Recruitment & Induction

NHS Blood and Transplant

Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance or quick reference guide only, so always refer to the policy.

1. Vacancy Approval Stage

1.1 What is the role of the Talent Acquisition and Recruitment (TAR) Department?

The Talent Acquisition and Recruitment Department is responsible for advising Hiring Managers and applicants on the recruitment and selection process and meeting the timescales set out in the document "Working together to fill your vacancy" and Recruitment/Guidance and Checklists in People First). Recruitment will work with managers to support them in recruiting their employees.

1.2 Do I need to wait until my employee has served their notice before advertising the vacancy?

No. You should start the recruitment process as soon as you have received their notice in writing to prevent any delays. Do not wait until they have served their notice.

1.3 What actions do I need to take to recruit to my vacancy?

You need to complete a vacancy request via the eRecruitment system to obtain the appropriate approvals. See Requesting a vacancy on People First

You will receive an acknowledgement of your request. All the requests are collated and reviewed on a Monday morning by a member of the TAR team and sent to the directors for approval. You will be contacted during the week to arrange a commissioning (start-up) meeting with you to discuss your vacancy in more detail. This may vary where workload is high.

1.4 When would it be appropriate to use expressions of interest rather than going through the usual recruitment process?

Our Recruitment and Induction policy states that "As a minimum all job vacancies must be advertised internally (i.e. available to those working within NHSBT) in our Vacancies Bulletin available on People First. This includes posts that are to be filled on the basis of permanent, fixed term / temporary or secondment opportunities. To ensure national consistency, exceptions to this must be agreed with a senior member of the Talent Acquisition and Recruitment (TAR) and Resourcing Department (RRD).

Expressions of interest are a way for managers to recruit internally without employees having to complete the full application form and recruitment process through NHS Jobs. However, there are limited circumstances where this would be appropriate. Expressions of interest can be used in the following situations:

- When filling a post and the appointment, and any subsequent back fill, must be from within a department's existing budget or establishment. This applies to permanent and fixed term appointments.
- When there is a short-term need (usually less than 6 months) for someone to do a specific piece of work where only someone from within the department will have the current specialist skills / knowledge required.

- When there is a short-term development opportunity that matches developmental needs identified during the PDPR process.

A manager wishing to seek expressions of interest for a role rather than advertising internally must agree this with a senior member of the Talent, Acquisition and Recruitment Team beforehand as outlined in the Recruitment and Induction Policy. If a manager appoints to a role through expressions of interest and the role subsequently becomes permanent it must be advertised.

In addition, if you are looking to redistribute hours within your existing team, and not recruit a 'whole' new person, this may also be managed using Expressions of Interest. You must however consider any neighbouring teams who may have the same job roles and skills.

2. Advertising Stage

2.1 A former employee wants to come back to work, what do I do?

This will depend on the length of time since they left and whether or not recruitment has commenced on the post they vacated. If it is only a short time ago, you have not yet commenced recruitment and you want to re-employ them you should contact HR Direct to discuss how you would like to proceed.

If they left a while ago and you have recruited to their vacated post, you should refer them to the eRecruitment portal to set up an alert for appropriate vacancies or offer to make them aware of any posts that might be of interest to them. However, the full recruitment process will need to be carried out, and the person in question would be treated as an external applicant and would be in competition with any other applicant.

2.2 I want to make a permanent appointment to what was a fixed term (temporary) post or a secondment. What action do I need to take?

Fixed-term or secondments changing to permanent posts must be advertised internally as a minimum in the usual way. You will therefore need to complete a vacancy request form on the eRecruitment systems. The recruitment process will then need to be followed.

3. Short-listing and Pre-interview Stage

3.1 My post requires a professional registration. How is this checked?

Your recruitment contact will check any statutory registration (i.e. NMC, GMC, and HCPC) for all successful candidates prior to an offer being made.

3.2 What other selection methods are available in addition to the interview?

The main method of selection is the face to face interview, however there are a number of other selection methods that you may use to provide you with further evidence for the panel to consider in reaching a final decision, these include:

- ability tests
- informal tour or visit
- group exercise
- written report
- presentations
- in-tray exercise
- occupational personality reports

Further detail on these selection methods is provided on People First. Should you choose to use an additional selection method, it must be relevant to the job and recruitment will notify the candidate in advance of the interview. Please discuss this with your Recruitment contact.

3.3 What happens to my recruitment campaign if a redeployee applies for my post?
It is important that we give redeployees preference during the recruitment process to retain their skills, knowledge and experience and minimise the cost of redundancy.

