Recruitment and selection policy

Approved by	Full Council
Date approved	**13/01/2020**
Date implemented	**09/04/2013**
Owner	MK/HM
Review date	16/04/2027

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is available in Welsh.

Recruitment and selection policy

Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
1.0	09/04/13	Full council	New policy
1.1	13/08/13	Andrea Malam	Minor amendments
1.2	02/09/13	Andrea Malam	Minor amendments
1.3	03/09/13	Andrea Malam	Minor amendments
1.4	19/05/14	Andrea Malam	New versions of the Shortlisting Matrix, Interview terms and conditions form, VCF and advert/JD/PS template.
1.5	15/12/14	Andrea Malam	Updated Advert Job Description and Person Specification with Job reference on the advert. Interview schedule updated.
1.6	23/12/15	Andrea Malam	Minor amendments to include DBS on the interview schedule form
2.0	16/04/18	Andrea Malam	Reformatting
2.1	25/04/19	Felicity Chandler	Advert Job Description and Person Spec Template v2.1
2.2	13/01/20	Felicity Chandler	Reformatting
2.3	18/02/21	Felicity Chandler	Updated Right To Work in the UK section in line with legislation changes. Updated shortlisting section in line with iTrent access upgrade. Updated GIS for Veterans
2.4	19/10/23	Andrea Malam	New vacancy control form

Recruitment and selection policy

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
2.5	15/04/24	Andrea Malam	New vacancy control form
2.6	16/01/25	Miriam Wheeler	New appointment form

Recruitment and selection policy

Contents

Version control 2
Contents 4
TIMESCALES 7
Roles and responsibilities 8
- Denbighshire Leisure Ltd. (DLL) 8
- Head of Service, Governing Body 8
- Recruiting Managers / Head Teacher / Chair of School Recruitment Panel 8
- Human Resources (HR) 10
- Elected Members 10
- Employees 11

Identifying the requirements of the role 11
- Use of agency workers 12
- Temporary or fixed term posts 13
- Temporary or fixed term posts which become permanent 13
- Supply staff 14
- Career Pathways 14

Advert pack and supporting documents 15
- Advert 16
- Job descriptions 16
- Job evaluation 17
- Person specifications 17

Advertising 18
- Advertisement Content 18
- Internal vacancies 19
- External vacancies 19
- Advertising in professional publications 20
- Advertisement closing dates 20
- Advertising an identical or similar vacancy 21
- Welsh Language Standards 21
- Redeployment 22
- Application process 22

Shortlisting of applicants 23
- Guaranteed Interview Schemes 24
  - Disability Confident Employer 24
  - Veterans Guaranteed Interview 25
- Informing Applicants after Shortlisting 25
- Re-advertising a Vacancy 25
- Declaring an interest 26

Selection 26
Interviews 27
Safeguarding: Personal Suitability Interviews 28
The interview panel 29
Notice periods for interview 29
Language of the interview 29
Competency based questions 30
Strengths-based interview questions 31
Values-based interview questions 31
Assessments 32
Selecting the right assessment 33
Assessment centres 33
Decision 34
Offers of employment 35
Informing unsuccessful applicants after interview 36
Feedback 36
Safer recruitment checks during the selection and appointment process 37
Gaps in employment 37
Proof of qualifications 37
Right to work in the UK 38
Safeguarding 39
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders 40
References 40
References: internal applicants only 41
References: internal applicants for posts that require CSIW registration 41
References: for posts that require an enhanced DBS 42
References for posts within Domiciliary Care 42
Medical fitness and suitability for the role 43
Additional Considerations 43
Denbighshire County Council's values 43
Market Supplement 44
Relocation 44
Interview expenses 44
Time off for interviews / assessments 45
Induction 45
Probationary period 45
Returning to the council after TUPE 46
Declarations 46
Seeking support for appointment 47
Politically restricted posts 47
Outside commitments 48
Training for recruiting managers 48

