

Recruitment & Selection Policy

v4.6



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Our Staff Values
Focus. Passion. Inspiration.

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Related Forms/ Template Letters	All of the template letters and forms referenced in this document are available on the Councils Intranet site ' <u>Connects</u> '	
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Related documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>HR Procedure: Recruitment Process Recruiting Managers</u> • <u>Employment Reference Policy & Procedure</u> • <u>Redeployment Policy & Procedure</u> • <u>Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy and Procedure</u> • <u>Post Interview Counselling Guidance Notes</u> • <u>HR Guide: Psychometric Assessment Centre Options</u> • <u>Tips for applying with North Ayrshire Council</u> 	
Prepared by	HR Team	
Version Number	Effective Date	Details of Last Revision
4.6	27.04.2020	Amended the complaints procedure for Stage 1 complaints to be considered by the service.
4.5	30.09.17-05.11.19	Sections of HR Guides and Addendum merged in Policy. New Section on re-employment of former employees

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4.4	30.03.17-29.09.17	Minor procedure updates including replacing double tick with new Disability Confident.
4.3	21.08.15 – 30.03.17	Updated to replace reference to Navigate with 'Connects'
4.2	10.07.15 – 21.08.15	Double tick update
4.1	01.05.15 – 10.07.15	Updated onto new policy template, and to reflect Talentlink system / Staff Values and Behaviours
4	31.10.11- 01.05.15	Introduced Competency Based Recruitment
Equality Impact Assessment		01.10.10

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council Plan sets out considerable challenges for North Ayrshire Council, and we recognise that an important part of achieving these challenges is having the right people in the right place at the right time. It is therefore essential that we have effective means of recruiting, selecting and retaining employees with the right skills, values and behaviours to further the Council's aims.
- 1.2. As an equal opportunities employer, it is part of our fundamental philosophy that we recruit and promote solely on the basis of knowledge, experience, qualifications, skills, values and behaviours. The recruitment and selection procedures are designed to ensure that all applicants are treated equally, and that the most suitable candidate is chosen based on criteria which are relevant to the post.
- 1.3. All appointments must be made on the basis of merit and be consistent with current employment legislation and the Council's Equality Policy.
- 1.4. The Recruitment and Selection Policy is supported by the [HR Procedure: Recruitment Process Recruiting Managers](#). There are additional guides which help Recruiting Managers through the complete recruitment and selection process and further advice and support is available on the [Job Vacancies and Recruitment](#) pages on Connects.

2. Guiding Principles

2.1. Membership of Recruitment Panel

- 2.1.1. It is important that the process of shortlisting and interviewing is impartial; therefore, the disclosure of any family, personal relationships or friendships between the person's shortlisting and applicants is required. Where such family, personal relationships or friendships exist, it is the responsibility of any employee who is shortlisting candidates or who is interviewing candidates to declare this relationship to their line manager and thereafter, to take no further part in the selection process.
- 2.1.2. Failure to do so, and to continue to take part in the recruitment process, will be a breach of the procedure and will leave an employee open to disciplinary action.
- 2.1.3. The Chair of the Recruitment Panel must have attended the North Ayrshire Council Recruitment and Selection Course, and therefore be suitably trained to shortlist/interview.
- 2.1.4. The procedures comply with the requirements of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, the Parental Involvement in Headteacher and Depute Headteacher Appointments (Scotland) Regulations 2007 and the associated Scottish Executive Guidance regarding the participation of Parent Councils in the appointment of Headteachers and Depute Headteachers in schools.
- 2.1.5. The 'Recruiting Manager', referred to throughout the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure, is the person who manages the job and is thereby responsible

for the recruitment and selection process to fill the job. The 'Recruiting Manager' must have authorisation to recruit from their Head of Service and this authorisation is recorded on the HR Payroll System.

2.2 Disabled Applicants – Disability Confident Employer

- 2.2.1 The Council has a positive approach to employing and retaining people with disabilities and those with health conditions and is proud to be recognised as a Disability Confident Employer and to be able to display the Disability Confident Scheme identity. As users of the Disability Confident Scheme, the Council guarantees to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a vacancy – the minimum criteria being the essential criteria specified on the Role Profile and providing acceptable evidence of our Staff Values and Behaviours.
- 2.2.2 As part of the application process, applicants may request special facilities to assist them to attend the interview, answer questions and complete any exercises or tests. Recruiting Managers should make reasonable adjustments to assist disabled candidates who request such assistance. This could include providing assistance to access the interview venue, allowing (e.g. sign language) interpreters to accompany them at interview, and/or allowing more time for interview/exercises and considering different methods of completion and assessment.