On a weekly basis, vacancies are advertised on the NHSBT e-Recruitment system a redeployee applies for your vacancy, your recruitment contact will inform you and you will be sent their application for shortlisting. All other applicants with be advised that progress on the vacancy will be delayed. You will need to shortlist any redeployees against the essential criteria for the post and where the applicant does not match any essential criteria consider whether the applicant could achieve this given the appropriate training within a reasonable timeframe, which is normally 3 months.

If you decide not to shortlist you will be expected to confirm your decision in writing and give feedback to the redeployee. If you shortlist the redeployee you will need to interview them ahead of any other applicants - it is recommended that you include a member of HR on the interview panel if possible. You will be expected to appoint the redeployee if they meet the essential criteria or could be trained in any essential criteria within 3 months.

If they are unsuccessful you will need to explain the reasons for your decision and give the redeployee feedback. If they are successful, they would normally commence on a trial period. Your recruitment contact will keep you informed of the process at all times.

3.4 Must I give feedback to applicants that I have not short-listed?
Due to the large numbers of applications we receive, we state in our policy, and candidate literature, that we are unable to give feedback on short listing to external applicants. You will however be expected to give feedback to internal applicants as part of their development.

3.5 What is a reserve list and how is this applied?
For some roles, the level of turnover may mean that regular recruitment is required for a particular role or department. Therefore, instead of choosing one candidate, and then potentially regularly running this process, if at the end of an assessment process, the interview panel indicate on the paperwork *anyone* who was appointable; this will create a reserve list of candidates, and usually in order of preference.

The general rule applied is that if the manager needs another recruit, and it is within 3 months and we do not have anyone on the redeployment list who might be interested, we go to the next reserve. If there is any doubt, as we may have a redeployee or an internal employee that might want to apply, an internal advert is placed for a week to make sure that there is no internal response before contacting the reserve.

3.6 What is cohort recruitment and how is this applied?
This is normally where we recruit more than one person in to some roles that may for example have a high turnover or may be difficult to recruit. Therefore, we may choose to recruit in a cohort two or three times a year. This will normally result in the appointing a successful candidate and provide us with an additional reserve list, which we may be able to offer posts to, normally within 3 months.

4. Interview Stage
4.1 I have interviewed a candidate who has stated that they will require a reasonable adjustment - what should I do?
The candidate should be considered for appointment based on their abilities with the reasonable adjustment made, against the criteria in the person specification or recruitment profile (this will depend on what document has been used for advertising) and in comparison, with the other candidates. If they are your successful candidate, you should speak with your recruitment contact who will identify who can support you with a reasonable adjustment assessment.

4.2 What checks do I need to carry out at interview?

A Candidate Interview Checklist will be provided for recording the checking of identity, right to work in the UK, relevant qualifications and, where appropriate, driving licence and Professional Registrations.

You will need to arrange for this to be completed on the day of the interview. Your recruitment contact will liaise with the candidates to ensure they bring with them to the interview the appropriate documentation to satisfy the NHS employment checks e.g. identity, immigration etc. You are required to check the authenticity of the documents provided, take photocopies and sign and date the photocopies before returning these to your recruitment contact with the Candidate Interview Checklist. If your post involves the candidate having access to an irradiator, additional checks are required. The candidate will have been sent a Candidate Security Checks Checklist with their invite to interview and are asked to bring this with them together with other relevant documentation to the interview. Again, you are asked to check the authenticity of the documents as above and return them to your recruitment contact with the Candidate Security Checks Checklist.

If these documents are collected and returned to recruitment in a timely manner this will aid the speed of recruitment.

4.3 What documents do I need to return following the interview?

Immediately following the interviews please scan and email the following for your successful candidate and any reserves to your recruitment contact. See People First for further details.

4.4 What should I do if I am involved in a recruitment and selection process where I feel that discrimination has taken place?

You should refuse to continue with your involvement and report the matter to your manager and HR Direct.

5. Offer and Pre-appointment Checks

5.1 Why do we need to carry out the pre-employment checks?

As an NHS employer, we must take appropriate action to prevent unsuitable people from obtaining employment with us. The checks we carry out are in accordance with NHS Employment Check Standards, Disclosure and Barring Services Guidance and Home Office UK Borders Agency requirements. For further information speak to your recruitment contact.

5.2 What health related pre-employment checks are made?

Once a job offer has been made, a pre-employment questionnaire is sent out to the candidate. This is passed on to our Occupational Health (OH) provider.

Sometimes this may result in an OH appointment with a Healthcare Professional, which may be by telephone, to ensure we understand any health-related issues they may have or may have had that may impact on their ability to work for us. It also allows us to ensure we are providing the appropriate support for them once they start with us, including any reasonable adjustments they may require conducting their duties.