Complaints 48
Work Schemes 48
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 49
How do I apply for a vacancy? 49
How will I know if you have received my application form? 49
I am having problems with web recruitment, what should I do? 49
When using web recruitment can I start the form in Welsh and change to English half way through? 50
I won't be able to submit my application form in time to meet the closing date. Could I submit it at a later date? 50
Can I apply for a job on the closing date? 50
Do you accept CVs? 50
I am interested in several jobs you have advertised; can I fill in one form for the various jobs? 50
The person specification asks for an NVQ level 4 as essential criteria. I have an NVQ level 3, am I eligible to apply? 50
Why does the Council monitor equality and diversity information, and what does it do with the information? 51
What happens to the personal information on my application form? 51
Will I have to disclose a criminal record? 51
How do I know if the post requires a check from the Disclosure and Barring Service? 52
The post I am interested in is advertised as full-time. Can I work part- time or job share? 52
I have a disability. What does the Disability Confident Scheme for applicants with a disability mean for me? 52
The essential criteria states that the post holder will be required to travel around Denbighshire. I do not hold a current driving licence. Does this mean my application may be unsuccessful? 53
How will I know if I have been shortlisted for interview? 53
Can I arrange another interview date if I am not available for the scheduled interviews? 53
Can I arrange another interview time if I am not available? 53
Will my references be requested before my interview? 54
Do my references have to be from a previous employer or can I provide character references? 54
How will I know if I have been successful after interview? 54
If I am successful, when will I be able to start work? 54
Where on the salary scale would I start? 54
I currently work for another authority. Will my previous service be counted? 55
If I am unsuccessful after shortlisting and/or interview, can I get feedback? 55
Do you have a register for people interested in employment with Denbighshire County Council? 56
What if I have feedback or a complaint? 56
If I am successful in gaining an interview, will the Council pay my expenses? 56
I am 14 years old, am I able to apply for a job with Denbighshire County Council? 56
Can I offer the second best person a job if we have the same job vacant within 3 months of the original advert? 57

TIMESCALES

Please note: For the purpose of timescales, 'days' are classed as working days and are based on a full time week (Mon-Fri) and not the contracted days of an employee.

Action	Minimum timescale
Job evaluation of new post/amended post to receive an indicative grade prior to the Job Evaluation Panel (Pay and Reward Specialist)	Up to 10 working days
Vacancy advertised (from receiving final versions of the VCF, Advert, JD and PS)	Up to 5 working days
Vacancies will be advertised for a period of	2 weeks
Time of vacancy closing on the closing date	Midnight – 23:59:59
Managers will be sent submitted application forms for shortlisting	Up to 2 working days after closing date
Reference checks (schools request their own references but 10 days should still apply to schools)	10 working days minimum
Time it takes for ICT to set up a new starter on system (not applicable for schools)	10 working days

Roles and responsibilities

Denbighshire Leisure Ltd. (DLL)

For the purposes of interpretation of roles and responsibilities please see below:

Denbighshire County Council	Denbighshire Leisure Ltd
Head of Service	Managing Director / Executive Team Member
Director	Company Board Director
Senior Management Team	Company Executive Team
Section 151 Officer	Company Accountant
Monitoring Officer	Company Secretary

Head of Service, Governing Body

- Responsible for approval of vacancy. Signature of authorisation required on Vacancy Control Form
- Promoting the use of Web Recruitment
- Ensuring managers are committed to implementation of Recruitment and Selection policy and procedure and appropriate training is provided
- Promoting living and working in Denbighshire

Recruiting Managers / Head Teacher / Chair of School Recruitment Panel

- Ensuring policy and procedure is followed and implemented
- Ensuring consistent job descriptions and person specifications are up to date and evaluated appropriately with the Job ID included on the job description.
- Consider all applicants and make the recruitment decision in line with the