2.3 Modern Apprentices – Guaranteed Interview

- 2.3.1 Applicants who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) or who are, or have been, in Looked After Care (LAC) and apply for an Apprenticeship opportunity based within the Council, will be guaranteed an interview provided they meet the essential criteria for the post. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this information within their application should they wish this information to be taken into account in their submission.
- 2.3.2 Any existing Council employed Modern Apprentices who meet the essential criteria for any advertised posts will also be guaranteed an interview for any post for which they apply. Where their application is unsuccessful, the employing Service will provide feedback on the interviewee's performance where requested.
- 2.3.3 If a Modern Apprentice is appointed to a substantive post within the Council, they will be required to complete any outstanding part of their Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Training Plan. The offer of employment issued may include a clause that can require individuals to complete their SVQ Training Plan as a condition of their employment. The employing Service should allow adequate time for the employee to complete their SVQ Training Plan, which is a work based assessed qualification.

2.4 Safer Recruitment

- 2.4.1 North Ayrshire Council is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all employees to share this commitment.
- 2.4.2 In line with our recruitment procedure, all roles involving regulated work with children, young people or vulnerable adults will undergo a number of pre-

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employment background checks including the relevant level of Disclosure Scotland check (basic, standard, enhanced or PVG membership), professional registration check (e.g. SSSC) and the requirement to have references available.

2.4.3 For posts which have a PSN requirement for secure access or transmission of data the postholder may be required to undertake a 'basic disclosure' and meet the requirements as per the government baseline personnel security standard (BPSS).

2.4.4 The costs of these checks will be recovered from successful applicant's salary.

2.5 Redeployment

2.5.1 The Council will make every effort to redeploy all displaced employees and to support them throughout the redeployment process, providing training and development support where applicable.

2.5.2 All vacant posts will be notified to employees on the redeployment register. Redeployees can apply for any suitable vacant posts within the same timescale as the post is available to all applicants.

2.5.3 On the closure date, any redeployee applicants will be notified to the Recruiting Manager for a placement meeting ahead of any other applicant.

2.5.4 If no redeployees apply for the post, or where there are no suitable redeployees, the other applications will then be made available for shortleeting.

2.5.5 Please see the '[Redeployment Policy and Procedure](#)' for further information regarding redeployment.

2.6 Pre-Employment Checks

2.6.1 Appointments should not be made without all the pre-employment checks outlined within the Recruitment & Selection procedure being completed to the satisfaction of North Ayrshire Council.

2.6.2 Appointments to High Risk driving roles (as defined in the [Health and Safety Guide: Driving At Work](#)) and specified in the post licence screen on HR Payroll System (PLI) **must not** commence until after completion of the Occupational Health assessment and the service is satisfied with the outcome.

2.6.3 Recruiting Managers **must not** make verbal or written offers of appointment as this will constitute formation of a contract. Successful candidates are to be notified that they are the 'Preferred Candidate' only and this will be followed up with a conditional offer outlining the statement of particulars of appointment.

2.6.4 The conditions should be satisfied on completion of the pre-employment checks and the Recruiting Manager will be advised when these have been completed so that arrangements can be made for the appointment to commence.

2.6.5 Should the conditions not be met, the Recruiting Manager can advise that they are no longer the preferred candidate as they have not satisfied the necessary conditions and that the application process will be closed with a rejection notification.

2.6.6 Exceptionally, a Recruiting Manager may proceed to commence employment prior to the pre-employment checks being complete having put necessary arrangements in place to minimise any identified risks. In this instance the employing service must advise of their decision to the Resourcing Team by email.

2.7 Immigration Asylum & Nationality Act 2006

2.7.1 Under these regulations, an employer who employs an adult who is not entitled to take that employment or whose eligibility to be in that employment has lapsed is liable to be fined for negligently employing an illegal immigrant. There is a maximum fine of £20,000 per illegal worker; therefore, no employee will be allowed to start employment until this check has been carried out. This Act requires us to make sure that everyone we employ is eligible to work in the United Kingdom.

