

Recruitment policy (NC)

Policy statement

University of the Built Environment (“the University”) aims to be transparent about the process it employs to recruit, select, and onboard talent, which includes the process for internal appointments. This policy takes you through the different stages and elements involved in the process and provides comprehensive information for both external stakeholders (applicants, regulators) and internal colleagues (line managers, employees).

For ease and for the purposes of this policy only, the term ‘recruitment’ is used to cover all stages in the process, from the identification of a vacancy to the end of the onboarding process.

It is the policy of the University that line managers and the HR team are jointly responsible for recruitment activities, by working together collaboratively to achieve the best outcome for the University. In each year senior leaders will consider future recruitment intentions and budget accordingly.

The University aims at all times to recruit individuals most suited to advertised job vacancies. Recruitment will be based solely on individuals’ abilities and merit as measured against the person specification criteria for the job role.

A summary of the recruitment procedure used by the University can be found at **Appendix A**.

This policy should be read alongside the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy and alongside the *Privacy notice for job applicants to University of the Built Environment*.

Important note for internal vacancies: The University may vary aspects of this policy for those vacancies which are only advertised internally. A specific section is included for internal vacancies, which is relevant to existing employees and line managers.

This policy and the recruitment procedure are non-contractual. They will be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis, including when new requirements are inserted into the recruitment process or changes are made to legislation, or when aspects of the process change. The published version will always be the current version.

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When existing employees resign, vacancies will not automatically be replaced, permanently or temporarily, via an internal or external recruitment process. Line managers will instead take time to consider whether the work can be done or managed in a different way, or if there are other ways to achieve the outcomes of the job, before deciding to commence a recruitment process.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We are committed to applying our EDI policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing, and selection will always be carried out with due regard to the Equality Act 2010. All line managers taking part in the recruitment and selection process will need to have completed mandatory EDI training, including Unconscious Bias, as well as safer recruitment training.

Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear the candidate is unable to perform a duty intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. Where identified within the job application, reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability.

For full information on how we ensure a fair and equitable recruitment process, please consult our EDI policy.

Budgeting for vacancies

In each budget year (1 August to 31 July) the HR team manages a centrally held recruitment advertising budget. A Recruitment Approved List (RAL) for approved new and existing job roles also exists, which is managed between HR, the Finance team, and budget holders.

Job specifications

We will ensure all roles advertised either internally or externally (or both) are accompanied by a detailed and accurate job specification. This will include a job description and a carefully considered person specification.

We strongly encourage applicants to read the job specification thoroughly before applying for a role. It is vital applicants understand what they are applying for and what the role entails, along with the competencies required.

When it comes to salary level and benefits on offer, we provide full and transparent information within job specifications. We will always publish pay information when advertising internally and externally.

Should a selection process involve an assessment other than interview, such as a test, presentation, or other task, this will normally be clearly identified in the person specification section of the document.

Within the job specification we will also make it clear what pre-employment checks will be undertaken; this is detailed in a later section.

Advertising

HR manages the advertising budget carefully, aiming to extract the most value from funds

available. We use a number of general online jobs boards to advertise roles, as well as both sector-specific and specialised boards. The type of job boards chosen depends on the role however we always aim to cast the advertising net as wide as reasonably possible.

We will continue to seek and explore new advertising channels, including more specific diversity focussed jobsites, with the aim of reaching underrepresented groups and attracting diverse pools of candidates.

Typically, external adverts run for two weeks maximum.

Format and management of job applications

We use a careers site and Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to manage job vacancies. A legacy system also exists for some vacancies, where job applications are received into a recruitment mailbox Recruitment@ube.ac.uk with receipt being acknowledged.

Unless otherwise stated within the job specification, we require applicants to submit **complete** job applications. A complete application comprises a covering note, up to date CV, and answers to our recruitment questions (these are contained within a Recruitment Check Form for the legacy system).

Should applicants require any adjustments to this application process on account of a disability, we will consider what is reasonable on a case-by-case basis. Incomplete applications may not be considered, especially because they may signal applicants may have not read the job specification thoroughly.