5.3 What is considered to be poor sickness absence in a reference?

In consideration of the pre-employment clearances, the principles stated in the Attendance Policy will apply. Therefore, we would look to see if the candidate would trigger our own stages within the policy. In addition, following open and measured discussion, we would also consider any long-term absences. If you have concerns regarding the candidate's sickness record, you will receive support to hold a meeting with the candidate, when you would consider whether:

- the candidate's absence record is accurate
- the candidate has a condition covered by the Equality Act
- reasonable adjustments we would apply in that situation and what are they
- there is an underlying reason for the absence level and pattern
- the candidate may need any long-term support from us and what this should be

- the absence was a one off e.g. due to an accident or operation

This list is not exhaustive.

5.4 How and when should I organise a start date for my new starter?

Your recruitment contact will inform you when the necessary pre-employment checks have been received. Once you are satisfied with these you will need to contact your successful candidate to agree a start date. Please let your recruitment contact know the final start date that you have agreed so that they can send out the contract of employment to the new starter and the starter paperwork to you for completion on their first day.

5.5 My successful candidate has asked for a higher starting salary and / or higher annual leave entitlement - what am I able to approve and how do I progress this?

If your successful candidate is moving from an NHS post, they will move to NHSBT on Agenda for Change provisions. This is subject to salary and service confirmation by their previous employer.

New entrants to the NHS would normally commence on the minimum of the salary scale, however there is discretion to allow incremental credit if the candidate has relevant experience. See the Starting Salary on Appointment Managers Guidance and ask your recruitment contact for the most up to date form that you will need to complete.

With regards to offering higher annual leave entitlement, again the expectation is that this will be in accordance with NHS terms and conditions, however if you want to use this as an attraction for recruitment please refer to the refer to the Time Off Work Policy.

In exceptional circumstance, a Recruitment Retention Premium (RRP) may be considered. Please refer to the Recruitment and Retention Premia (RRP) Management Guidance

If you have any queries regarding attraction benefits you will need to contact HR Direct.

5.6 In what circumstances am I permitted to offer and negotiate relocation expenses for recruitment purposes?

Relocation support will only be granted where the appointment of a more local candidate is unlikely.

More information is contained within the Organisational Change Policy and supporting FAQ's.

6. Induction

6.1 As a manager, what should I consider for inclusion in a first Personal Development Plan (PDP), as part of an induction?

New Starters information on People First) will provide you with a list of options that you need to consider during the design of a first PDP in relation to your work area. A first PDP template is also available (see PDPR Policy). As a minimum, it is recommended that you include the following areas in the first PDP:

- Introduce their immediate work area. This will be an orientation of the local departmental and centre surroundings, job role, and key personnel.
- Introduce their Directorate and departmental structure
- Introduce other key personnel
- Enrol them on any electronic systems within NHSBT
- Review their roles, responsibilities and set expectations for their new JD/PS
- Provide a Buddy, or group of buddies to mentor them into the role (informal support)
- Identify their essential training for the post
- Identify other training required for the post - consider any relevant task-based training needs such as MPD/SOP here – this could be generic or grouped and not listed in total

- Identify other detailed training required for the post, supported by any existing, relevant workbooks for the role or work area
- Ensure sufficient work cover to enable training to take place – trainers and trainees
- Refer them to the New Starter information for Employees on People First.
- Consider what gaps, if any, were identified by the employee or by you in the interview process – set out how these gaps will be filled
- Finalise initial PDP objectives using the PDPR process
- Finalise timescales for all PDP and induction activity – timetable regular reviews
- Book a date of first PDPR and review of induction plan

6.2 Do I need to cover all elements of New Starter information on People First during my new starter's induction?

No, this acts as a resource of potential discussion topics that you may wish to include within your new starters Local Induction. They are listed in their entirety to enable you to consider their relevance with respect to your work area.

6.3 How do I report that I have agreed my new starter's PDP?

Once you have agreed a PDP and completed the local induction, this must be reported via the PDP/R reporting tool on the PDPR pages in People First.

6.4 What information do I need to report about the PDPR process?

You need to report the PDP for new starters and the full year PDPR. Although it is likely that you will have interim PDPR reviews with your employee, these do not need to be reported.

6.5 What information is available for new starters about their Induction?

You can direct your new starter to the New Starter information for Employees on People First.