council's equal opportunities policy and safer recruitment practices

- Ensuring that they have completed appropriate recruitment and selection training
- Completing the Vacancy Control Form and gaining appropriate authorisation
- Creating the advert
- Making the necessary arrangements for interview using the Interview Schedule Form
- Shortlisting – ensuring that Disability Confident scheme is adhered to and highlighting both this and the Welsh language preference on the Shortlisting Matrix where applicable
- Interviewing applicants fairly and consistently using the Interview Assessment Form
- Making provisional offers of employment and contacting those unsuccessful after interview to confirm and offer feedback
- Sending details of those unsuccessful after interview to HR within 2 days of interviewing
- Verifying and taking copies of qualifications as deemed essential to the post and Right to Work in the UK documents
- Providing constructive feedback to applicants unsuccessful after shortlisting and interview upon request.
- Completing the Appointment form and ensuring that the vacancy information, including interview notes, are sent back to HR.
- Ensuring no new starter commences employment without all safer recruitment checks in place
- Setting up a new starter with ICT equipment and log-ons etc. (This may take 10 working days minimum)
- Obtaining Occupational Health advice declaring individual suitable for the role, where appropriate

Human Resources (HR)

HR will support all recruiting managers in exercising their responsibilities in the following areas:

- Advertise all vacancies, checking redeployment list for employees prior to advertisement release
- Advise on appropriate recruitment methods
- Arrange translation of recruitment documents into Welsh
- Ensure advertisements and recruitment documents are quality controlled to ensure no discriminatory content has been included
- Ensure all recruitment documentation and recruitment file has been received and is satisfactory.
- Sending confirmation of unsuccessful after interview correspondence following prompt receipt of information from managers
- Obtaining employment references
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed
- Ensure new starter receives up to date terms and conditions of appointment documentation in accordance with legislation
- Create personal file for new starter
- Monitoring equal opportunities
- Produce recruitment data
- Responsible for monitoring, use and application and reviewing the policy

Elected Members

Elected members are only involved in the recruitment and selection of the Council's most senior staff (Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service)

Employees

Any employee may request assistance from HR at any stage of the recruitment process

Identifying the requirements of the role

Recruiting managers need to carefully consider whether there is a need to recruit and if so, the terms and conditions of the post. In all instances, the authority to fill a post has been delegated to Head of Service / Headteacher, except in instances where these roles are recruited to, in which case the authority has been delegated to Directors / Governing Bodies.

Reasons for recruiting can include:

- Employee leaves a post
- New projects and/or funding
- A change in the priorities or direction of the council
- Restructure of a team or Service
- A change in the needs of service users or customers
- Long term absence of post holder e.g. secondment, sickness, maternity/adoption/shared parental leave

Where an employee leaves a post, recruiting managers should use the opportunity to consider whether they need to replace like for like, or if the work can be done in a different way. Some considerations to reflect on are:

- Is it necessary to fill the vacancy? Consider feedback given by the employee leaving
- Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- Can this work be carried out via a Career Pathway i.e. supporting the development of an employee into the position?
- Is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- Could the work be accommodated in other ways?

- Is the post Welsh essential? Should the post be Welsh essential? Is there a requirement for a Welsh speaker in the team?
- Are there any staff 'at risk'? Staff at risk within the Service/organisation must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to both external and internal advertisements being placed. HR will approach those on the redeployment pool automatically.
- Managers/Governing Body should consider widening the diversity of the team which could include consideration of part time working / job share / positive action initiatives.
- Could the post be a job share / part time / mobile / flexible?
- Is there a long term need for the position or is there a foreseeable end date?
- Is there a need for financial saving within the Service, or is the position required to fulfil the aims and targets of the service / organisation?

All posts will need to have an evaluated job description and person specification. It will be the responsibility of the manager of that post to ensure this is done. All new and amended posts must go to the Pay & Reward Specialist and taken through the Job Evaluation Panel. Advertisements can state 'subject to job evaluation' whilst the new post is taken through job evaluation but this is not ideal.

Use of agency workers

Whilst Denbighshire County Council aims to attract and retain a dedicated workforce, there will be occasions when there is a need to employ agency workers. The Council recognises that the use of temporary short-term workers can enable the smooth delivery of services, by providing an element of flexibility within the workforce.