Job applications are treated confidentially by the HR team and shared only with those

individuals involved in the recruitment and selection process.

Due to the fact we take the applicant and candidate experience seriously, **all** applications will be responded to. If you are not shortlisted after the screening process, you will receive a rejection notice. After each interview stage candidates will be kept up to date with the status of their application, and feedback provided should your application be unsuccessful. We value the time taken to make a job application and the interest shown in our University.

Speculative applications and connecting with the University

Due to the volume of recruitment activity and resources currently available to us, we do not consider direct speculative applications. Instead we expect individuals to connect with us via our [careers site](#) and to manage their own interest in our vacancies, by keeping up to date with roles we advertise.

Employee referral bonus scheme

We have in place an incentive bonus scheme for existing employees. This scheme enables employees to receive a bonus where they introduce a friend, family member, or other personal contact as a job applicant, and the referred person is then subsequently recruited and employed as a result of that introduction.

Important: Applicants must clearly state the name of their referring employee within their job application.

Interviews

Selection interviews are conducted by hiring line managers and normally there are two stages to

this process; they may be via Teams, face-to-face at our Reading or London office, or over the phone – or a combination. The HR team will contact you should you be selected for interview and advise you what is involved.

Questions asked at interview (as well as other assessments undertaken) are prepared in advance, using only the person specification for the role. They focus on the needs of the job and will not in any way be discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. The University may share these questions or assessment guidance with you in advance to allow you time to prepare, as well as recognising the particular needs of candidates with neurodivergent traits.

Candidates will, as a minimum, be interviewed by a panel of at least two interviewers, and during the process will normally meet a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Interviewers will be required to follow a standard and consistent format and make and retain records of interview answers and feedback. Interviewers must provide the HR team with comprehensive feedback for any unsuccessful candidates.

Should interviews take place at our offices, candidates must cover their own travel costs. We are unable to pay for or contribute towards those costs.

Internal vacancies and applications

In the interest of fairness and equity, all internal vacancies will be advertised prior to an appointment being made; employees will not be unilaterally promoted without such a process being undertaken. The only exception is when one of the following scenarios applies:

- The line manager is certain no other internal candidate could undertake the role
- An existing employee's role is not changing, and they are receiving no new additional responsibilities; this is in effect, a job title change
- The proposed change to an employee's existing role does not leave a vacancy to backfill.

Advertising

Line managers can decide to advertise vacancies internally prior to advertising externally. All vacancies advertised to external candidates will automatically be advertised internally. Staff can access vacancy information from being connected to the [careers site](#), HR intranet page, and weekly Bulletin.

Typically, internal adverts run for one week.

Informing the existing line manager

We encourage open dialogue between employees and their line managers at all times. Should existing employees wish to apply for a job vacancy within the University, we request they inform their current line manager without delay. We encourage conversations which involve line managers:

- Supporting internal applications
- Offering advice in relation to applications
- If they are not already aware, talking to team members about career aspirations
- Addressing any concerns employees may have about their current job role hence wishing to move
- If employees are unsuccessful in their application, line managers can support them after the process closes.

Keeping line managers informed will also be helpful in terms of resource planning. Early notifications about internal applications will enable line managers to plan, should applications eventually be successful.

Should employees feel unable to inform their line manager, we ask they seek advice from the HR team.

Interviews

Line managers may choose to implement a one stage interview process, normally as long as the relevant Senior Leadership Team representative is part of the interview panel.

Feedback

Recruiting managers will provide comprehensive feedback **directly** to any unsuccessful internal candidates. Ideally this will be provided in person or over a video call.

Notice periods

Employees who are successful in obtaining a role within another team, may be required to fulfil their contractual notice period in their existing role, prior to moving to their new role. This process can be subject to negotiation.

Fixed term contracts

Should existing employees wish to apply for a fixed term job vacancy within the University, they will need to discuss this with their current line manager to understand what would happen after the expiry of the fixed term period, should they be successful and be appointed into another role.

