

**UNIVERSITIES ACT 1997**

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK –  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, CORK**

***REGULATION***

*on*

***APPOINTMENT TO SENIOR RESEARCH POSTS***

*adopted by the Governing Body at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016*

*by virtue of the Universities Act, 1997, ss 18(2) and 25(1)*

*and Principal Statute B.5.b and F.1.a*

## ***Appointment to SENIOR RESEARCH Posts***

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## **1. Introduction**

*1.1. Objective and remit 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 to senior research positions. For the purposes of this regulation Senior Research posts are defined as posts at the level of Centre/Unit Director, Senior Research Fellow, Senior Research Manager and Senior Research Coordinator as defined from time to time in the University Policy on Employment & Career Management Structure for Researchers. These regulations may also, on request, and with the approval of the Director of Human Resources, apply to other research positions.

*1.2. Principles of fairness and transparency.* It is the policy of the University to recruit employees in a fair and transparent manner.

*1.3. 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 UCC Policy on Equality in Recruitment and shall be conducted in a manner compliant with the Employment Equality Act 1998 and other relevant legislation. No candidate shall be discriminated against on any of the nine grounds mentioned in the legislation, i.e. Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability, and 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. 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 from the Head of College.

*2.2. Composition.* The relevant Head of College shall nominate the Chairperson of the Selection Committee. A nominee may only be appointed to Chair a Selection Committee where such nominee has completed a training programme for Selection Committee Chairs provided by the Human Resources Department. In all instances the Chair shall be from a budget area outside of the research budget area to which the post is being recruited.

*Composition of Selection Committee for Senior Research posts:*

- Chairperson nominated by the relevant Head of College will be from outside of the recruiting research budget area;
- The relevant Academic Staff member leading the research (PI);
- Head of School;
- Head of RICU/Research Centre, or nominee, where appropriate;
- Vice President for Research and Innovation, or nominee;
- Another member of staff of the recruiting unit at least one grade higher than the post to be recruited, and if not possible, not a direct report of the post to be recruited;
- External assessor with relevant discipline and/or related expertise;
- A Human Resources Representative nominated by the Director of Human Resources (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 Committee. In the event of both sexes not being represented, the Committee, following consultation between the Chair and Human Resources Department, should determine an appropriate alternate for one of the members. The University's *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions* shall apply to all members of the Committee.

**2.4. Additional Members.** The composition of the Selection Committee as outlined in 2.2 above does not preclude the inclusion of additional members where required to ensure the range and depth of expertise necessary on the panel. The inclusion of additional members to the Selection Committee can be discussed between the Department of Human Resources, the employing Head of Unit and the relevant Line Manager.

**2.5. External Assessor: Selection** The names of at least two proposed External Assessors shall be put forward by the Academic staff member leading the research (PI) for approval and ranking by the relevant Head of College and the Vice President for Research and Innovation. The Academic Staff member leading the Research (PI) must include a declaration that no conflict of interest exists in respect of the list of possible External Assessors. In order to assist the Head of College and Vice President for Research and Innovation with ranking, the list of names should include a detailed biography of each of the proposed External Assessors.

The Human Resources Department will then be informed as to the ranked listing of nominated External Assessors by the Head of College, prior to the first meeting of the Committee taking place.

**2.6. 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. The attached Appendix 1 outlines in detail the role of the Chairperson.

**2.7. 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 1 outlines in detail the role of Selection Committee members.

**2.8. External Assessor: Role.** The role of the External Assessor is an objective specialist who advises the Committee and participates in the assessment of candidates at both shortlisting and interview stage as set out below. The External Assessor should be of appropriate standing in relation to the level of appointment of the post being filled. It is a requirement that the External Assessor participate at both shortlisting and interview.

An External Assessor shall at the time of invitation be given details of the *University Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions*. In particular, the External Assessor shall be

advised that **they shall not be referees of any candidates**. The *Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions shall apply to all members of the Committee*.

**2.9. Human Resources Representative: Role.** The role of the Representative shall be to provide advice and support to the Committee, to assure 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 meetings of 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 Committee short-listing meetings. The HR representative will not *ordinarily (see below)* be present during the course of interviews and 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.

The HR representative will attend when the interviews are completed and prior to the commencement of scoring by the Selection Committee in order to verify all documentation, debrief the Selection Committee and assist the Chairperson in the completion of the Selection Committee report. The attached Appendix 1 outlines in detail the role of the HR representative.

The HR representative will be present for the full selection process (including interviews) if:

- (a) The post being filled is at the level of Centre/Unit Director
- (b) The HR Representative is a participating member of the Selection Committee.

