

SECTION ONE

RECRUITMENT POLICY

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Policy Owner	Head of HR & OD
Author	Human Resources Officer
Reason for Revision	Updated in light of Safer Recruitment report by Care Commission Cyclical Review and implementation of Safer Recruitment Guidance 2016 update
Data Protection	This policy is compliant Data Protection Requirements
Proof Read	Law at Work; Care Service Managers; Human Resources Team
Date Approved	November 2017
Approved by	EMT
Next Review Due	November 2020

Audience – Training and Awareness Method	All managers with responsibility for recruitment need to be aware. Update will be communicated through Email, the Loop, Care Service Manager Meetings and Team Leader Forums. Also through training with Business Support Officers.
Effective Date	Immediate Effect

Internal References	Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Procedure
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External References	CI & SSSC Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment Guidance (2016), Asylum and Immigration, Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended), Equalities Act 2010
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Comments	
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RECRUITMENT POLICY

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Blackwood recognises that our success depends on the calibre of our people. We are committed to a fair and objective process of recruitment based on equality for all to recruit the best person for the job on every occasion.
- 1.2 We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our customers, by ensuring that we comply with the CI & SSSC Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment Guidance (2016) and that we work to ensure continuous improvement in the recruitment processes.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 The ultimate responsibility for recruitment rests with the recruiting manager. All managers are responsible for ensuring that they have employees with the skills and knowledge needed to maintain a high quality of service.
- 2.2 The Human Resources Team will offer support and help, both in the administration of the recruitment process, and in the assessment of candidates. The Human Resources Team is also responsible for recruitment procedures, recruitment training, coaching employees on recruitment practice, monitoring recruitment standards and ensuring that Blackwood's Equality and Diversity Policy is being adhered to.

3.0 PRINCIPLES AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 This policy applies to the recruitment of permanent, temporary and relief positions across Blackwood.
- 3.2 Equality forms the cornerstone of the Blackwood recruitment process. The main principle is for all recruitment decisions to be made based on the competency, skills and abilities of candidates, not on discriminatory assumptions or unrelated personal characteristics. The following principles stem from this:
 - 3.3 **Identifying Vacancies and Authorising Recruitment**
 - 3.3.1 Recruiting Managers must as a matter of course review staffing arrangements wherever a 'vacancy' arises. Consideration should be given to whether the position is still needed, whether it requires a different focus or whether the job requirements can be facilitated by a reorganisation of tasks. Consideration must also be given to whether the vacancy is permanent or temporary.
 - 3.3.2 Recruitment for any type of position must be authorised by a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), in accordance with the Financial Standing Orders before it can commence. The Human Resources team is not authorised to commence the recruitment process without the appropriate authorisation in the recruitment request form. Recruitment to support care growth must be authorised using the appropriate form to demonstrate viability.

3.4 **Job Profile and Person Specification**

3.4.1 To facilitate objectivity in the recruitment process all posts must have a job profile that specifies the general scope of the post and the principal and additional duties and responsibilities of the post. Job profiles are reviewed and, if necessary, updated before recruitment commences, and are regularly reviewed during the course of employment as part of the appraisal and review procedure to ensure that it remains consistent with the actual job being carried out.

3.5 **Person Specification**

3.5.1 A person specification outlines the experience, qualifications, skills, aptitudes and personal qualities required of the post holder. These criteria are related to and justified in terms of the duties contained in the job profile and the attributes of the competency profile. All short-listing decisions are taken based on the relevant person specification.

3.6 **All Candidates Compete on an Equal Footing**

3.6.1 To facilitate this all applicants must complete the Blackwood Employment Application Forms. Curriculum vitae will not be accepted as supporting information for any permanent recruitment process. Curriculum vitae may be accepted for temporary positions for initial shortlisting purposes (see section on Temporary Employees and Use of Recruitment Agencies).

3.7 **All Permanent Vacancies are Advertised**

3.7.1 It is usual for all vacancies of six months or more in the organisation to be advertised both internally and externally to attract a good quantity and quality of applications. Only under exceptional circumstances will this rule not be followed, such as:

- (a) Where an employee is sourced from an agency for a fixed amount of time to cover the vacancy while the recruitment process takes place.
- (b) Where a candidate selected at interview leaves Blackwood during their probationary period and the reserve candidate is contacted and offered the position.
- (c) Where the redundancy policy is followed and an employee is re-deployed.
- (d) Temporary positions covering absence for maternity, adoption, parental and other unpaid leave etc.
- (e) Where the post has already been unsuccessfully advertised and the Recruiting Manager can demonstrate that further advertising is unlikely to be effective.
- (f) Where the vacancy is a small number of hours (e.g. less than 2 days per week) it may be more expedient to advertise internally at first as there may be part time employees who are willing to increase their hours. This option is suitable if there are enough part time employees to form a candidate pool.
- (g) Where a person is already in the post on a Temporary or Fixed Term basis. In this case an internal advertisement may be sufficient.