The default position is if the employee is offered and accepts the fixed term role, they would

relinquish their contractual permanent employment status with the University. This means following the expiry of the fixed term period, their employment with the University would cease, unless an alternative role is secured by the employee.

At the point of application for any fixed term role, employees have the option to negotiate with their line manager and discuss whether they are able to undertake the fixed term role as a secondment, thereby protecting their permanent employment status with the University. In practical terms this means that following the expiry of the fixed term period, the employee would return to their substantive role and retain their contractual status.

Please note approval for a secondment is at the sole discretion of the employee's line manager. It is not a given that employees can automatically return to their former job role after a fixed term period expires in another role, nor can any line manager be pressured to accept a secondment.

It is important these conversations take place prior to an employee's application, so they understand the impact any fixed term role will have on their employment status.

Offers of employment and onboarding

Once a hiring manager has selected their chosen candidate, they will liaise with HR about the offer to be made. Once formally signed off, offers of employment are made verbally by a member of the HR team (not the hiring manager) and followed up in writing with full details of the offer. For the avoidance of doubt, offers will not be made during the interview process.

Where an offer is accepted, the HR team will agree a start date in consultation with the successful candidate and the hiring manager; this is where the onboarding process begins.

Pre-employment checks

We undertake thorough pre-employment screening as part of our onboarding process **for new staff**; this satisfies legal requirements, and it ensures we comply with the requirements laid down by those organisations with whom we have contractual arrangements.

Important: Any offer of employment will be **conditional** on pre-employment checks being met satisfactorily.

Our standard pre employment checks comply with the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) and include identity, right to work (RTW), a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, three years of employment history, and qualification verification. We will fund the cost of any identity, RTW, or criminal record (DBS) check for new starters.

For some job roles, we may require that an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List is undertaken, as part of pre-employment screening. If this is the case, we will make this clear from the outset as part of advertising the job vacancy. We will also be transparent about this requirement throughout the recruitment process, including up to and including the formal offer of employment. Again, we will fund the cost of this criminal record check.

As part of safer recruitment processes, we maintain a **Single Central Register (SCR)** for recording pre-employment checks undertaken. The SCR remains available for inspection by Ofsted.

Identity check

We engage with a third-party Digital Verification Service (DVS) in order carry out identity checks on all new starters. Successful candidates will receive a link from our DVS on behalf of the University and will need to provide the relevant identity documents.

Right to work

We can only employ staff with the requisite right to work in the UK. The HR team will inspect right to work documents or complete an online RTW check as part of the recruitment process.

Please note advertised job roles with permanent employment status, normally require indefinite leave to enter and remain in the UK, and right to work. Wherever possible, we will adopt a digital approach to verifying an applicant's right to work.

At this current time, we do **not** hold a sponsor licence, nor do we intend to apply for a licence in the foreseeable future.

Basic DBS check

New staff will need to undertake a Basic DBS criminal record check via GOV.UK, making sure to identify the University for payment. Please note we will carry out a follow up conversation with any successful candidate where their certificate contains information i.e. it is not "clear". The presence of information on your certificate will not automatically make you ineligible for the role you have applied for; the conversation will be based on risk in relation to the job role you have been offered.

For the avoidance of doubt, all special category data relating to criminal records is managed confidentially and securely by the HR team, as

part of our data protection policy and processes.

Enhanced DBS check

Some successful candidates in some job roles, will need to undertake an Enhanced DBS criminal record check via the DVS*; this check **will include** the Children's Barred List. Enhanced DBS checking satisfies safeguarding requirements for some of our working environments, and will only be necessary in exceptional cases, where the delivery of education programmes to those aged under 18 takes place in a physical or online environment – and where there is an opportunity for contact with children by the jobholder.

*Candidates will be required to download and use the app of our DVS, in order to undertake the online check.

In these cases, the job itself will be exempt from certain provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. In practice this means candidates are **required** to disclose all and any past or pending cautions or convictions, whether spent or otherwise, unless it is either a "[protected caution](#)" or a "[protected conviction](#)" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020).

