process. As part of the Report all members of the Selection Committee shall sign specifically to confirm compliance with the University *Code of Conflict of Interest in Relation to Recruitment and Promotions*.

The Shortlist Meeting Report shall specify in respect of each unsuccessful candidate the areas in which the Selection Committee deemed the candidate did not meet the essential criteria for the post.

## **5. Responsibilities: Selection stage**

*5.1. Consistency of process.* For consistency, all short-listed candidates should experience the same assessment process. While the selection process will generally consist of seminar and interview the Selection Committee may at its discretion require such other assessment techniques as it deems necessary (such as workshops/psychometric testing), provided such assessment applies to all short-listed candidates.

*5.2. Attendance of Reserve Candidates.* So as to ensure consistency of assessment any invitation to a reserve candidate for attendance at seminar and interview shall issue no later than 10 days prior to the scheduled date for the commencement of seminars and interview. This should allow sufficient time for candidate preparation and travel, as well as the collation of employment references.

*5.3. Seminar & Interview Attendance.* Ideally short-listed candidates should attend in person for interview. In exceptional circumstances where a short-listed candidate through no fault of his/her own is unable to travel, or where decided in advance by the Selection Committee, a video conference *may* be facilitated subject to the agreement of the Selection Committee. Such facilitation will be subject to the video conference facilities being compatible with University systems in operation at the time of interview. In no circumstances will assessment via telephone only be allowable.

In the event that an individual interviewed via video conference is recommended for appointment,

then s/he will be required to attend in person for a second interview in advance of any formal offer of appointment being made.

*5.4. Seminar: Format and attendance.* Candidates shall ordinarily be requested to give a presentation with an opportunity for questioning from the members of the Selection Committee. [See 4.4 above re the discretion of the Selection Committee.] The format of the seminar can be amended subject to the requirements of the post. The notification of interview to the candidate will include details of any seminar requirements. Where a seminar is required it **must** be scored however the Committee shall have full discretion as to the weighting of the score.

*5.5. References.* References for candidates for interview will be requested by the Department of Human Resources prior to interview. Where possible such requests will include the current employer. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that references are received in advance of interviews. Where members of the Selection Committee are nominated as a referee, a candidate will be advised that only one member of the Committee may provide a reference. In the event that a Selection Committee member (excluding the external assessor(s)) decides to provide a reference, such a reference may only be factual in content and cannot recommend the candidate for appointment. Under no circumstances may an external assessor provide a reference for a candidate. References shall be considered by the Committee as a distinct part of its deliberations but shall not be scored.

Following completion of the interview process and the identification of the most preferred candidate, any offer of appointment will be subject to receipt by the Department of Human Resources of a satisfactory verbal reference from the candidate's current employer a note of which shall be recorded in the recruitment file.

*5.6. Interview.* The Committee shall conduct interviews and apply other relevant assessment methods to acquire information relevant to work-related requirements. At the outset of the interview process and before any candidate presents for interview, the Committee shall decide on which criteria are to be scored and the relative weighting of each criterion. **The full Committee shall participate in each interview.**

At the commencement of the Interview process each member of the Selection Committee shall sign the relevant section of the Interview Report indicating that they have no conflict of interest [as defined in University Policy] to declare with regard to any of the candidates.

The Committee may conduct a second interview, where following the first interview and seminar process, it is agreed by the Committee that there is a necessity to conduct a further assessment of all or a number of the candidates previously interviewed.

Members of the Selection Committee may record notes during interview of each candidate so as to assist in recall and discussion for the purposes of decision making at the completion of the interview process. After each interview the Selection Committee members should assign a silent score to a candidate. Such notes and scores will not form part of the final record of the Selection Committee decision and will be shredded once the final consensus decision of the Selection Committee is recorded in the Interview Report.

Appointable candidates shall be scored relative to the criteria agreed by the Selection Committee. A scoring sheet shall be available to the Committee but only scoring on 'Overall Match with Job Description' shall be mandatory. Both the inclusion of a criterion and its relative weighting in the scoring process shall be at the discretion of the Committee. While educational qualifications may be

scored, no weighting shall apply to the conferring institutions. Where the Committee determines that a candidate is not appointable, a score will not be recorded, but detailed feedback will be.

*5.7. Report.* The Committee shall prepare a report (Interview Report) on their proceedings. The report shall include a record of the rationale used to determine their final recommendation(s). Members of the Selection Committee shall sign the report indicating agreement with the recommendation of the Committee and confirming that they have no conflict of interest [as defined in University Policy] to declare with regard to any of the candidates.

A recommendation (appointable or not appointable) must be made in respect of each candidate interviewed. Consensus scores will be recorded for appointable candidates only and meaningful feedback will be recorded in respect of all candidates. Recommendations from the Committee for appointment to any position must be based on the specific competition and any additional appointment may only be made where more than one position has been advertised. The report shall be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources for sign off and subsequently to the President for approval. Appointment to the position of Head of College is also subject to the approval of Governing Body.

In the event that an individual interviewed via video conference is recommended for appointment, then s/he will be required to attend in person for a second interview in advance of any formal offer of appointment being made.

*5.8. Notifications.* While the deliberations of a Selection Committee are confidential, the Committee must, prior to the conclusion of its deliberations, nominate a member to advise internal candidates verbally of the outcome of its deliberations. Such communication should make it clear that the recommendation of the Committee is subject to the relevant approvals. In all cases where informal notification is provided, such notification must be provided to all internal candidates. On approval of the Committee report, the Department of Human Resources shall formally notify the most preferred candidate of the outcome of the interview process, noting that any recommendation is subject to receipt of satisfactory references and the approval of Governing Body. Unsuccessful interviewees and alternate appointees are formally notified of the competition result as soon as possible following ratification of the Committee's report. The outcome of the appointment process shall be published on the University Human Resources webpage.

*5.9. Appointment.* Appointment shall be subject to the provision of satisfactory employment references, successful completion of a medical (where relevant), the verification of qualifications and the approval of Governing Body. An offer of appointment subject to the approval of Governing Body, which shall contain details of salary and commencement date, shall issue from Human Resources to the most preferred candidate.

*5.10. Recourse to Competition.* In the event that the most preferred candidate is unable to take up the appointment, or in the event that the candidate appointed resigns the position or is assigned to a new position within a 12 month period from the date of final interview, the competition is considered to be valid for a 12 month period from the date of final interview. In either event, the University may, at its absolute discretion make an offer to the next ranked candidate, provided such offer is made prior to the completion of 12 months from the date of final interview.