



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Department	Human Resources (HR)
Policy/Project etc.	Recruitment and Selection Policy

### Description

This Equality Impact Assessment evaluates the potential impacts of the Academy's Recruitment and Selection Policy on different groups of people, ensuring compliance with equality legislation and promoting fairness and diversity in the workplace.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy and the supporting document 'Nine steps to recruitment' aims to provide a fair, consistent, and effective approach to recruiting and selecting staff and to ensure that all candidates are treated equally and that the best candidate for the job is selected based on merit.

This policy is designed to provide recruiting managers and interview panel members with guidance on how the Academy ensures its recruitment and selection processes and practices are compliant with employment legislation and supports our commitment to recruit and retain individuals with the required skills and experience for our roles.

## Could the policy/project have an adverse impact on equality?

Please consider this in relation to the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage or civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

There is always the possibility for potential unconscious bias in the recruitment process, particularly if barriers for underrepresented groups are not fully considered and addressed. The Academy has put in place mitigating measures by ensuring that staff complete the Learn Upon 'Unconscious Bias' training module including for all staff involved in recruitment.

Point 7.3.2 of the policy states 'The Human Resources Team can advise on the most appropriate avenues of external advertising to attract strong candidates'. The word "strong" implies this is the sole focus of recruitment, giving the impression that is the priority when selecting which job boards to use. The words "diverse, highly skilled, and knowledgeable" were used earlier in the policy and it is recommended that they are used to replace "strong".

Point 7.4.1 of the policy states 'Public or private sector recruitment agencies or selection consultants may be used to assist in all or part of the selection process.' Clarification on the criteria on how these agencies are selected for the Academy's 'approved' list of agencies should be included to ensure that there is transparency and evidence that their own policies align with the Academy's commitment to belonging.

Point 7.5.1 of the policy states 'For roles advertised internally only, applicants (contracted employees) are not required to complete this process; instead, they are required to complete a supporting statement outlining how they meet the criteria of the role advertised.' The policy should provide more transparency on why internal applicants follow a different application process to external applicants to ensure that fairness and commitment to belonging remain intrinsic to the recruitment and selection process.

Point 8.7.3 of the policy states 'Managers are not required to limit the decision simply to the outcome of scoring (detailed in point 8.7.2).' If managers are not required to limit the decision simply to the outcome of scoring, there may be the potential for unconscious bias choices in the shortlisting process. The policy should, therefore, provide clarity on what other factors might be considered as part of the shortlisting process, and how these align to the Academy's commitment to belonging and diversity.

Point 12.2.1. of the policy states that the Academy asks that all shortlisted candidates are invited to complete an online assessment at which the ability of the applicant to conduct the role is determined using psychometric reasoning. Successful candidates then progress to a more detailed interview. The psychometric assessments are conducted by an external provider. This EIA recommends that the outcomes of these assessments be monitored to ensure they do not negatively discriminate against the above protected characteristics, in particular disability where additional software provision may be required.

## Does this policy provide opportunities to make a positive impact on equality?

Yes, the policy does provide an opportunity for a positive impact on equality in the following ways:

It promotes diversity by ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates, and by doing so enhances the Academy's reputation as an inclusive employer.

The policy states that 'the process of recruitment and selection is about selecting the right people for the job by making decisions, which are based on merit, and which are fair, equitable and legally sound'. It states that the process must be transparent and look to attract high quality applicants (from all parts of the community). The policy promotes and supports good practice for those with responsibility for recruitment, applying fair and consistent procedures that are non-discriminatory.

The Policy includes a specific equal opportunities statement confirming that the Academy is an equal opportunities employer and that recruitment managers, in conjunction with HR, must ensure that all stages of the recruitment and selection process are compliant with the relevant legislation. It states that all recruitment and selection decisions will be based on relevant skills, knowledge, and experience and that is important to avoid judgements based on age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, ethnic origin, race, religious/philosophical belief, or any other irrelevant factor.

With specific regard to age related legislation, the policy confirms that the Academy only states a specific time-linked level of experience/qualification (e.g. a minimum of 10 years' experience) when absolutely necessary, and only where the recruitment manager is be able to justify this. Instead, a job description will be specific about the nature or depth of experience that is required (e.g. Significant Conservatoire Management experience, including experience of managing budgets in excess of £500,000).

With regard to the selection process the policy states that only managers or employees on the Academy's Approved Recruiter List will be eligible to be on a recruitment panel for both shortlisting and interview. All managers or employees on the list will have attended a recruitment and selection training session, normally delivered by an approved HR recruitment specialist. Where possible, the Academy will look for diversity among the panel members to reflect the current diversity of the organisation. The policy states that information relevant to the skills and experience required to perform the role and the candidate's suitability for it can be legitimately discussed at interview, but that it is not appropriate to discuss matters of politics, religion, age, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, maternity, or childcare arrangements.

With specific regard to disability related legislation the policy confirms that the Academy's HR People Partner is responsible for notifying the chair of the interview panel if a disability is disclosed during the interview process and what, if any, reasonable workplace adjustments are required. If requested, suitable adjustments will also be made to support candidates with a disability during the interview process.

The policy states that HR will monitor the equality information provided by applicants in the interest of managing the diversity of Academy candidates and employees.

**What evidence has been considered? What consultation has been undertaken?**

Consideration has given to the following legislation:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Internal consultation took place within the HR department, and with the EIA sub-committee of the Belonging Committee and the Academy's Policy Group.

## What actions have been agreed as a result of this EIA?

This EIA highlights the importance of a fair and inclusive recruitment and selection process. By implementing the recommended actions, the Academy can ensure that it attracts and retains a diverse and talented workforce.

Actions will be reviewed, and progress reported to the Belonging Committee.

Action	Who	Timescale
Provide clarification on why internal applicants follow a different application process to external applicants.	HR	Point 7.5.1 clarified, confirming that this only relates to internally advertised vacancies.
Provide clarification on the criteria on how recruitment agencies are selected for the Academy's 'approved' list of agencies.	HR	Prior to approval of policy.
Provide clarification on which factors, other than the scoring system, might be considered as part of the shortlisting process.	HR	Point 8.7.3 removed from the policy.
Advertise vacancies across a diverse range of recruitment channels.	HR	Ongoing.
Monitor the revision of job descriptions to remove any existing biased language.	HR/Recruitment Managers	Ongoing.
Implement inclusive job advertising and flexible working options.	HR/Recruitment Managers	Ongoing.
Consider strategic initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion (e.g. mentorship programs for underrepresented groups).	HR	2024/25 academic year.
Monitor the use of psychometric assessments to ensure they do not negatively discriminate against the protected characteristics.	HR	2024/25 academic year.
Monitor recruitment and selection data with regard to the protected characteristics.	HR	Annual.
Report and publish findings and outcomes of the monitoring processes to promote transparency and accountability.	HR	Annual.

## Approval of EIA

Approved by HR and EIA sub-committee: 1 October 2024.