All Corporate services must procure agency workers via Matrix, and Schools should use New Directions or Matrix. Only in exceptional cases will alternate providers be considered, and managers must ensure they are able to provide the justification as to why they are using a different Agency. Managers must not procure workers directly from an agency even if the agency is an approved supplier within the Matrix contract, instead they should contact Procurement for their involvement in procuring an Agency worker from a new supplier.

Please refer to the Agency Workers Policy for further details.

Temporary or fixed term posts

Some posts may be additional to the structure, but not required on a permanent basis, such as in the following circumstances:

- Project-based – to fulfil a particular time limited project which is linked to external funding
- Maternity or parental leave cover
- Long term sickness absence cover

A fixed term post has a specified end date that is included in the advert. A temporary post is for a limited period, but the exact end date is as yet unknown. In these circumstances, fixed-term posts (with an end date stipulated in the advertisement and contract), would be advertised, which would be additional to the structure. In this case the post will usually also be advertised as a Secondment opportunity for internal staff.

Please refer to the Fixed Term Contracts Policy.

Temporary or fixed term posts which become permanent

If during the time employed on a fixed term/temporary contract, the post becomes permanent, or if an extension is required, all parties must be kept informed. If the employee went through a competitive interview process in the beginning for that particular post and there is satisfactory evidence of good performance, the employee with the fixed term contract should be offered the extended or permanent position.

This is not the case where a fixed term or temporary Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher position becomes permanent. In these situations, where a Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher is ‘Acting’ or on a fixed term contract, the position must be advertised nationally and a full recruitment process followed in order to appoint to the permanent position. However, extensions to fixed term or temporary contracts are allowed without a recruitment process.

Please refer to the Fixed Term Contracts Policy.

Supply staff

Supply (relief/casual) workers should only be used in circumstances where there would be a significant impact on service provision if someone was not engaged e.g. to cover sickness absence, to cover staff holidays, unforeseen circumstances or short term peak workloads. Relief workers by definition are engaged to work:

- on an ‘as and when’ basis
- on an irregular basis
- crucially where the individual and the Council are genuinely not obliged to accept or offer work respectively, and there is no expectation of work being offered or carried out
- where there is no intention of continual employment.

To appoint a supply member of staff, managers must ensure that the worker completes a Denbighshire County Council Supply Application form. The manager must then send the application form along with an Appointment form to HR as soon as possible. It is important to remember that the safer recruitment checks must still apply:

- an interview must still take place regardless of whether the position was advertised or not
- 2 satisfactory references must be sought
- DBS check undertaken where appropriate
- Proof of Right to Work in the UK obtained
- Proof of qualifications required for the position obtained

Career Pathways

A Career Pathway is when an employee does not yet meet the full requirements of the end position, and instead has a training and development framework outlined for them in order to be supported in achieving the required qualifications/skills/experience. In these

instances, the starting position is evaluated as is the end position, and managers develop the requirements at each stage in between. These can be useful when recruiting to a specialist role that limits the number of likely applicants due to specialist knowledge and/or qualifications, or where the manager wants to use the opportunity to develop someone in to the role.

Recruiting managers are expected to consider whether there is feasibility to develop a Career Pathway into positions needed, before sending in the paperwork to HR to advertise.

Full guidance on Career Pathways and how to develop an effective pathway can be found on the Denbighshire website.

Advert pack and supporting documents

In order for the recruitment process to commence, the recruiting manager must gain authorisation from their Head of Service/Governing Body and Finance using the Vacancy Control Form. All vacancies will be advertised using a vacancy pack that consists of an advert, job description and person specification as a minimum. The following documentation must be completed by the recruiting manager for all posts:

- Authorised Vacancy Control Form
- Advert
- Job Description
- Person Specification

For ease, the advert, job description and person specification are combined into one vacancy pack template for managers to use. Both the person specification and the job description form the basis for shortlisting and selection.

HR will not be able to begin the recruitment process without all the above documents. Recruiting managers should send the advert pack and VCF through to HR, with the Head of Service and Finance approval included. It is the recruiting manager's responsibility to gain this authorisation. For ease, emails of authorisation will suffice, providing they are sent from the person's email address, not on behalf of. Please be aware that separate emails

can cause information to be mismatched, and recruiting managers should therefore send one email that includes a chain of the authorising emails and the 2 attachments; VCF and vacancy pack.