As part of the job application process, applicants will be asked to respond to the following recruitment questions:

Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974? (Y/N)?

Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of

Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020? (Y/N)?

If applicants accidentally disclose certain convictions and cautions which are considered protected, they will not be taken into account.

Once a DBS application is made via the DVS by a successful candidate, we will carry out a follow up conversation if your certificate contains information i.e. it is not "clear". The presence of information on your certificate will not automatically make you ineligible for the role you have applied for; the conversation will be based on risk in relation to the job role you have been offered. Government guidance covering the [filtering rules](#) for DBS checks is available online.

We will keep the requirement for Enhanced DBS checking with the Children's Barred List under review, as our education programme delivery evolves.

For the avoidance of doubt, all special category data relating to criminal records is managed confidentially and securely by the HR team, as part of our data protection policy and processes.

Employment history (references)

The HR team will request employment references for the successful candidate. References will mainly be used to confirm factual information such as employment and/or academic history and experience. References must cover three years of employment history and candidates should contact HR, if they have less than three years.

Qualification verification

We will seek original documentary evidence or certified copies, of the relevant academic and/or professional qualifications or memberships, which are detailed in job applications. Where candidates cannot locate original certificates for required qualifications, they are responsible for applying for replacement certificates. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not the policy of the University to pay for, or contribute towards, these replacement costs.

Teacher prohibition checks

We will conduct a teacher prohibition check via the Teaching Regulation Agency for all teaching or lecturing roles. A prohibition check ensures the employee is not prohibited from teaching. This is a statutory requirement.

Disclosure of medical information

We are a supportive and inclusive employer with respect to both physical and mental health, as well as neurodiversity. As part of our onboarding process, we will ask candidates to provide any medical or health information they wish to notify to our First Aid team in the event of an emergency, such as allergies, medical conditions, medicines/drugs etc. We will also ask candidates to provide any other medical or health information which may need to be considered, for their employment.

The HR team will work closely with candidates and line managers to consider what reasonable adjustments we can facilitate, to support employment and effective working.

Record keeping and data protection

A complete record of each recruitment process will be retained by the HR team. Typically we retain information for no more than six months, after a job offer has been accepted. More information on how the University processes this data, along with our data retention periods and destruction schedule, can be found in our *Privacy notice for job applicants to University of the Built Environment*.

Temporary workers (agency)

Occasionally we may require the urgent support of a temporary agency worker (“a temp”). Wherever possible we will work with existing suppliers with whom we have long-standing relationships. Temps are generally used to:

- Assist with urgent work or assist during a very busy period
- Cover for roles we are struggling to recruit
- Cover for absence when a return to work date is unknown, such as sickness
- Completion of a specific task
- Cover short term project work
- Fill intended temporary roles, perhaps where funding is time limited.

Line managers must seek approval for temps via the internal Personnel Change Request (PCR) process. Line managers should provide HR with as much detail as possible on the assignment duration, skills, experience, and qualifications required.

HR will work with the agency to provide suitable CVs for line managers to consider. Occasionally HR will ask the line manager to act as the main contact, particularly in the case of technical or specialist roles.

Wherever possible, temps should be based in our physical office location for each working day and be supervised. Only in exceptional circumstances should a temp be offered an alternative working arrangement.

Once a suitable temp has been identified, HR/IT/FM require a **minimum of three clear working days** between confirming with the agency to supply the named temp, and the temp starting at our office. In the rare event a temp has an alternative place of work, HR/IT/FM will require a **minimum of seven clear working days**. This ensures internal teams have enough time to source and set up equipment with the required items. The above timeframes have been mutually agreed between HR, IT, and FM and must be respected by line managers.

Where a temp is no longer required for the original assignment duration, the temp and their agency must be given reasonable and respectful notice; we aim to provide one week but this may not always be possible. We value the relationship we have with our suppliers and the temps with whom we are supplied.

Whilst temps are not subject to the same pre-employment checks listed elsewhere in this policy, we may ask them to undertake appropriate mandatory training, which may vary depending on the job role.