6.6 Will any Induction and Mandatory Training I have completed elsewhere count with NHSBT?

We recognise that a new starter may be recruited from neighbouring Trusts where they have completed the Trust-specific Induction and Mandatory Training. Where you can show that you have completed equivalent, or superior learning against the job-specific training requirements, we will not require you to repeat the training. You must provide HR Direct with your exclusion reasoning and, where possible, include the following:

- Programme attendance details e.g. certificate and/or date
- Programme Title
- Programme Learning Aims
- Programme Learning Outcomes
- Programme Indicative content
- Programme delivery method

Details of the programme previously attended must be submitted to HR Direct for review prior to equivalence being confirmed. Your records will be compared against the programme outlines for our in-house training programmes. Where the learning outcomes match, this will be confirmed by e-mail, and manual amendments will be made to your Mandatory Training Requirements.
This will be particularly suitable if you are on an Honorary contract and work primarily within a local Trust, those who are directly employed with NHSBT but who are embedded within a Trust environment, or those in a Work Placement position and rotate between different employers.

6.7 How do I correct my new starter's mandatory training allocation?

All new starters will be allocated their corporate mandatory training automatically based on their job role. Should you have any queries, contact HR Direct.

7. Probation Review

7.1 How often should I meet with my employee/manager during my Probation?

There is no set frequency. You and your manager will hold regular reviews throughout your induction and probation period. This should be entirely appropriate to your first PDP and although considering operational requirements, be as often as required.

There should however be a thorough formal review at the 1-month probation stage. This will be an opportunity for you both to reflect on your progress to date. This will culminate in you having a formal 6-month review. This must take place after 5 months, but before the end of the full 6 months.

7.2 What do I do if I decide during my Probation that the job role or aspects of the job are not right for me?

We do try to ensure that we are as honest and open as possible in our vacancies, job descriptions and interview processes. However, there may be aspects of a role you did not fully understand, or, now you are in post, just do not feel are right for you. Therefore, should you decide within your induction period, that even with the necessary induction and training, you feel unable to continue in our employment, we will make every possible effort to support your decision to leave us, as soon as practicable.

7.3 What happens if I am struggling with any part of my induction or initial training?

Your manager will talk through your induction and initial PDP as part of your local induction, and regular reviews will be held. If there are any aspects of the induction that you do not understand, or you have any concerns, you should raise this with your manager as soon as possible.

If your manager identifies any issues, your induction may be extended where necessary, to provide you appropriate opportunity to complete your training. However, should you not complete any necessary training for your post within this time, or with a reasonable extension, and if you have not decided to leave us, this may lead to a final review meeting, where a senior manager may decide to bring your employment with us to an end. Should this situation arise, the Recruitment and Induction Policy will be followed.

7.4 When do I have a probation period?

If you are joining us for the first time, you will have a probation period of 6 months. However, if you are changing job roles, this will not be subject to a probation period. Any concerns that your manager may have will be supported by the Capability and/or the Disciplinary policy.

If you are joining us from another NHS organisation, you will still be subject to our probationary period. Although some benefits may transfer from your previous service, this does not apply to notice during your probationary period.

7.5 How long is my probation period?

The probation period is 6 months.

7.6 What must I achieve during my probation period?

You must participate fully in your induction and complete everything within your first PDP, which includes job specific training. You participate in your reviews and highlight any concerns you have to your manager. You will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Your Job performance
- Your performance against our values and behaviours
- Your Conduct
- Your Work attendance
- Your Training and development

The 1-month formal review is particularly important, as this will be a good indication of how much you need to do to pass your probation. The 5-month review is a formal review to establish that you have done enough to pass at the 6-month stage, or whether your probation will be extended, or your case will be referred to a final review meeting.

7.7 What happens at the 6-month formal probation review meeting?

You will be invited in writing to attend this formal review, and therefore you have the right to be accompanied by an NHSBT employee or representative of a Trade Union you belong to, not acting in a legal capacity. You and your manager will review thoroughly the content of your PDP (or other competency related documentation), including updates from your review meetings. Provided you have completed all the actions required in your PDP, your manager will be able to confirm that you have passed your probation period. Should you narrowly miss your objectives, or any elements of training have not been completed, your manager will be seeking assurances as to when you will be able to complete this. Therefore, an extension of up to and no more than 3 months will be granted. Your manager must ensure they provide you with the appropriate support to complete any outstanding requirements. Finally, if you have not achieved the requirements, your case will be referred to a final review meeting.

7.8 What should I do if I feel my manager is not providing me with appropriate support during the induction and probation period?

