

Recruitment Policy

Purpose

- The A1 Group recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. The A1 Group therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined below, which also meet the requirements of the A1 Group Equal Opportunities Employment Policy, the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant employment legislation.

Scope

This policy and procedure cover all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all staff recruitment except casual staff. In order for the policy and procedure to be effective it is essential that any employee who is involved in any aspect of the recruitment and/or selection of staff is aware of this document and follows it. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the senior management in The A1 Group, including Heads of Departments, in conjunction with HR to ensure that this is the case.

Core Principles

- The A1 Group has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment.
- The A1 Group will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the A1 Group.
- The A1 Group wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process and as required in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post.
- The A1 Group will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.
- The A1 Group will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities in order to meet this core principle. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy him or herself that he/she is appropriately trained and can comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure. As a minimum requirement any member of staff who takes part in any activity under this policy and procedure must first have been aware of the A1 Group Equality and Diversity policy and the equal opportunities policy training.
- Recruitment and selection is a key public relations exercise and should enhance the reputation of the A1 Group. The A1 Group will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- The A1 Group will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- The A1 Group will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost effective.
- If 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.



- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Recruitment & Selection Procedure

There are a number of key stages in recruiting and selecting for a post. This procedure outlines the key stages. Further advice and guidance is available from our HR Consultant and an A1 Group manager.

Preparation Stage

- The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the area's strategic plans and budget has been completed.
- The recruitment of staff will take into account the A1 Group's need for new ideas and approaches and additionally should support the A1 Group's commitment to ensuring a diverse workforce by proactively seeking to attract groups that are under-represented in the A1 Group's profile to maximise its ability to meet diverse student requirements.
- Recruitment should form an integral part of the staffing strategy for the area and should take account of the need for any 'positive action' initiatives in process. 'Positive Action' is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to the steps that an employer can take to encourage applicants from people who share a protected characteristic (e.g. a certain gender or race) who under-represented in a particular area of the workforce, for example:
 - placing advertisements in the minority ethnic press, the women's press and any other publication which is targeted at groups which are under-represented;
 - including statements in advertisements that encourage individuals from under-represented groups to apply for the advertised position.
- All new or changed posts must be formally role reviewed and graded before they are advertised in order to help ensure equal pay for work of equal value.
- Formal authorisation to recruit to a post should be sought before commencing the recruitment process.
- If a manager believes that there may be potential difficulties in recruiting to a post they should contact the HR Consultant for advice and guidance on comparative market rates and options for appropriate action.

Job Description & Person Specification

- A job description including a person specification must be produced or updated for any vacant post that is to be filled.
- The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post.
- The person specification section should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used do not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.



Advertising

- As a minimum all positions will normally be advertised within the A1 Group. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide staff with opportunities for career development, thus maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff. In exceptional circumstances the HR Manager for the department may waive the need to advertise. This is likely to include the following circumstances:
 - positions requiring specialised expertise where the Recruiting Manager in the department can demonstrate that a comprehensive search has been conducted and the nominated individual is the most suitable person for the position.
 - where the recruiting manager can verify that the work is required for a specific purpose of no greater than twelve months duration.
 - where current members of staff are named on research grants in order to ensure the individual's continued employment.
 - where a research project includes a named researcher, and one of the factors for awarding the grant was the strength of the proposed research team.
- Staff subject to redeployment will be given access to vacancies before they are advertised more generally within the A1 Group or externally.
- In certain circumstances it may be more effective to use a recruitment agency. This should be discussed and agreed with the HR Consultant. This will, however, not eliminate the need to advertise the position internally and any external agencies or consultants who assist in the process must act in accordance with this policy and with respect to our equal opportunities requirements.
- Applicants should be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision regarding their suitability for the role. Further particulars that provide such information should be produced using the pro-forma that can be provided to applicants via the A1 Group administration team.
- Staff who have been in an acting position that subsequently becomes vacant will have to apply for the position when it is advertised, but in such cases the position can be advertised, in exceptional circumstances on an internal basis only.
- Applicants are not asked to provide equal opportunities details when making their application
- The A1 Group has a legal obligation to comply fully with the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act .
- All adverts must be placed through the administration department, except where alternative arrangements have been formally agreed in advance with the HR Consultant.
- All advertised vacancies will be placed on The A1 Group's website and may also be advertised on Indeed
- All advertising must be cost-effective and agreed in advance with a Director.