3.7.2 A variety of external advertising outlets are used to reach as many areas of the community as possible (see Positive Action section of Equality and Diversity Policy).

3.7.3 As a minimum standard for external advertising, all posts are advertised on Blackwood's own website, Universal Job Match (Job Centre Plus) and some online jobs boards such as S1 Jobs or Good Moves.

3.8 **Recruitment Information Is Accessible to All**

3.8.1 Recruitment packs can be made available in standard print, large print, braille, audio and electronic documents. These packs can be requested by telephone, email, letter and in person. Where it takes Blackwood longer to produce a pack in an alternative format, the deadline that the candidate must return the form will be adjusted accordingly. In whichever format an application is made, it is treated on its merits and without prejudice. Arrangements for interview will consider any requirement that a candidate has informed us of.

3.9 **Selection Processes**

3.9.1 Applicants must be assessed against the criteria listed in the person specification and no other criteria at all stages of the recruitment process

3.9.2 Selection panels must consist of at least two people to mitigate against the possibility of stereotyping and bias and, where possible. All panel members will have received an appropriate level of interview training before conducting interviews.

3.9.3 Interview questions must be agreed beforehand and must relate to the selection criteria outlined in the person specification.

3.9.4 For recruitment of care employees, the values based recruitment assessment, "A Question of Care", will be completed and the resulting profile used as part of the selection process.

3.9.5 Other selection methods can be utilised depending upon the vacancy. It is recommended that for positions at Officer level and above an additional assessment method such as a presentation or in tray exercise is also used. For senior positions, it may be appropriate to undertake ability or psychometric testing of candidates. Advice can be obtained from Human Resources regarding these selection methods.

3.9.6 Selection decisions must be made a unanimous or majority decision of the interview panel.

3.10 **Customer Participation**

3.10.1 In accordance with Customer Engagement Strategy, customer participation is encouraged in Blackwood's activities and this includes recruitment.

3.10.2 Customers should be involved in the recruitment of employees in care roles where possible and consideration should be made in all recruitment processes as to their involvement.

3.10.3 Blackwood can provide training through the Human Resources Team to customers who wish to take part in recruitment.

3.11 Conflict of Interest

3.11.1 If an employee involved in recruitment processes has a personal or family relationship with a candidate, the employee should declare this to the Human Resources Team as soon as they are aware of the candidate's application. A decision will then be taken as to their continued role in the recruitment process regarding several factors including, but not limited to, the nature of the relationship, the makeup of the panel, the importance of their involvement in the process. However, it would be the preference that there was no involvement in these recruitment processes.

3.12 Confidentiality

3.12.1 All applications and other documentation relating to recruitment will be treated as confidential by Blackwood. Any data relating to recruitment and selection may, however, be legally disclosed in the event of discrimination claims being made against Blackwood.

3.12.2 Recruitment files will be retained by Blackwood in an electronic form and stored securely on the organisation computer system for a period of 12 months after which they will then be deleted/destroyed. All hard copies of documents used during the interview and selection process will be scanned and destroyed in the confidential waste directly after the interview process has been completed.

3.13 Training

3.13.1 All Blackwood employees who are involved in recruitment must receive appropriate training and/or support from the Human Resources Team.

4.0 TEMPORARY VACANCIES

4.1 Recruitment may be undertaken on a temporary rather than a permanent basis to facilitate a variety of organisational requirements. Temporary vacancies may exist because there is an operational reason not to fill a position on a permanent basis or because the position itself only exists to provide a temporary resource and is not part of the permanent staffing establishment.

4.2 Temporary recruitment will adhere to as many of the same principles as stated for permanent recruitment, however, in recognition of the differing requirement needs for temporary recruitment (typically the need for a quick appointment to be made) the following will apply:

- (a) Temporary vacancies do not always need to be advertised. Agencies can be used to supply candidates (see section 5 below) or candidates can be obtained via internal recommendations, placements from universities and other educational institutions
- (b) A full job profile and person specification may not be required.
- (c) The recruitment process may be shortened and an application process not used for short listing purposes

4.3 The following basic principles should however be applied to a temporary recruitment process:

- (a) Candidates should ideally be obtained from more than one source

- (b) A basic job description and person specification should form the basis of the candidate search
- (c) Where more than one candidate is short listed for interview, they should be asked to complete an application form prior to the interview
- (d) Notes must be kept as a record of interviews for temporary employees
- (e) Where there is more than one candidate standard interview questions should be devised.