2.7.2 Every preferred candidate will be asked to produce appropriate documentation to confirm that they are legally permitted to work in the UK. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of documents that are acceptable as proof of entitlement to work in the UK. It should be noted that only original documents are accepted. Such checks must be done for every candidate at interview, to ensure that everyone is treated equally. It also ensures that the person attending for interview is the person who applied for the post.

2.7.3 These checks will be carried out at the interview. Services should scan copies of all candidates' identification. Only the identification of the preferred candidate should be sent to the Resourcing Team, Employee Services. The copies of the unsuccessful candidates should be held for 4 weeks in case they are required, and then confidentially destroyed.

2.7.4 If the post requires a PVG check to be carried out, this identification should also be checked by the Chair of the panel at interview. The identification for the preferred candidate should be forwarded to Resourcing Team, Employee Services.

2.8 Qualifications & Professional Memberships/Registration

2.8.1 Where a particular qualification is required for the job, or where there is a minimum standard of education expected for the job, copies of these qualifications must be obtained for the preferred candidate and added to the personal file when the employee commences work. Details of qualifications will be recorded on the HR Payroll System on the D81 screen. The Chair of the panel should ensure this is checked at the Interview Stage.

2.8.2 Where a particular professional membership is required the certificate should be photocopied for the personal file.

2.8.3 Where an applicant is registered with the SSSC, the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will, through enhanced access to the SSSC register, undertake a check on the candidate's professional qualification. This will also advise whether the applicant's registration is subject to any condition and whether the applicant is the subject of investigation by the SSSC or in the midst of conduct procedures.

2.8.4 For Teachers, GTCS membership will be also be checked by Education & Youth

Employment. The Care Commission also requires to approve a Head Teacher preferred candidate, where a Nursery Class forms part of the school.

2.9 References

- 2.9.1 North Ayrshire Council will normally request at least one reference once an applicant is invited to interview. This reference should be available at the interview. Depending on the post applied for, further references may be requested for the preferred candidate after the interview. These additional references must be submitted to the Chair of the panel prior to completion of the Preferred Candidate Notification on Recruitment Portal.
- 2.9.2 The Service must obtain satisfactory references before allowing the preferred candidate to commence employment. The number of references required will depend on the post being applied for. Please see the [Employment Reference Policy & Procedure](#) for guidance.
- 2.9.3 Once received the Recruiting Manager should file all references to ensure they are available for external audit purposes, e.g. from the Care Commission audit.

2.10 Preferred Candidate Health Questionnaire

- 2.10.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, organisations **cannot ask applicants to complete Health questionnaires until the applicant has been advised that they are the preferred candidate.** This is to prevent disability discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. The preferred candidate will be issued the 'Preferred Candidate Health Questionnaire' by the Resourcing Team and asked to return the completed form to Employee Services to monitor receipt. Resourcing Team will then forward the unopened questionnaire to Occupational Health for review.
- 2.10.2 The purpose of the questionnaire is to establish whether there are any reasonable adjustments that require to be made prior to the person taking up employment with the Council.
- 2.10.3 Where the content indicates the preferred candidate may have difficulty fulfilling the intrinsic conditions of the post and will require reasonable adjustments to complete the post, the candidate will be referred to Occupational Health. The offer of employment would only be withdrawn where undertaking the post would worsen an existing condition, or there are no reasonable adjustments which could be put in place to allow the applicant to carry out the full duties of the post.

2.11 Re-employment of Former Employees

2.11.1 Employing a former employee of North Ayrshire Council who has left on the basis of Voluntary Redundancy or Voluntary Early Release (and received the appropriate Redundancy/Early Retirement payments) is normally only permitted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. where there is a critical skills shortage, lack of success of recruitment exercises, etc). In such cases, the Recruiting Manager, having established that this clause is applicable, will be responsible for making the case to the relevant Head of Service. In addition, HR should be consulted for guidance prior to appointment, as there may be implications for areas such as pension payments and taxation.

2.11.2 In any case, former employees of North Ayrshire Council who left the employment of the Council via Voluntary Redundancy or Voluntary Early Release should not normally be re-employed or re-engaged within 4 weeks of the date of termination of employment. This applies to re-employment into permanent positions, fixed-term and temporary appointments.