Contractors

A contractor is an independent external third party who may be a self-employed individual, or a person who provides their services through a limited company.

Line managers looking to engage a contractor or consultant must have secured the relevant budget; they must also contact HR, so a work assessment (for tax/employment) can be

undertaken, prior to the search process commencing.

Working together, HR and the line manager will conduct this assessment. The result will determine how we legally engage and pay the contractor. HR will then assist with contract preparation (contract for services or contract of employment).

HR will also undertake an online RTW check, which is a new requirement under the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Act 2025.

As stated, line managers are responsible for liaising with their Finance Business Partner regarding budgeting and costs. If the tax/employment assessment outcome requires us to add the person to payroll, there may be 'on costs' associated with the appointment, including holiday pay, pension, apprenticeship levy, and National Insurance.

Whilst contractors are not subject to the same pre-employment checks listed elsewhere in this policy, we may ask them to undertake relevant mandatory training, which may vary depending on the role. We will also ensure any contractors have sufficient qualifications and experience for the type of work to be undertaken.

Appendix A: Recruitment procedure

Below is a summary of the procedure to fill a job vacancy at the University. The majority of jobs will be advertised on the [careers site](#) with the process managed within the associated Applicant Tracking System (ATS). If your vacancy is not to be managed in this way, HR will inform you about the legacy system to be used.

Step 1: Approval to recruit (line manager)

Establish the agreed budget for the post. All roles to be recruited should be found on the Recruitment Approved List (RAL). If this is a new, unbudgeted role, you will need to follow the Personnel Change Request (PCR) Docusign process in consultation with your Finance Business Partner.

Step 2: Prepare vacancy (line manager)

Alert the HR team of your intention to recruit by emailing the Recruitment mailbox Recruitment@ube.ac.uk

Prepare a full and up to date job specification document; this includes both the job description and person specification (a template is available on the HR section of the intranet). If a job specification already exists from an earlier recruitment, this will still need to be reviewed and updated before use.

For roles advertised via the careers site, raise the requisition for the vacancy, attaching the job specification. Send any other requirements to the Recruitment mailbox, such as specific advertising requirements which might be outside of the ordinary, such as specific wording to include or specialist jobs boards.

Step 3: Finalise, advertise, and manage vacancy (HR)

Finalise the job specification for publishing. This includes reviewing the required competencies listed and challenging where required. Send final version to the line manager.

Prepare advert words and post on the careers site/relevant job boards, negotiating costs as required. Follow the standard HR operating procedure (SOP) to manage the vacancy from this point onwards.

Step 4: Screening/Shortlisting/Interviews (HR and line manager)

HR will conduct an initial screen of applications and provide line managers with a long list, together with a request to supply interview details (dates/times, interviewers, etc.). Line managers should provide HR with a final shortlist of candidates for interview along with the required interview information.

Line managers prepare for interviews by using the person specification to write interview questions, referring to the sample questions provided by HR on the intranet.

If not occurring within the ATS, HR will manage the invite to interview process, which includes checking right to work, in accordance with the SOP. HR will act as the link between candidates and the line manager and will keep the line manager apprised of any developments. Once interviews are complete and interview notes finalised, line managers send HR interview outcomes and candidate feedback. This includes completing the [Docusign offer form](#).

Step 5: Manage offer and rejections (HR)

Continue to follow the SOP to make the offer and keep the line manager informed of progress.

Make sure all applicants and interviewees have received a response in writing with the outcome of their application.

Step 6: Prepare for new starter (HR and line manager)

Once start date is confirmed, HR will notify internal teams through the new starter workflow process and commence further onboarding activities.

Line managers should prepare for the new starter arrival including planning induction activities and notifying the team. Please make use of the Welcome to the University guide for new starters and other resources (available within the HR area of the intranet).

It is vital a new starter feels welcomed and has a structured induction process. It is recommended line managers contact new starters prior to arrival, to let them know what time to arrive on day one and the activities planned.

Step 7: Onboarding and close vacancy (HR)

Continue to onboard the new starter until all activities complete. Close down recruitment process in line with GDPR privacy notice.