**2.10. 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 (First meeting of the Committee)**

**3.1. Documentation.** To agree the documentation for advertising including the advertisement, Candidate Information Pack and particulars of the post which detail the responsibilities of the post and the person specification/selection criteria. This shall be prepared in accordance with the agreed job outline for the post. It is the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that the details of the post including the job description shall be clearly aligned with the University's strategy and reflective of the most up to date information in respect of both the University and the hiring Unit. 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 recruiting unit; data relating to specialised areas of 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 will 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 & Search Strategy.* To agree the advertising and search strategy in accordance with the *Recruitment Advertising Policy and Guidelines in relation to Search*;

*3.4. Timelines for the Selection process.* To agree closing dates and where possible indicative dates for shortlisting 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 at least four weeks duration to assist in ensuring that vacancy information reaches the widest possible audience. Where possible, when vacancies are identified, advertising (and where appropriate search strategy) should take place at the earliest opportunity thus ensuring that UCC can compete for high calibre candidates.

*3.5. 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 where appropriate search strategy) in addition to detailing 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.

*3.6. 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 normally lead to disqualification. It is entirely reasonable for candidates to seek information about the University, school or research centre/unit 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 meeting 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.

#### **4. Responsibilities: Post Closing Date (Shortlisting Process)**

*4.1. Shortlisting meeting.* 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. On the basis that the External Assessor has been invited to participate in the shortlisting process, their assessment of the candidates may be considered by telephone/e-mail contact. All Selection Committee members must sign and approve the Shortlisting Report, including the External Assessor.

*4.2. Re-advertise.* In the context of a limited field of suitable applications the Committee may

decide, for the robustness & validity of the process, to attract a wider field of candidates through 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. Settling dates.* The Committee shall finalise interview dates.

*4.4.Seminar Arrangements.* For certain posts, it may be deemed appropriate for candidates to give a presentation/seminar to the Selection Committee or alternatively to complete an “in-tray exercise” or some other appropriate assessment as part of the Selection Process. The Committee shall agree details of presentation/seminar title, nature and subject duration. The seminar audience will be members of the Selection Committee **only** and all members of the Selection Committee **must** attend all seminars.

*4.5. Contact with School/Department/Research Unit/Campus Visits.* All shortlisted candidates, where both appropriate and feasible, shall be offered the opportunity to visit the relevant unit prior to interview to meet with key relevant personnel (who are not members of the Selection Committee) to gain insights into the work of the unit and its plans for the future. There will also be an opportunity for those short-listed candidates to be given a guided tour of the campus 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 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 an interview with a possible seminar/presentation, 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 invite 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/Presentation & Interview Attendance.* Ideally in all circumstances short-listed candidates should attend in person for seminar and interview. In exceptional circumstances where a short-listed candidate through no fault of his/her own is unable to travel a video conference *may* be facilitated subject to the agreement of the Selection Committee. Such facilitation will be subjected 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/Presentation.* Where it is agreed that candidates will be asked to give a presentation as part of the assessment process, the time frame and format of the presentation will be agreed by the Selection Committee according to the requirements of the post. 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. Timing.* Interviews for Senior Research posts will ordinarily be of 45 minutes to 1 hour duration and any seminar/presentation will be in addition.

*5.6. 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) 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.

*5.7. 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 can conduct a second interview, where following the first interview and (where applicable) seminar/presentation 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.



*5.8. 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 approval.

The report of the Committee shall also include the name of a nominated mentor (at an appropriate grade in relation to the level of the post being filled) to provide:

- For Centre/Unit Director and Senior Research Manager posts: management and leadership mentoring to the successful candidate over the course of the first year of appointment.
- For research posts: appropriate mentoring for the successful candidate over the course of the first year of appointment.

Development needs that are identified at selection stage will be written into the contract of employment as being essential to address and will include suggestions for the method or proposed intervention as identified by the Committee. Mentors must be advised by the Head of Unit in the employing unit of any development needs identified for the successful candidate.

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.

*5.9. Notification.* While the deliberations of a Selection Committee are confidential, the Committee must 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 Selection 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. Unsuccessful interviewees and alternate appointees are formally notified of the competition result as soon as possible following ratification of the Selection Committee's report. The outcome of the appointment process shall be published on the University Human Resources webpage.

*5.10. Appointment.* Appointment shall be subject to the provision of satisfactory employment references, successful completion of a medical (where relevant) and the verification of qualifications. An offer of appointment, which shall contain details of commencing salary, shall issue from the Director of Human Resources or his/her nominee, to the most preferred candidate.

