

**Guidance on Shortlisting**

This document provides an overview of the University’s expectations for shortlisting.

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# **1. Key principles**

* The University will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit.
* Recruiting and retaining top talent is essential for meeting our business goals and maintaining a competitive advantage. Shortlisting effectively helps us to find and employ the right person for the role. We know that applicants may turn down an interview or job offer if the recruitment process takes too long, so shortlisting quickly and effectively is essential to ensure we don’t miss out on our best candidates.

To help you to do this, once an advert is live, all panel members who are University employees will have access to view any applications received in iTrent, as and when they are submitted. You can choose to commence your shortlisting at this point or when the vacancy closes. We recommend you start the process as soon as possible.

# **2. Shortlisting**

* Shortlisting should be carried out by at least 2 panel members (excluding the Chair).
* The recruiting manager should ensure that HR are aware of the names of all panel members as soon as possible, the HR team can then provide them with access to iTrent, where they can view the applications.
* If you have any panel members who are not University employees, unfortunately we cannot give them access to iTrent. Please ensure that you download and securely share applications with them.

**Shortlisting Grid**

* A shortlisting grid is available to download within iTrent and will also be emailed to panel members the day after the vacancy closes.
* Completion of the shortlisting grid is mandatory as it ensures that you assess all candidates fairly and against the criteria, rather than each other. This allows for a more objective evaluation and for identifying the strongest candidates. It also ensures a fair and transparent record of the shortlisting is kept. Applicants who are not shortlisted have the right to question the decision and request feedback.

**How to complete the shortlisting grid**

* You should add all of the criteria from the person specification in your recruitment pack, which are **reasonably demonstrated on a written application**, along the top of the shortlisting grid and consider applicants against these.
* If there are criteria which you feel are not reasonably demonstrable from a written application, then these criteria do not need to be added to your shortlisting grid but would require further discussion at interview, to check that the candidate meets these requirements.
* On your own, make time to consider each application against the criteria.
* Within each application, check that the candidate mentions the criteria, evidences how it is met and where relevant provides an example of where they have developed the skill/knowledge in question.

For example:

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| **Criteria** | **Evidence** |
| Substantial experience of working in a busy office environment, dealing with customers and handling a range of queries. | In my last role as Team Leader, I worked in a busy office environment and managed a team of 4 administrators. A key part of my role was dealing with customer queries about a range of matters over the telephone, email and in person etc…... |
| Current experience of operating IT systems and using standard office applications. | In my current role, I use Microsoft Office daily, sending letters using Word, keeping a track of all office expenditure on an Excel spreadsheet and preparing PowerPoint presentations for the quarterly sales meetings. I have used several in-house IT systems in all of my roles, such as……. |

* You must only shortlist a candidate if they evidence that they meet all the criteria on your shortlisting grid. Candidates who do not demonstrate that they meet those criteria cannot be shortlisted, as those competencies are deemed to be the minimum required on commencement of the role.
* Candidates must meet the criteria on application, for example if there is a qualification requirement, they must have already obtained the qualification.
* If the qualification requirement for the role is, for example, an undergraduate degree and the only qualification the candidate has stated on their application is a Master’s degree, you should score them as exceeding the criteria, since their qualification exceeds your requirement.

You should score each candidate on a scale of 0-2:

0 - No evidence they meet the criteria

1 - Evidence meets the criteria,

2 - Evidence exceeds the criteria

* Totalling these scores provides you with a straightforward method to rank the applications. If you prefer, you can increase the scale to help you differentiate between candidates who meet the criteria.
* If a candidate doesn’t show any evidence of meeting a criteria, you should score ‘0’ against the criteria and they cannot be shortlisted. There is no requirement to assess them against the remaining criteria if you have already found that they don’t meet a criteria.

**Focus only on the criteria**

* You must not let other aspects of the application influence your decision. Making decisions based on things such as gaps in service or whether you feel that a person may require a visa could be discriminatory and should not influence your shortlisting decisions.
* You can take into account skills gained from an applicant’s wider life experience, for example they may have managed a budget for a local Scouts group, even if they haven’t done this in paid employment, however it is down to the candidate to draw your attention to this.
* For internal applicants, you still need to rely on the evidence they present in their application, which you may find more difficult.

**Agree a final shortlist**

* When you have completed your provisional shortlist, you should then meet with at least one other panel member who has also shortlisted, to agree a final shortlist.

# **3. Uploading documentation to iTrent and coding candidates**

* Once you have agreed your final shortlist, an agreed completed shortlisting grid should be uploaded to iTrent, along with your completed interview arrangements pack. All candidates then need to be coded within iTrent as either ‘not shortlisted initial stage’ or ‘invite to interview’. For more information on how to code candidates within the system please see our [Recruitment Self Service User guide](https://staff.hud.ac.uk/media/intranet/content/hr/downloads/myhr/Recruitment_Self_Service_User_Guide.pdf).
* We would recommend that you invite no more than six applicants to interview, for a single post, with a standard interview duration of 30 minutes (plus test/presentation, if required).

# **4. Disability Confident Employer**

* We are accredited as a Disability Confident Employer.
* As a Disability Confident Employer, we guarantee an interview to any applicant who has declared a disability **and** meets all of the criteria for the post.

**How does this work in practice?**

* Once your shortlisting grid and interview arrangements pack have been uploaded to iTrent and you have coded all candidates, HR will carry out a check to identify if any candidates have declared a disability.
* HR will then refer to your shortlisting grid and if there are candidates who have declared a disability but haven't been shortlisted, and your shortlisting grid shows they have met all of the criteria, the HR team will contact you to advise that they should be added to the shortlist.  HR will then begin to process your arrangements and invite candidates to choose and book their interview slots.

# **5. Things to consider**

**Fairness**

* You should endeavour to be fair and unbiased. All members of staff involved in recruitment and selection activities are required to have completed both Recruitment and Selection, and Unconscious Bias training in the last two years.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

* The University supports the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments at all stages of the recruitment process. If a candidate requests a reasonable adjustment directly to HR, we will contact the recruiting manager to advise on a reasonable course of action based on previous scenarios.
* Always be mindful of protected characteristics and ensure you stick objectively to the person specification. Please refer to the University’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Framework if you are unsure.

**Don’t make changes to the criteria when shortlisting**

* We have asked candidates to provide evidence of how they meet the minimum criteria for the role, as detailed on your person specification, and they have made their applications on this basis. To change these criteria in retrospect would be unfair to candidates who have applied and also potential candidates, who didn’t submit an application because they didn’t meet the original criteria.

**Conflicts of interest**

* If there is a conflict of interest or a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual’s application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

If you have any queries about the process, please contact Claire Round, Recruitment and Selection Manager, via Teams or at c.l.round@hud.ac.uk.