5. **RECRUITMENT METHODS**

5.1 To ensure that the most suitable candidate pool can be accessed Blackwood will utilise a variety of recruitment methods appropriate for the position, which may include:

- (a) A variety of advertising sources including internet advertising
- (b) The use of recruitment agencies
- (c) Recruitment Fairs will be organised where there are several vacancies, or Blackwood will take part in organised Recruitment Fairs, both to advertise specific vacancies and to raise the profile of Blackwood
- (d) Open Days can be arranged
- (e) Universities and other Educational institutes can be utilised, both in terms of Careers Fairs, Open Days, and advertising.
- (f) Partnership workers with employability groups e.g Cyrenians

6.0 **USE OF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES FOR PERMANENT VACANCIES**

6.1 In accordance with Blackwood's policy on advertising most vacancies over 6 months duration, the use of Recruitment Agencies is to be limited and should only be considered where the usual processes have failed to attract sufficiently experienced or skilled candidates.

6.2 The circumstances where it is appropriate to use agencies are:

- (a) Where a position has been previously advertised unsuccessfully and it is deemed to be futile to advertise again.
- (b) Where a person leaves Blackwood within their probationary period and there was no reserve candidate for the position and the advertising response has been poor.
- (c) Where the position is for 6 months or less
- (d) Where the position is designed to cover a long-term absence such as sickness, maternity, parental or other paid leave
- (e) Where executive search and selection is required

6.3 The Agency must be made aware of Blackwood's Equality and Diversity Policy and Recruitment Policy and Procedures. Blackwood should also be satisfied that the Agency has adequate Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures in place.

6.4 Agencies must be provided with the Job Profile and Person Specification for the position and be given a detailed briefing of the role and the organisation environment.

6.5 The same selection principles and procedures should be applied to Agency candidates as for those from advertising, except for the fact that Curriculum Vitae will be acceptable for short listing purposes. Applicants short listed will then be asked to complete an application form before attending an interview.

7.0 SUCCESSION PLANNING

7.1 Blackwood is committed to Employee Development and there will be a focus on the employee's career development as well as their personal development, thus facilitating succession planning across the organisation.

7.2 Blackwood has an established review and personal development plan (PDP) process in place to facilitate employee development and progression. Whilst there is no automatic promotion process for employees, this will ensure that they are well placed to apply and be selected for more senior positions when they become available.

7.5 Blackwood will also consider providing 'Trainee' positions as a method of ensuring succession across the organisation. Officer level positions within the established headcount can be recruited at a Trainee level with a defined training programme and period.

7.6 It may also be appropriate to consider whether a vacancy can be filled on a secondment basis to provide a development opportunity to an employee. This may be appropriate if the vacancy is temporary or is permanent but is suitable to be filled on a temporary basis. Secondments outside the organisation will also be considered.

8.0 USE OF CONSULTANTS

8.1 There are circumstances where it may be appropriate to use a Consultant to undertake work for Blackwood. This may be appropriate where:

- (a) there are tasks or projects that are required to be undertaken but where there is no vacancy as such,
- (b) the tasks require to be completed temporarily but recruiting candidates with the appropriate skills may be difficult on a temporary basis
- (c) 'expert' knowledge is required on a short-term basis to support the existing in-house skills base

8.2 It is essential to note that a Consultant cannot be used as a substitute for an employee or an agency worker as this contravenes Inland Revenue regulations and places Blackwood at risk regarding other areas of employment law. As such, Consultants can only be used where:

- (a) They are self-employed and can provide evidence of this or they are part of a Company and can provide evidence of this, including the Company registration and VAT number.
- (b) There is no requirement for them to be based at Blackwood's premises
- (c) There is no requirement for them to be managed or provided with tasks to complete daily
- (d) There is no requirement for Blackwood to provide them with the basic tools to complete their role (e.g. desk, PC, stationery etc.).

- 8.3 To be certain of the employment status for tax of a potential consultancy post, the HMRC guidance should be consulted and the Employment Status Tool should be completed before a decision is taken to appoint a consultant to establish if this is the best and most cost effective course of action for the organisation to take.
- 8.4 The HMRC Guidance and the Employment Status Assessment Tool can be found on the Gov.uk website and searching check employment status for tax.