Firstly, you should try to speak to your manager about how you are feeling and try to explain this with the use of examples. Should the situation not improve, or you feel unable to discuss it with your manager, you should try to speak to your manager's manager. Should this not work or not be possible, you should contact HR Direct to discuss the options available to you and agree next steps. Every effort will be made to ensure that you receive the appropriate support from the right person. Only in circumstances where this may not have been achieved, and you will need to demonstrate this, you should consider reference to the Grievance Policy.

7.9 How is probation applied to fixed term employees?

The probation period of 6 months is applied to all employees including those on a fixed term contract. Even if the term of the contract is less than 6 months, as their manager, you must ensure that they have a robust first personal development plan in place.

In some cases, fixed term contracts are extended, and sometimes the role may become permanent, and the person in post may apply and be successful. In such circumstances the probation period will not start again.

In addition, any issues around performance or conduct will also be considered during probation.

7.10 What happens if I change job roles during my probation period?

This may rarely occur as a permanent employee or more commonly if you are a fixed term employee, who has applied for a permanent role during your probation period and got the job.

This will be considered on a case by case basis; however, your manager and your new manager will consider the following:

- How far in to the probation period you are
- The content of your first PDP
- The content of any specific task-based training
- Any significantly different training you may require for the new post
- Your conduct, job performance and attendance to date

Depending on these factors, your managers will decide one of the following:

- To continue your probation and first PDP
- To hold a 6-month review
- To extend your probation period up to and no more than three months

7.11 What notice do I need to provide during my probation period?

You are only required to give statutory notice during your probation period of 6 months, which is equivalent to one week's notice. You should discuss your notice requirements with your manager. Although one week is the minimum notice period required, it may be that you agree with your manger to provide more, depending on your own personal requirements and that of your new employer. During any notice period, we would expect you to complete any identified outstanding work and handover to another colleague wherever possible or to your manager.

Once you have passed your probation, then contractual notice will apply either side.

7.12 Must I attend a Final review meeting?

Following your 6-month Formal Probation review, or extended period if appropriate, should your manager refer you to a Final Review meeting for contemplation of dismissal, you may choose not to attend. In this situation, the senior manager will consider your case and decide in your absence.

Once a formal decision is made, and the decision is to dismiss you on grounds of failure to meet the required standard during the probation period, then you would not be required to work the statutory notice period.

7.13 What do I as a manager need to provide to my senior manager before they hold the Final Review meeting?

You must be clear in your rationale for not wishing to continue your team member's employment. This means that you need to summarise the key reasons. This does not need to be a detailed statement of case, as with other processes, however, the information must be clear, concise and robust. You may also wish to include exerts and details from:

- Their Personal Development Plan
- Any action plans
- E mails/other correspondence
- Sickness data
- Conduct summary from any potential case or outcome
- Notes/minutes of any 1-1 meetings held

7.14 As the senior manager making the decision, what do I need to consider?

The manager referring the case must be clear in their rational for not wishing to continue their employment. You need to be provided with a summary, and not a detailed management statement of case, however, the information must be clear, concise and robust. They should also be including exerts and details from:

- Their Personal Development Plan
- Any action plans
- E mails/other correspondence
- Sickness data
- Conduct summary from any potential case or outcome

The employee must have been given reasonable time to comply with any actions etc and to attend any essential training etc. In addition, the manager must have ensured they have carried out their actions from the above meetings. Timescales must have been followed.

On receipt of the summary, it is important that you seek the appropriate advice and support from HR, and if necessary refer to the Dignity at Work Policy and seek advice from HR.

7.15 As a member of an appeal panel, what do I need to consider?

You must ensure that the processes contained within the Recruitment and Induction Policy in relation to probation has been followed. The policy sets out the processes very clearly and the manager referring the case must provide the necessary rationale for not retaining the person in our employment.

The dismissing manager needs to be clear on the process they followed, and the basis of their decision including the consideration of an extension etc.

7.16 What measures are in place to ensure that those who are known to have or found to have during the process, a protected characteristic under current legislation?

If you have one or more protected characteristics, the summary that your manager sends to their senior manager for the Final review meeting will be assessed by the Senior Manager and the Diversity and Inclusion Manager before the meeting, to ensure that no discrimination has occurred. This review will normally take place by phone or Teams, as quickly as possible, so that proceedings may continue.

7.17 Why is the Final Review meeting with my senior manager and not with a panel?

Your manager would have provided you with their expectations from the time you were provided with your job offer and would have had a structured induction/PDP in place.

Based on the PDP and their reviews etc, they will provide a clear reason for referring your case to a senior manager. To ensure fairness, a more senior manager would be able to review your case and the reasons for referral, and considering the supporting evidence be able to make a decision.

8. Policy Approval and Review

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9. FAQ's Section Details

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