



Recruitment and Selection Policy

Policy Title	Recruitment and Selection Policy
Category	Human Resources
Relevant To	All employees of Limerick City and County Council
Policy Lead	Head of Human Resources
Accountable Director	Director of Support Services
Approved By (Group)	
Document History	V1 – June 2019 V2 - Amended draft January 2021 V3 – Amended draft September 2021 V4- Final October 2021
Date Published	
Implementation Date	
Next Review Date	

1. Statement

It is the policy of Limerick City and County Council to ensure that recruitment and selection procedures operate in an open and fair manner, in line with good practice and standards, employment and equality legislation and relevant circulars and departmental guidelines.

The Public Appointments Service is responsible for the filling of specified senior management local authority posts under the terms of their own separate recruitment and selection procedures. The filling of all other posts is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the process will be managed locally by the local authority through confined or open competitions, in line with this policy. From time to time, one local authority may by agreement recruit on behalf of a number of local authorities.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a robust framework, based around the core recruitment and selection principles outlined below, within which to facilitate the recruitment and selection of high calibre employees.

2. Scope

This recruitment and selection policy applies to candidates for **all competitions** including internal competition confined to existing employees of the local authority and covers all activities pertaining to the overall recruitment and selection process.

3. Legislative Requirements and Guidance

The Council has regard to all relevant legislative requirements and guidance in its recruitment and selection processes, including for example the following although this list is by no means exhaustive:

- Local Government Acts, 2001 - 2014
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage circulars and guidelines
- Equality Acts
- Freedom Of Information legislation
- Data Protection Acts
- Local Government Management Agency guidelines

4. Core Principles

This recruitment and selection policy sets out the Council's commitment to comply with standards of best practice in its recruitment and selection processes and outlines the obligations and responsibilities of applicants who apply for employment with this Council.

The aim of this policy is to ensure a competitive recruitment process where criteria for judging suitability of candidates can be related directly to the qualifications, attributes, skills and competencies required to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the post. It further aims to ensure that candidates are treated to a consistent standard and in a consistent manner through open and active communication, at all stages of the process. This policy is based on the following core principles:

- Probity
- Integrity
- Impartiality
- Fairness
- Reliability
- Ethical conduct
- Confidentiality
- Merit
- Best practice
- Transparency

5. Equal Opportunities Statement

Limerick City and County Council is an equal opportunities employer and employment opportunities are accessible to all eligible applicants

The Council strives to promote a culture of equality and ensure that all candidates are selected on merit. The Council endeavours to ensure that the selection process does not provide unjustifiable advantage or disadvantage to any particular candidate or group of candidates. The recruitment and selection process embraces genuine equality of opportunity which will be integral to the process by which appointments are made.

The Council's employment opportunities are open to all, irrespective of a candidate's background, personal beliefs or circumstances. The Council endeavours to accommodate particular candidates' needs where practicable, unless to do so would be to unlawfully disadvantage another candidate. Applicants with disabilities are reasonably accommodated in so far as is practicable to ensure they have the opportunity to perform at their optimum level. This may include providing easily accessible interview facilities, venues for aptitude tests, agreeing an appropriately timed

interview, arranging an alternative medical examination location or time, supplying or arranging for appropriate equipment and provision of forms in accessible formats.

6. Responsibilities

Human Resources Department

The Council's Human Resources Department has overall responsibility to manage the recruitment and selection process.

Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for supporting the Human Resources Department in the recruitment and selection process including preparing and submitting of approved business cases, developing the job specifications, duties and relevant competencies, short listing of applications, attending interview skills training and participating in interview boards both internally within the organisation and externally in other local authorities.

Candidates

Candidates in the recruitment process shall not knowingly or recklessly provide false information.

Any attempt by a candidate or by any person(s) acting at the candidates instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise, to canvass or otherwise influence in the candidates favour, any member of the staff of Limerick City & County Council or person nominated by the Limerick City & County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought.

Candidates are responsible for providing verification of the education or other qualifications deemed necessary for the post as well as their identity.

A third party shall not personate a candidate at any stage of the process.

Conflict of Interest

Any person involved in a selection process who has a personal or familial relationship with an applicant shall immediately bring this to the attention of the Human Resources Department so as appropriate alternative arrangements can be made.