3. Method of Recruitment and Selection

3.1. 'myjobscotland' and the 'Recruitment Portal'

3.1.1 The 'Recruitment Portal' known as 'Talentlink' is an e-recruitment tool co-ordinated by COSLA on behalf of all Scottish Local Authorities. North Ayrshire Council uses the national [myjobscotland](#) website created to support recruitment for all Scottish Councils. The website allows candidates to apply on-line, and in turn this allows the teams who support the recruitment process and Recruiting Managers to manage all recruitment functions (approvals for vacancies, setting up the advert, applications, shortlisting, interviewing and communication) as well as the provision of statistical information, through the portal.

3.1.2 Applicants, including redeployees, are asked to complete and submit an online application form for any posts for which they wish to apply. Applicants are advised on commencement of the online process that all future correspondence will be via email.

3.1.3 If an applicant does not have access to the internet then they are advised to use their local library, employability hub or local area office. However, where this is problematic for the applicant, for example due to a disability, applicants are advised to contact the Resourcing Team on 01294 324650 for support and guidance on how to apply.

3.1.4 Applications will not be accepted after the closing date. The submission of a CV supplementary to an incomplete application form or on its own will not be accepted.

3.1.5 Canvassing of employees involved in the selection process, Chief Officers or Elected Members, whether directly or indirectly by any applicant, shall disqualify the applicant from being considered for the post.

3.1.6 Further advice and support is available on the [Job Vacancies and Recruitment](#)

pages on Connects as well as on the North Ayrshire Council external website under [Jobs and Training](#).

3.2 Behavioural Based Recruitment

- 3.2.1 Behavioural based recruitment is a technique designed to ensure that successful candidates not only have the relevant experience to undertake the post to which they are appointed, but also demonstrate the staff values and behaviours expected of North Ayrshire Council employees. This method of recruitment involves asking applicants to provide examples of when they have demonstrated the behaviours required within a particular value. This is in addition to the normal information asked on the application form or questions asked at interview.
- 3.2.2 Behavioural based recruitment allows Recruiting Managers to make better and more effective recruitment decisions as all candidates provide examples and evidence from their past experience of how they connect with North Ayrshire Council's Staff Values. These examples therefore provide an indication of how they may achieve the objectives of the role being recruited for in the future.
- 3.2.3 Behavioural based recruitment should always be used during the recruitment process.

3.3 Other methods of Recruitment & Selection

- 3.3.1 There may be occasions where other selection methods may be considered e.g. open days or assessment centres. Alternative methods may be particularly suitable for hard to fill roles, where response rates are low.
- 3.3.2 There may also be occasions where a panel interview is not enough to assess the candidate's suitability for the post. In this instance additional elements can be added to the selection process, for example, presentations, ability tests or psychometric testing.
- 3.3.3 If a preferred candidate decides not to proceed to appointment and a vacancy remains within twelve weeks from the last date of interview, then the recruiting manager can revert to the initial shortlisted candidates to approach the second scored preferred candidate at interview.
- 3.3.4 Further information on alternative methods of recruitment should be sought from People and Transformation prior to arranging any other methods of selection.

3.4 Shortleeting Application Forms

- 3.4.1 All application forms will be treated fairly and equally and will be measured against the shortleeting criteria taken from the Role Profile. The shortleeting should take place as soon as possible after the closing date for applications. Panel members can work together to complete one shortleeting or complete the shortleeting individually and then compare their lists to find a consensus.

- 3.4.2 The shortlisting panel should consider each application form individually, scoring each applicant against the Role Profile. Applicants should not be compared to each other. The scores should be added to the Shortlisting Grid.
- 3.4.3 Searching for information on candidates on the internet, including social networking sites, should not be used as part of the recruitment process. Searching for information online could be discriminatory as any information posted on the internet about the candidate may not be correct and does not form part of the recruitment and selection procedure.