While the Selection Committee can make a recommendation in respect of salary placement, any salary offer can only be in line with University policy and in some instances national policy in this regard and any salary offer can only be communicated by Human Resources.. In the event of a candidate not accepting the appointment within the required period (which shall normally be no

more than two weeks from the date of offer), an offer shall automatically issue to the next preferred appointable candidate.

*5.11. 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.

## 6. Sample timetable for Administration of Recruitment and Selection Process.

*This time frame is open to review depending upon a number of factors including whether the post is internally/externally advertised together with the level and duration of the post being staffed.*

### Week 1

- Approved post proposal form in place.
- Nominations for the internal members of the Selection Committee received from the recruiting Line Manager.
- Chair is nominated and invited to participate in the Committee.
- First Meeting of the Selection Committee arranged.

### Week 2

- Criteria meeting scheduled to draft advertisement and particulars of post.
- Report of the first meeting of the Selection Committee is completed by the HR representative on behalf of the Selection Committee.
- Draft advertisement and particulars of post emailed to Selection Committee for final approval.

### Week 3

- Post advertised in appropriate publications/websites.
- Search activity commences as appropriate in accordance with search plan.
- Enquiries acknowledged and further information provided to candidates as requested.
- External Assessor is nominated and secured.

### Week 6-9

- Closing date for applications is reached.
- Applications are acknowledged and entered into the HRIS system.
- Shortlisting meeting is arranged.
- Applications are forwarded to each member of the Selection Committee with a complete listing of candidates.
- Advertising Tracking Sheet completed.
- Shortlisting report is prepared for the HR representative to complete at the shortlisting meeting.
- Should there be any undue delays encountered during the process, then HR will advise candidates accordingly.

### Week 8-11

- Shortlisting meeting takes place.
- Shortlisting report is returned to the Department of Human Resources.
- All applicants are advised in writing as to the outcome of their application and HRIS is updated.
- Selection Committee is contacted to confirm agreed date(s) for seminar and interview. Referee reports are requested for each shortlisted candidate.
- Members of the Selection Committee should consult the Code on Conflict of Interest in Recruitment in relation to the provision of a reference for a candidate who is being considered for appointment by that Committee.
- Human Resources notifies shortlisted candidates of interview date and advises them of the arrangements for the presentation if this forms part of the process (including the nature, subject and duration of presentation).
- Venue is confirmed.
- Timetable is drafted.
- Letters are sent out inviting candidates for interview.
- Letters and associated interview documentation are sent out to member of the Selection

Committee confirming timetable and precise arrangements for interviews.

- Candidates/External Assessor are assisted with making their travel and accommodation arrangements. Indicative figures for travelling and subsistence costs are provided to candidates.
- Catering is organised.
- Should there be any undue delays encountered during the process, the Human Resources Department will advise candidates accordingly.

#### Week 12-15

- Candidates attend for interview.
- An opportunity is provided for candidates to receive a tour of the recruiting unit and campus.
- Evaluation takes place.
- Second interview takes place and/or appointment decision made.
- Selection Committee report is signed by the Director of Human Resources.
- Should there be any undue delays encountered during the process, the Human Resources Department will advise candidates accordingly.

#### Week 13-16

- All interviewed candidates written to in relation to the outcome of the interview.
- Unsuccessful interviewees and alternate appointees are formally notified of the competition result as soon as possible following ratification of the Selection Committee's report and HRIS is updated.
- Salary placement for successful candidate is confirmed.

#### Week 14-17

- Following approval by the Director of Human Resources, an offer of appointment, which shall contain details of commencing salary, shall issue from Human Resources to the most preferred candidate. In the event of a candidate not accepting the appointment within the required period (no more than two weeks from the date of offer), an offer shall automatically issue to the next preferred candidate.
- Feedback requests from other candidates are processed.
- Queries/request for additional information, support/advice etc. from appointable candidates are processed.
- Interview related expenses are processed.

### **7. Date in force, repeals etc.**

*7.1. Date in force.* This regulation shall come into effect immediately.

*7.2. Repeal of former Statutes.* Where this regulation applies, it is in substitution for the provisions of Statute C, which (to that extent) is hereby repealed in accordance with the Transitional Statute, s 9.