9.0 PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

- 9.1 The following checks must be done at the interview stage:
- (a) Qualifications certificates must be checked for qualifications deemed essential for the role.
 - (b) A Right to Work check in accordance with the Eligibility to Work in the UK legislative requirements must be completed for all positions, whether temporary or permanent.
- 9.2 Right to Work checks require that you take the following steps:
- (a) Obtain the candidate's original identification documents such as a passport.
 - (b) Check that the documents are genuine and valid with the candidate present.
 - (c) Take a copy of the document and record the date of the check.

Any copies taken of identification belonging to unsuccessful candidate should be securely destroyed as soon as this decision has been communicated to the candidate in question.

Further guidance on Right to Work checks can be found on the Gov.uk website.

- 9.3 Following the interviews, when the successful candidate has been selected the following checks will be required:
- (a) Two written references must be obtained.
 - (b) A Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) or Enhanced Disclosure application for appropriate roles (refer to the PVG Procedure and Code of Practice). Standard Disclosure checks should be carried out for all other roles.
 - (c) Registration checks should be undertaken for social care roles where the selected candidate already holds a Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) registration
 - (d) SSSC Registration must be applied for in the case of selected candidates who do not already hold a SSSC Registration.
 - (e) An organisation Medical Mandate will be completed by the selected candidate after an offer of employment has been made and accepted.
- 9.4 A contract of employment will be provided on the strict understanding that it is conditional until the above criteria have been satisfied.
- 9.5 Newly recruited employees will not be able to commence employment until an acceptable PVG and two acceptable references have been received

- 9.6 Failure to declare criminal convictions as required and detailed by Disclosure Scotland during the recruitment process which are then subsequently identified during the PVG or Disclosure process may result in the termination of employment or the withdrawal of any conditional offer of employment.
- 9.7 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain vital information regarding the candidate, their performance, conduct, characteristics and qualities to assist Blackwood in making appointment decisions.
- 9.8 Two references must be obtained, one of whom must be from the current or most recent employer. Ideally, references should cover the last 5 years of employment. The references must be from an appropriate source i.e. a manager to whom the person reported, not a peer. The referee must be someone who can comment on the candidate's performance and conduct during their employment. A character reference must be able to comment on the person's personal characteristics and qualities.
- 9.9 Reasonable steps must be taken when there is difficulty sourcing two such references. Efforts must be made to contact other referees from the most recent employers, failing that other referees should be obtained from the candidate's employment history. References from educational institutes and character references can be accepted where employment references are not obtained.
- 9.10 Where references are obtained which simply confirm the employment details of the candidate, this would not be deemed to be a satisfactory reference and efforts should be made to obtain additional references from other sources.
- 9.11 References supplied directly by the candidate will not be accepted.
- 9.12 Registration checks should be undertaken where the candidate is registered with a recognised Registered Body such as the SSSC or NMC. The candidate should be asked to present their registration certificate or card and a check will be undertaken with the registered body to confirm this. If there are any exemptions referred to this must be followed up with the Registered Body to ensure that the person is suitable for employment.

10.0 KEY OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- 10.1 A comprehensive set of recruitment procedures has been developed to ensure a high level of quality and consistency across all Blackwood services. Further, all employees involved in recruitment will receive training, coaching and Human Resources advice on best practice.
- 10.2 Blackwood complies with the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended) and provides all new employees whose employment continues for one month or more with a written statement of particulars of employment.
- 10.3 Every applicant is required to disclose in writing any known or former (i.e., within the past 12 months) relationship to (a) any member of the Board of Blackwood, (b) any employee of Blackwood. Deliberate omission to make such a disclosure will disqualify the candidate and, if such an omission is discovered after engagement, the employee's employment may be terminated in line with Blackwood's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

- 10.4 On request, all interview candidates can receive feedback on their performance at interview and further information on how the final decision was reached. Internal candidates will receive this information automatically.
- 10.5 Any employee who is subsequently found to have given false information during the recruitment process that has a material effect on selection may be subject to disciplinary action in line with Blackwood's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure which may lead to termination of employment
- 10.6 Canvassing of a member of the Board of Blackwood or of a Head of Department about any employment application or appointment will disqualify a candidate for employment whether this is done directly or on their behalf by a third party.

11.0 REVIEW

- 11.1 This policy and related recruitment procedures shall be reviewed every three years or earlier if required.