4. Rules of Recruitment Advertising

- 4.1 Council vacancies are advertised on the **myjobscotland** website.
- 4.2 Where the service wishes to advertise in the press this will be placed in a composite signpost advert (i.e. showing only job title, location and salary) in the Herald or local press. The advert will direct prospective candidates to [myjobscotland](https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk) for further information.
- 4.3 Employee Services can make previous response levels available and will advise against unnecessary advertising in the press. Human Resources will encourage publication of adverts on the **myjobscotland** website in the first instance, and monitor responses prior to press advertising to ensure that the most cost effective method of advertising is being utilised.
- 4.4 Any requests to place stand-alone job adverts in the Herald or any other external publication will be by exception only and require authorisation by the budget holder.
- 4.5 Further advice and guidance on how to market specific posts effectively, and cost efficiently, is available from the Resourcing Team, Employee Services, People and Transformation.

5. Monitoring

5.1 Recruitment Monitoring

- 5.1.1 Monitoring of the recruitment process will allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed. Various reports and statistics are available from the recruitment portal and can be requested by Services to assist with recruitment strategy.

5.2 Equal Opportunities Monitoring

- 5.2.1 North Ayrshire Council is committed to providing employment opportunities on a fair and equal basis and creating a working environment for all employees that is safe, accessible, and free from harassment or discrimination and which values and respects each individual's identities and cultures.
- 5.2.2 To achieve this, we need to collect information about protected characteristics such as: age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Monitoring is required by law, however, prospective employees can elect '**prefer not to say**'

on the monitoring screen.

5.2.3 The information obtained about applicants and employees enables us to check:

- Applications are being received from a broad cross-section of people,
- People appointed represent a cross-section of people who apply and are suitably qualified,
- Our Recruitment and Selection Procedures and working practices are fair,
- Our policies meet the diverse needs of our employees,
- Our employees reflect the diversity of the community we serve.

6. Recruitment Complaints

6.1 Complaints Procedure

6.1.1 In accordance with the Council's commitment to equal opportunities, and to address other recruitment complaints, a procedure has been developed to deal with complaints connected to the Recruitment and Selection process.

6.1.2 The objective of the procedure is to resolve complaints and to ensure the appointment of the most suitable applicant(s). Financial compensation will not be considered. All persons involved in the recruitment and selection process will be required to co-operate fully with any investigations.

6.1.3 It is hoped that any complaints can be dealt with internally, but the procedure is not intended to detract from an individual's right to pursue an application to an Employment Tribunal.

6.2 Submitting a Complaint (Stage 1)

6.2.1 Complaints must be lodged in writing to the Head of Service (who advertised the post) in the first instance, and as soon as possible following a selection decision, but no later than 14 days of receiving notification of the Council's recruitment decision.

6.2.2 The Head of Service or nominated Senior Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days and will nominate an Officer to carry out an independent investigation.

6.2.3 The Investigating Officer will carry out the investigation within 10 working days and will write to the applicant immediately on completion of the investigation to inform them of their findings.

6.3 Appeal (Stage 2)

6.3.1 Should the applicant be dissatisfied with the findings an appeal may be submitted within 14 days of being notified of the outcome of Stage 1. The procedure is as follows:

6.3.2 Applicants should write to the Head of People & Transformation confirming their appeal against the findings at Stage 1. The Head of People & Transformation or