7. Eligibility Criteria and Education Qualifications

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage has responsibility for setting and approving eligibility qualifications for appointments to established local government posts. From time to time, new posts may be created locally by the local authority to which a locally agreed job

specification, description and qualifications apply. Eligibility criteria and requirements shall be clearly outlined for all posts being filled.

Verification of Education Qualifications

For each advertised vacancy the Council makes the eligibility criteria available and **applicants shall have the responsibility** for providing relevant verification from the appropriate awarding authority or certifying body of the education qualifications deemed necessary for the post. This includes qualifications deemed equivalent to those required, and qualifications obtained overseas.

8. Job Description, Person Specification and Competencies

A briefing document is developed for each recruitment competition. This includes the key responsibilities for the job, the qualifications required, and the competencies that will be used for assessment.

Job Description

The job description will outline the key duties and responsibilities relating to the job/grade.

Person Specification

The person specification shall state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge, experience and competencies that are required for the job, all of which shall be directly related to the role, and applied equally to all applicants.

Competencies

Competencies are the behaviour, skills and attitudes that underpin effective performance and provide a practical menu of the critical skills and visible 'on the job' behaviours that underpin effective 'on the job' performance. Specific competencies required for any post being filled will be included as part of each job description and specification

9. Communication of Vacancies

The Council is committed to ensuring that vacancies are communicated openly to afford equality of opportunity to all. Advertisements advising of the vacancy will indicate where full details and particulars are available from. The appropriate methods of communication for vacancies are selected for each post being filled.

These may include;

- Council website
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Relevant Local Authority national websites including www.localauthorityjobs.ie
- Council Connect Staff App

- National press
- Specialist journals
- Recruitment websites
- Employment agencies
- University or other Third Level institution careers services
- Professional bodies
- Representative organisations
- Other appropriate sources

10. Applications

The Council specifies the method of application in each job advertisement. Applications may be accepted in a variety of formats once accessible using standard office applications. Typical methods include predominantly via email; delivery in person to the Human Resources Department, or through the post. Applications sent by post must be posted in sufficient time to ensure delivery by the specified closing date for receipt of completed applications. **Late applications in any format shall not be accepted.** Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by the Council.

The Council will not be responsible for any applications not delivered.

In accordance with approved payscales, a person who is not a serving local authority employee will enter the scale for the relevant position at the first point.

11. Selection Procedure

The following are the key steps in the selection procedure

Screening

In the first instance, all applications will be screened for eligibility as per the job specification. Applicants who meet these criteria will be progressed to the next stage of the selection process. The local authority may request verification of education qualification such as result transcripts at this stage of the selection process.

Shortlisting

Where a large number of applications are received for a post, the Council reserves the right to shortlist as required. Short-listing will be based on the specific criteria and competencies as advertised for the post, or pre-determined criteria based on the requirements of the post.

As part of the shortlisting process, achieving 50% in each competency will not guarantee that a candidate is called for interview. Due to the number of applicants, only a proportion of those

achieving 50% in each competency may be called for interview, and this is at the discretion of the relevant shortlisting board. Further qualified candidates may be called at a later stage.

Short-listing does not suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable or incapable of undertaking the job, rather that there are some candidates, who based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience

Other Selection Methods

The selection process may involve additional assessments, tests or interviews and applicants will be notified of these additional stages, if applicable.

Interview Procedure

Interviews shall be carried out in line with the agreed Interview Board procedures as per document 'Notes for Members of Interview Boards'.

Interview Board Selection

For all positions, Limerick City and County Council will endeavour to use suitable Interview Board members for competitions (including shortlisting applications or shortlisting by interview) who have a relevant background.

Interview Board members will be briefed on the requirement to discuss any potential conflict of interest issues with the Human Resource department arising from their participation in the recruitment process.

12. Panel

For some competitions, a panel of successful candidates may be formed following final interview stage. The placement on a panel does not necessarily lead to a job offer. Panels where established, may be used to fill both permanent and temporary posts that arise during the life of the panel based on order of merit. The number of candidates placed on a panel will be at the discretion of the interview board.