Recruiting managers should take care to ensure they use the most up to date template, except in the exceptional cases of bespoke recruitment for specialist and senior recruitment, whereby new packs may be created. This is done with the Organisation Development Specialist in HR. All vacancies will be advertised bilingually, except for Welsh essential posts which may only appear in Welsh.

Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on the vacancy pack, equivalent qualifications and shortlisting.

Advert

The job advert should be one page and bilingual, written in plain English/Welsh and contain information on the terms of the position being advertised, who to contact for information and how to apply as a minimum. The vacancy pack template contains all the information required and recruiting managers are therefore required to just update the specifics of the vacancy. The purpose of an advert is to provide an overview of the terms and conditions, and to encourage suitable applicants to apply. Managers should therefore consider how to appeal to their target audience with concise and attractive language.

Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on how to write an advert.

Job descriptions

The job description outlines what the successful applicant will be doing (duties / tasks) if they get the job. Job descriptions and person specifications must not discriminate in any way.

Every job must have a job description and person specification. If a job already exists, it should be reviewed to ensure that it is written in plain English/Welsh, accurate and up to

date. Any changes that need to be made to a current job description and person specification must be carried out with the Pay & Reward Specialist within HR, who re-evaluates it and takes through the job evaluation panel. This process could potentially take approximately 2-4 weeks.

All job descriptions and person specifications must be formatted in the standard template.

For posts working with vulnerable groups, the job description should clearly state the individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable groups that they are responsible for or in contact with.

Posts that require health surveillance must include this element within the job description.

For further details on teachers' pay and conditions of duties please refer to the STPCD. Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on job descriptions.

Job evaluation

Job evaluation is not applicable to those on Teaching, Youth or Soulbury terms and conditions.

The recruiting manager/Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the post is evaluated at the appropriate grade. Job evaluation will be carried out in conjunction with the Pay and Rewards Specialist in HR.

The purpose of job evaluation is to provide an analytical, systematic and consistent approach to defining relative job worth within Denbighshire County Council.

Please refer to the Job Evaluation and Maintenance Policy for further details.

Person specifications

The person specification outlines the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills required in order to carry out those tasks and fulfil the whole role competently. A person specification should be written objectively, describing the 'essential' and 'desirable' criteria a person needs in order to perform a post. It should provide the basis for the shortlisting

and the interview. The criteria must be post related, justifiable, non-discriminatory and be able to be tested. Setting unnecessary standards for qualifications, experience or personal qualities may unfairly discriminate unless the particular criterion is capable of being justified. Managers should be mindful of the number of criteria as positions with an unnecessary amount will be hard to shortlist, and may not attract candidates.

All person specifications must be formatted in the standard format using the Template.

Where possible the interview panel should meet, prior to interviewing, in order to understand the criteria for the person specification.

For posts working with vulnerable groups, the person specification should clearly state the individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable groups that they are responsible for or in contact with.

Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on person specifications.

Advertising

All vacancies must be advertised internally first, using the vacancy pack template. However, where there is a business need then vacancies will be advertised internally and externally simultaneously. Head of Service / Governing Body permission will be required in these circumstances along with the justification outlined on the Vacancy Control Form (VCF).

Advertisement Content

Recruiting managers should consider the correct language to appeal to their target audience. The advert is the opportunity to 'sell' the council and the role to potential candidates and managers should therefore use the advert to attract candidates to consider the position. An example of this is to highlight the benefits of working for a local council such as flexible working and the pension scheme. The advert content should be contained to 1 page and should not be a repeat of the job description.

HR will organise the translation of the advert, job description and person specification on behalf of the recruiting manager. Please allow up to 5 working days for translation and processing from the date that all of the correct documentation is submitted to HR. Please ensure you use the up to date version of the vacancy pack, which can be found attached to this policy. Advertisements will only be placed once the recruitment documentation is correct and bilingual.

Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on how to write your advertisement.