Selection of Candidates

Shortlisting

- Shortlisting will involve the recruiting Manager and if necessary, the HR consultant
- Shortlisting and selection must have due consideration to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.
- Notes of the shortlisting decisions for each candidate should be recorded by the Manager and the form should be returned to the HR Services department once the shortlisted candidates for interview have been selected.
- Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including any tests, in writing giving as much prior notice as possible and a minimum of 5 working days before the interview. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, they should also be asked to advise if there are any particular arrangements or reasonable adjustments that could be made so that they can participate fully in the selection process.
- All candidates (internal and external) should be assessed objectively against the selection criteria set out in the Person Specification section of the job description, and only candidates who meet all the essential criteria should be short-listed. Assumptions about the qualities of internal candidates should not be made.

Selection & Interview

- Interview should normally be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the Recruiting Manager.
- Selection is a two-way process: candidates are assessing the role and the A1 Group. Those involved in recruitment should consider how best to convey a positive image.
- It is recommended that a range of selection methods, that are suitable for assessing both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification are established as this will enhance objective decision making which is difficult through interview alone.
- Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.
- Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken, ideally by the interviewers, so that they can refer back to these when assessing candidates against the person specification and making decisions. Any notes of the interview and any other notes on the candidate taken during the recruitment and selection process should be passed back to the Administration team and will be kept for a minimum of 6 months following the selection process.
- In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the Recruiting Manager, although he or she may delegate this to another member of the panel where appropriate.
- Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will, as a minimum, receive telephone or written notification of the outcome of the selection process.

References

Information sought from referees should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided. It should be noted that many organisations have a policy of not providing personal references and therefore references provided may only confirm details of current appointment. This is much less likely to be the case with references for academic posts which are of a more personal nature.

- Sample reference request letters are available from the HR Consultant.
- If the appointment is urgent, the Recruiting Manager may seek to obtain a verbal/telephone reference for the successful candidate providing that standard procedures for doing so are followed
- Referees should not be contacted without the candidate's consent and the information provided should be treated as confidential.

Making the appointment

- It is recognised that in many cases it is desirable to make a verbal offer very shortly after the selection process to enhance the A1 Group's ability to recruit the selected candidate. In such cases the verbal offer will normally be made by the recruiting manager.
- The A1 Group recognises open contracts as the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees and will appoint new and existing staff to indefinite contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify use of a fixed-term contract.
- Once a selection decision has been made the HR Consultant will produce a written offer of employment following receipt of an email from either the recruiting Manager or the Administration team (which includes salary recommendation) in line with agreed service standards.
- Offers of employment are normally subject to satisfactory references and any other checks as appropriate, such as Asylum and Immigration checks, Criminal Records Bureau checks (for posts that are exempted from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act)

Induction

- Induction is the final stage of the recruitment process. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed the line manager is responsible for preparing a comprehensive induction programme for the new employee. (See the A1 Group Induction Policy for further details)

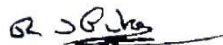
Responsibilities

Role	Accountable for
Recruiting manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating the need for the post(s) in the context of the staffing plan and budget. Ensuring a comprehensive induction programme for any new employee(s) Liaising with the Finance Director to determine whether a vacancy is a replacement post, a new post or an existing post which requires revision. Discussing potential difficulties in recruiting with the HR Consultant where necessary Confirming a Job Description, Person Specification, draft advert and further particulars are obtained from the HR Consultant. Agreeing recruitment plan and timescales business . Undertaking any tasks agreed to as part of the recruitment timescales drawn up (e.g. inviting short-listed candidates to interview, taking up references, issuing rejection letters). Ensuring that any agencies or external consultants who assist in the recruitment process adhere to the A1 Group's Recruitment Policy. Preparing a comprehensive induction programme for the new employee(s).
HR Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing professional HR advice on grading of posts, content of job descriptions/person specifications, advertising and appropriate salary levels. Assisting with placing job adverts where necessary. Carrying out pre-employment checks where necessary. Issuing written offers of appointment and contracts of employment. Undertaking any other tasks agreed to as part of the recruitment timescales drawn up with the recruiting department (e.g. inviting short-listed candidates to interview, taking up references, issuing rejection letters). Monitoring and reviewing the recruitment process and supporting policies / guidance. Providing training on Recruitment and Selection, including equality issues.

Revision

The Company will make all employees aware of this Company Policy.

Signed:



Date: 1/1/24

Russell Pike - **Managing Director A1 Group**

Next Review date 1st January 2025