<b>Version</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>University Management Team Operations</b>	<b>7 June 2017*</b>
<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>1 November 2016</b>
*Reconsidered by UMTO following GB approval on 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2016 following recommendation for same by GB	

## APPENDIX 1 – ROLE REQUIREMENTS

### Role of Chairperson of the Selection Committee (“the Chair”)

The Chair has overall responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the selection process. S/he must ensure due process is followed in the conduct of interviews, where each applicant should be given the same opportunity to present their case. All applicants must be considered on their merits. Particular care must be taken not to discriminate on any ground other than the requirements of the position. As a full member of the Selection Committee the Chair is subject to the requirements of all Committee members. In addition the Chair should:

- Ensure that the shortlisting and selection process is carried out fairly and confidentially in accordance with the University Regulation and Policies;
- Ensure that the Selection Committee has a clear understanding of what its objective is;
- Ensure that Committee members are aware of their role in the selection process and take an active part in said process;
- Ensure that Committee members and candidates are aware of the format of the interview process;
- Manage the process of preparing outline questions on the basis of the criteria for selection and areas to be covered during the interview;
- Ensure that Committee members are aware of the requirement on them to record questions asked of candidates, including any follow up questions, for the purposes of the final record of the interview;
- Ensure that questioning and assessment are approached with an open mind and that the members remain impartial during the process;
- Ensure that all Committee members are aware of the *UCC Code on Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions* and specifically ask all members of the Committee to declare any potential conflict of interest;
- Introduce the Committee to candidates and explain the interview plan;
- Ensuring the candidate understands that notes shall be taken during the course of the interview so as to assist in recall and discussion;
- Advise the candidate that standard questions relevant to the selection criteria will be asked of all candidates;
- Make a reasonable effort towards assisting the candidate to feel sufficiently at ease to be able to communicate effectively during the interview;
- Ensure that the review of candidates takes place at the end of all the interviews, not between interviews;
- Ensure that the Committee keeps to time with each interview;
- Assisting the candidate, should s/he become overly anxious/nervous
- Conclude the interview by confirming that all relevant areas have been covered; invite the candidate to add any relevant information not already supplied and give them an opportunity to ask any questions which they may have;
- Ensure that each candidate is informed of the process following interview;
- Co-ordinate the Committee in the assessment of short-listed candidates and facilitate them in making a decision while ensuring that each member of the board is given adequate opportunity to contribute fully to the assessment process;
- Ensure that the criteria for selection are equally applied to all candidates;
- Ensure that the views of the Committee members are sought on each candidate and that where possible a consensus is reached;
- Ensure that discriminatory or other unacceptable behaviour does not occur during the selection process;

- Ensure that reasons for the assessment are agreed and fully recorded as part of the Selection Committee report including detailed feedback in respect of each candidate;
- Undertake the role of the Human Resources representative in the absence the Human Resources representative.

### **Opening the interview**

- Welcome the candidate (stand up to greet the candidate and offer to shake hands if you are able to do to so) and thank her/him for attending;
- Set a positive tone with appropriate non-verbal communication e.g. encouraging expression, responsive listening, eye contact, leaving space for the candidate to answer;
- Introduce the members of the Selection Committee by name;
- Explain the running order of interview and any other assessment methods to be used;
- Briefly confirm details of post being recruited;
- Confirm that the members of the Committee will take notes;
- Take candidates through their careers to date, ensuring that significant gaps in their application forms are fully explained.

### **Closing the interview**

- Check from your notes that all areas where clarification was required have been met;
- Offer Committee members the opportunity to ask any final questions on any areas not covered;
- Provide outline of what will happen next regarding when you will be communicating the outcome of the interview, any further assessments etc;
- Thank the candidate again for attending and say who will show them out of the building/back to the waiting area;
- Ensure any discussion in respect of the candidate does not take place until such time as all candidates have attended for interview and deliberations commence.

## Role of Selection Committee Member (“the Committee”)

Members of the Committee are responsible for reviewing all applications and shortlisting candidates for interview and interviewing all shortlisted candidates in accordance with the requirements of the relevant appointment regulations. The Committee should ensure at all times to represent the University appropriately to all candidates and to maintain the confidentiality of the process. In addition the Committee should:

- Comply with all University policy and procedures, and in particular the University *Code of Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions*;
- Conduct themselves in an appropriate, impartial, open, respectful and objective manner;
- The Committee members, as agents of the University, are bound to act in accordance with the University *Equality in Recruitment Policy* and *Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy*, in what they believe to be the best interest of the University and to nominate without fear, favour or prejudice that candidate whom they believe is best qualified to meet the requirements of the post;
- Understand the nature of the position as set out in the Candidate Information Pack and the characteristics of the person sought, as described in the selection criteria;
- Thoroughly familiarise themselves with each application, noting any shortcomings or anomalies in a candidate’s application or statement addressing the selection criteria to follow up during the interview;
- Declare at the outset of the process any conflict of interest that may exist, irrespective of how small that conflict may be or appear to be. Where a Committee Member believes that their knowledge of an individual (by virtue of professional, social or private association, or any other factor) may influence their decision, they must withdraw from the Committee;
- Observe strict confidentiality in regard to all aspects of the selection process and the Committee **must not** disclose any details of applicants or discuss aspects of the selection process with any person within or external to the University who is not on the Selection Committee;
- Internal Committee members who provide a reference for a candidate **must** avoid making any statement recommending the candidate for the post but should provide clear and factual information on the candidate which is related to the selection criteria for the post;
- Ensure the all mobile devices are turned off for the duration of interviews;
- Ask questions at interview consistently for all candidates;
- Record (in the documentation supplied) the questions asked of each candidate, including any follow up questions. This documentation will be returned to the HR Rep at the conclusion of interviews;
- Participate fully in the process, including attend for all interviews, contribute to the deliberation stage and be part of the final decision of the Committee;
- Differences of opinion should be seen as both natural and helpful rather than as a hindrance in decision making; generally, difference in opinion will result in more thorough consideration of all information.
- Ensure that private information, hearsay, or information from outside or personal sources is not introduced into discussion or consideration of suitability (other than nominated referee reports);
- Provide meaningful and relevant feedback for dissemination to all candidates;
- Ensure that a nominated mentor and developmental needs for the preferred candidate are identified for inclusion in the contract of employment;
- Maintain high standards of appointment;
- Work with the post administrator and the members of the Committee to ensure that the selection process is completed in a timely fashion;
- Attend Selection Committee training or seek training if they have not been trained.

## **Role of the External Assessor (“the Extern”)**

The role of the external assessor is as an objective specialist, who advises the Committee during the process, including where required by regulation 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. As a full member of the Selection Committee the Extern is subject to the requirements of all Committee members (excluding the requirement to undergo recruitment and selection training). In addition the Extern should:

- Comply with all University policy and procedures in relation to recruitment and selection, and in particular the University *Code of Conflict of Interest in relation to Recruitment and Promotions*;
- Provide expert advice to the Committee in respect of qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience;
- Ask questions to test specific knowledge and experience of an academic, professional or technical nature;
- Contribute expertise to the discussion in relation to the post, person specification and selection criteria;
- Provide objective, impartial, expertise, open advice and views;
- Challenge members of the Committee so as to ensure the maintenance of high standards of appointment;
- Participate as an expert in the process at both shortlisting and interview (and if required by regulation at the pre-advertising stage);
- As the role of the external assessor is to act as an objective specialist who advises the committee during the process, **an external assessor shall not provide a reference for any of the shortlisted candidates**;
- Seek guidance where required around UCC policy and procedures;



## **Role of the Human Resources Representative (“the HR Rep”)**

A representative of the Department of Human Resources will attend any pre-advertising and shortlisting meeting of the Committee. The HR Rep will ordinarily attend at the start and end of the interview process. The HR Rep will not ordinarily be present during the course of interviews, unless the post to be recruited is at Centre/Unit Director level, or if the HR Rep is a fully participating member of the Committee, in which case s/he will also be subject to the requirements of all Committee members.

The HR Rep will brief 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. In addition the HR Rep should:

- Assist the Chair in ensuring that the selection process is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements, University procedures and recruitment best practice in addition to providing guidance and administrative support to the Committee;
- Provide the Committee with guidance to support candidate review and evaluation;
- Provide the Committee with advice concerning appropriate questioning techniques prior to the commencement of interviews;
- Prior to the commencement of interview advise the Committee of their responsibilities with regard to:
  - the same key questions being asked of each candidate;
  - questions which should in each case relate to the selection criteria already identified for the post;
  - avoiding inappropriate remarks or comments either amongst themselves or to candidates;
  - note taking: in accordance with recruitment best practice, all notes are retained for a year;
- Ensure that the Committee is advised that no candidate interviewed is discriminated against on any of the nine grounds of the Equality Act 1998 and 2004, i.e. Gender, Marital Status, Family Status, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability, Membership of the Travelling Community;
- Advise and assist the Chair in the completion of the Selection Committee report at both shortlisting and interview;
- Assist the Chair in ensuring that meaningful and detailed feedback is recorded in respect of each candidate;
- Retain and return to the Department of Human Resources all documentation pertaining to the decision of the Committee.
- Ensure the destruction of all informal records at the completion of the recruitment process.