Internal vacancies

Internal only advertisements will be placed on the website with a statement explaining only internal applicants may apply.

The following groups of staff are permitted to apply for internal vacancies:

- Relief / Supply / Casual
- Agency Workers - from day one of commencement within the Council. Please note that application forms that are received within HR after the agency contract comes to an end will not be considered.
- Interns
- Summer Placements

The following groups will not be permitted to apply for internal vacancies:

- Work Experience Placements
- Volunteers
- Staff from other local authorities (or bodies covered by the Modification Order, unless it is an established partnership)

External vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised externally where:

- The post requires a particular level of skill, qualification, experience which

is believed not to be possessed by existing employees.

- A similar post has been advertised within the last 3 months and failed to identify a suitably qualified applicant.

Where a post is advertised externally, there will be no preferential treatment given to internal applicants over external applicants and all appointments will be based on merit.

Recruiting managers can use the guides found on the intranet to assist in deciding where best to advertise as certain roles will be better suited to certain forums. For example, a low graded role would not be suited to Linked In due to the professional nature of the audience, but is well suited to be advertised on other social media sites and possibly newsletters or papers within the local area.

Advertising in professional publications

Externally advertised posts may also appear in the national and local press or other specialist journals. The Vacancy Control Form (VCF) will need to indicate any specialist advertising requirements and have both Head of Service and Finance approval with a relevant cost code attached. Advertisements will not be placed until this cost code is received. The recruiting department will pay all associated costs for advertising purposes.

For an estimate of costs for adverts, please contact the Communications team.

HR will liaise with Corporate Communications for costs, advertisement sizes and publication deadlines, who will in turn provide the quotes to the recruiting manager. The recruiting manager may be asked to provide confirmation after receiving a quote to place the advert, if the quotes received exceed the budget stated on the VCF.

Advertisement closing dates

All vacancies will be advertised for a period of two weeks. In exceptional circumstances, alternative timescales may be agreed with the Organisation Development Specialist within HR. In some circumstances it may be sensible to extend the period for up to a maximum of four weeks, depending on any anticipated recruitment difficulties.

If you wish to speed up the recruitment process then please state the date of interview on the advertisement (please consider timescales in line with closing date, shortlisting, notifying candidates etc.).

Application forms will not be accepted after the closing date (midnight on that date) has passed. A Head of Service may give permission to accept a late application depending on the circumstances. Web recruitment will automatically close the advertised vacancy at 23:59:59 on the set closing date. A closing time other than midnight is not possible.

Advertising an identical or similar vacancy

Recruiting managers may have an additional vacancy which is identified during the advertising stage. If the new vacancy is significantly different e.g. rate of pay, then the recruiting manager must place an additional advertisement with a separate authorised Vacancy Control Form (VCF) and it will be classed as a separate vacancy.

If the vacancy uses the same job description and person specification, and is either identical or only has minor changes (e.g. different hours, different location), then the recruiting manager doesn't need to place an additional advertisement as they can state the difference within the VCF and advert, and explain to the shortlisted applicants that there is more than one post to be filled etc.

Welsh Language Standards

In order for the Council to be able to serve Welsh and English speakers on an equal basis and in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards, the Council must ensure that it can deliver services in both Welsh and English. In order to comply with the Welsh Language Standard, recruiting managers must:

- Use the advert pack template HR provide
- Ensure vacancies are not advertised unless fully bilingual
- Ensure that applications forms made in Welsh are treated equally to those made in English throughout the entire process, including any notification timeframes.
- Ensure any assessments and/or interviews are conducted in the language

of preference for the candidate, as well as any correspondence e.g. inviting for interview, informing of decision etc.

Recruitment notices placed in English language journals (and other publications) with a UK-wide distribution may be in English, unless the post is one where the ability to speak Welsh is essential, in which case the notice may be fully bilingual, or in Welsh with a brief explanation in English. Any official notices, public notices or staff recruitment notices placed elsewhere in Wales will be bilingual.

Redeployment

Where possible the council will take reasonable steps to find suitable alternative employment for employees who are in the redeployment pool.