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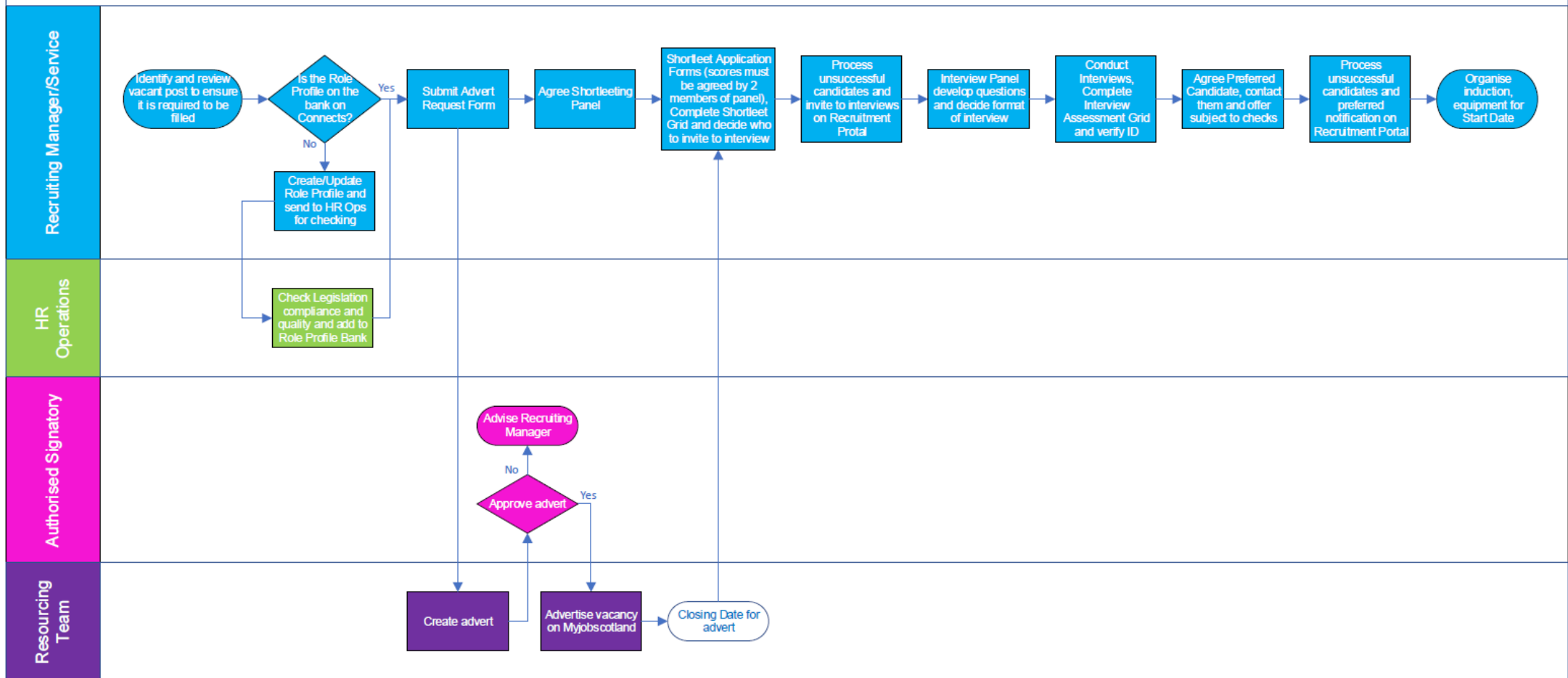
nominated Senior Manager will try to resolve the matter and write to the applicant confirming the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of this letter.

6.3.3 This is the final stage in the Council's complaints procedure for external applicants.

6.3.4 Internal Applicants can appeal to Stage 3 which will be treated as a grievance commencing at Stage 3 of the Grievance Procedure (to be heard by the Appeals Committee of the Council).

7. Overview of the Recruitment & Selection Process

Overview of Recruitment and Selection Process



Appendix 1: Asylum and Immigration Check – acceptable documentation

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act (2006) provides two lists of documents that can be accepted as proof of entitlement to work in the UK, referred to as List A and List B. The sections below provide an overview of the main documents contained in each list:

- **List A** – this list includes documents that can be accepted as proof of entitlement to work in the UK (no time limit). Examples included in this list are:
 - A passport showing that the holder is a British citizen, or of the United Kingdom and Colonies having the right of abode in the United Kingdom.
 - A passport or national identity card showing that the holder is a national of the European Economic Area or Switzerland
 - A full birth certificate issued in the United Kingdom which includes the name (s) of at least one of the holder's parents, **when produced in combination with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance Number and their name issued by a Government Agency or previous employer.

- **List B** – this list includes documents that can be accepted as proof of entitlement to work in the UK for up to 12 months. The Asylum and Immigration Check will be re-done, when the timescale on the document expires. Examples included in this list are:
 - A passport or travel document endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the United Kingdom and is allowed to do the type of work in question, provided that it does not require the issue of a work permit
 - A work permit or other approval to take employment issued by the Home Office or the Border and Immigration Agency **when produced in combination with** either a passport or another travel document endorsed to show the holder is allowed to stay in the United Kingdom and is allowed to do the work in question, or a letter issued by the Home Office or the Border and Immigration Agency to the holder or the employer or prospective employer confirming the same.

Details of other documents, in either list, can be obtained from Human Resources if required.