The selection process will not be concluded until such time as satisfactory references have been obtained and appropriate checks completed i.e. Garda vetting, occupational health assessment, verification of education or other mandatory qualifications or requirements (e.g. driving licence) or relevant experience.

The lifetime of any panel will generally be for one year from the date it is formed, but may be extended for a further period of up to one year at the Chief Executive's discretion.

13. Notification of Outcome of the Selection Procedure

Candidates shall be notified of the outcome of any short listing procedure as soon as practicable following the completion of the process.

Candidates shall be notified of the outcome of their interview at the earliest possible date after the interview. If a candidate has been placed on a panel, the candidate shall be informed of their position on the panel.

14. Feedback to Candidates

The Council shall provide candidates with details of the outcome and scoring in relation to the shortlisting and interview stages. This information shall be provided at the earliest possible date after shortlisting and interview.

15. Right to Information and Review

Candidates have a right to information and a review of the recruitment and selection procedure. The council will consider appeals in relation to eligibility, short-listing and final decisions of interview boards. Such appeals must be made in writing within **7 working days** of notification of the relevant decision. On receipt of appeal, the selection decisions will be revisited, and the candidate will be informed of the outcome of this review.

16. Appointment

The Council reserves the right to make an offer of employment following the creation of an approved panel, subject to the existence of an approved and sanctioned vacancy. The local authority shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered, to take up such appointment within a period of four weeks and if they fail to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the local authority in its absolute discretion may determine, the local authority shall not appoint them. The terms and conditions of the appointment should be in accordance with employment and equality legislation and relevant departmental Circulars.

Where persons who are not already permanent employees of a local authority are appointed, the following provisions shall apply: (a) there shall be a period after such appointments take effect during which such persons shall hold such office on probation. (b) such period shall be one year but the Chief Executive may at his/her discretion extend such period; (c) such persons shall cease to hold such employment at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Chief Executive, or nominated person, has certified that the service of such persons is satisfactory; (d) the period at (a) above may be terminated on giving one weeks' notice as per the Minimum Notice and Term of Employment Acts; (e) there will be assessments during the probationary period.

17. Employment Checks

The following employment checks shall be completed for successful candidates:

Verification of Education Qualifications

Verification of any education qualifications from relevant awarding/certifying body, i.e. results transcripts, shall be required from candidates before any job offer can be made. The onus is on the candidate to supply these in a timely fashion as requested.

Garda Vetting

Garda vetting will be sought for candidates whose post entailed engaging in 'relevant work' as defined in the relevant Children and Vulnerable Persons legislation.

References

The Council reserves the right to seek references from current and previous employers, educational institutions or any other organisations with which the candidate has been associated. The Council reserves the right to determine the merit, appropriateness and relevance of such references and referees. Information sought from referees shall be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description, person specification and/or competency profiles should be provided. Referees shall only be contacted with the candidate's consent. The information provided shall be treated as confidential and shall be used to verify information collected through the selection process. Documents relating to all applicants will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Acts.

Pre-employment Medical Assessment

Where appropriate, candidates may be required to undergo a pre-employment medical assessment with the local authority's nominated Occupational Health Advisor as a condition of any job offer. The candidate will be responsible for the cost involved and such costs will be refunded if appointed subject to taxation and other statutory deductions.

18. Employee Awareness

All employees of the Council are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Council's recruitment and selection policy which will be provided as part of induction and general employee awareness activities. Employees may be required to acknowledge receipt of the recruitment and selection policy.

19. Infringements of Recruitment and Selection Procedures

If a candidate is found to have breached this policy, then

- Where not appointed to a post, will be disqualified as a candidate
- Where candidate has been appointed subsequent to the recruitment process in question, they shall forfeit that appointment.

Any staff member violating this policy may be subject to use of the disciplinary procedures and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in line with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

20. Freedom of Information and Data Protection

Records created, maintained and stored by the Council as part of the recruitment and selection process are subject to a range of legislation, including Freedom of Information and Data Protection. The Council shall also comply with relevant National Records Retention Policies.

All applications will be treated in strict confidence in line with the requirements of Freedom of Information legislation.

21. Monitoring and Review

The Council shall monitor the implementation of and compliance with this recruitment and selection policy and will review it on a regular basis.