Upon receipt of the VCF, and full vacancy pack from the recruiting manager, HR will check the vacancy against the redeployment list. Employees who are in the redeployment pool are to be given first consideration before the advertisement can be placed internally or externally. Redeployee's are given 48 hours in which to express an interest in this position.

If there are no suitable matches on the redeployment list, the recruitment will commence. Please refer to the Redeployment Policy for further details of this process.

Application process

Applicants will apply online for vacancies, however, application forms can be provided in different formats for those with specific needs e.g. braille. Only applications made on a Denbighshire Application Form will be considered, CV's alone will not be considered, but may accompany a completed application form.

All correspondence will be dealt with electronically where an online application form has been submitted, this will include invites to interview, outcome of interviews, offers of employment, and contract paperwork.

For low graded posts, where there is no requirement to have reading or writing skills, the recruiting manager may work with the Organisation Development Specialist to agree an

alternative process, e.g. using an alternative application form. An interview and fair selection process will still take place, and candidates may be required to attend a recruitment day, rather than complete the standard online form. This will only be done where a full discussion and agreement has taken place with the OD Specialist prior to the advert being placed.

Shortlisting of applicants

Recruiting managers will be responsible for all the shortlisting using the Shortlisting Matrix. More than one person should always be responsible for short-listing applicants, thus reducing the chance of individual bias prejudicing an applicant's opportunity for selection.

This is a key element to the recruitment process to ensure the right applicants are interviewed and limit the risk to the Council. Recruiting managers will need to carry out the shortlisting exercise as soon as possible, as applicants are told that if they haven't had any response within three weeks of the closing date then they must assume they have been unsuccessful.

Recruiting managers expecting to receive large volume of applications for their vacancy may access their vacancy on iTrent to view and download applications prior to the closing date, in order to start shortlisting. Please note that this function cannot be delegated, and it is only available for the recruiting manager of that vacancy.

Recruiting managers must complete the Shortlisting Matrix for all applicants, by using the essential criteria from the person specification and comparing with the information provided on the application form. Managers will use the shortlisting matrix to tick where an applicant has met that individual criteria. Criteria should not be grouped into the 5 areas on the person specification, they should be individually considered. Where there are too many people to interview based only on essential criteria, the recruiting manager may further shortlist using the desirable criteria. A copy of this matrix must be sent back to HR with the Interview Schedule Form in order for HR to send out the relevant 'Invite to interview' emails to applicants.

Recruiting managers will be required to keep a copy of the Shortlisting Matrix whereby reasons for rejection are clear. Recruiting managers will be required to give any applicant feedback as and when requested and within a reasonable timescale.

Recruiting managers must be mindful that the criteria stated on the Person Specification has been used to form the grade of the post, and therefore interviewing and potentially appointing someone who does not meet all the essential criteria may result in the position being down-graded.

Please see the attached Recruitment Guidance for detailed guidance on equivalent qualifications and shortlisting.

Guaranteed Interview Schemes

Denbighshire County Council operates two guaranteed interview schemes, which support individuals who meet all the essential criteria to be guaranteed an interview for a vacancy. The Disability Confident Employer scheme supports applicants with a disability, and the Veterans Guaranteed Interview scheme supports those defined as Veterans.

Disability Confident Employer

Denbighshire County Council is a Disability Confident employer, which means we are committed to interviewing all applicants with a disability who meet all of the essential criteria of the role applied for. Applicants who have selected they wish to be considered under this scheme and who have met all the essential criteria, must be invited for interview. The recruiting manager must check the relevant section on the application for this indication and for information relating to any reasonable adjustments, and highlight this on the Shortlisting Matrix. Should the applicant have requirements, HR will inform the recruiting manager and it will be the manager's responsibility to action and implement.

Further information can be found in the attached Recruitment Guidance.

Veterans Guaranteed Interview

The Veterans Guaranteed Interview scheme supports our Armed Forces Community Covenant, and means we are committed to interviewing all applicants who are former Armed Forces personnel who have previously served for at least one day. The Government defines Veterans as “anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty’s Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations” and therefore Denbighshire County Council uses the same definition.

Under this scheme, applicants who have selected they wish to be considered under this scheme and who have met all the essential criteria, must be invited for interview. The recruiting manager must check the relevant section on the application for this indication, and highlight this on the Shortlisting Matrix.

Informing Applicants after Shortlisting

With the exception of schools, HR will send the ‘invite to interview’ emails out to all short-listed applicants. Unfortunately, the Council does not have the resources to personally acknowledge receipt of all applications. However, as applications will typically be completed online, applicants will receive an automated message from our online system confirming receipt of their application form. All advertisements will advise applicants that if they have not had any further notification within three weeks of the closing date, then their application has not been successful in progressing to interview stage.

Re-advertising a Vacancy

A recruiting manager and / or interview panel can make the decision to re-advertise a post if it is not possible to form a shortlist from the applications received. Suitable applicants should be told that the field of applicants was insufficient and that the post is being re-advertised. The recruiting manager may decide to either advise candidates that they have been unsuccessful at that stage, or to take the application forms through to the next round. Where this is the case, applicants will not need to re-submit their application forms.

Declaring an interest

Where a member of the selection panel is related to, or has a close personal relationship with a candidate, they will need to declare an interest and if possible, seek to remove themselves from the process. Where this is not possible, please seek advice from HR prior to shortlisting or interviewing.

Selection

Recruitment to all posts will involve the recruiting manager and chosen panel assessing a candidate's suitability and competency to undertake the role, using a minimum of an interview, structured around the essential criteria in the person specification.

The information gathered from the application and at interview can be sufficient, however in order to make an informed decision, the recruiting manager may need to consider other selection methods. The following selection methods may be used:

- Interviews
- Ability Tests (such as Occupational Personality Questionnaires, Verbal Reasoning ability assessment)
- Job simulation – presentations, written exercises, in-tray exercises, contact with employees / customers, role play exercises, group discussion
- Assessment Centres (using multiple complex assessments such as for senior recruitment both corporately and within schools)

All assessments and interviews must be appropriate to the post, have a scoring criteria and weighting agreed before this process begins and must be consistently applied to all applicants to ensure fairness. Where the post involves working with children and/or or vulnerable adults, it may be appropriate to consider the use of a test scenario and safeguarding interview questions.

Applicants must be informed in advance if alternative or multiple selection methods are to be used, outside of an interview; details of which must be included in the email inviting

them for interview. Skills tests should be held in appropriate rooms for all candidates, including those who may have a disability.

HR will be able to advise on appropriate selection methods.

Interviews

Prior to any interview, recruiting managers will be required to do the following:

- Organise interview panel
- Book rooms
- Allocate interview timings
- Arrange any applicant requirements/reasonable adjustments
- Agree on interview format, question setting, selection techniques
- Complete Interview Schedule Form and send back to HR

Further information can be found in the attached Recruitment Guidance.

Standard interviews are essentially a conversation where the interviewers ask questions which provide an overall impression of the individual. Interview questions should consist of predominantly specific question that relate to the role, and that seek examples demonstrating key behaviour, such as “Give me an example of when you have demonstrated excellent customer service”. A question such as "What can you offer the department?" will gather general information, and can be a good opening question, but does not test any specific skill or competency. It is important to have questions that can be critically and fairly assessed top ensure the process is not subjective.

Interviews should only be used for those areas within the person specification that cannot be tested by any other means. Other assessments methods can be more useful and less biased.

Recruiting managers and interview panel members must ensure that all of the assessment and interview process is recorded using the Interview Assessment Form and must do the following:

- Write down key words and examples of what the applicant actually says.
- Do not include opinion or judgements at this stage.
- Do not ask questions of a discriminatory or personal nature unless relevant to the requirements of the post.
- Once the interview is complete review the evidence which you have written down and compare it to the key behaviours and experience section.
- Allocate a score Competency Based Scoring
- Use these scores to compare to the results obtained from other assessment exercises to ensure consistency of evaluation.

Applicants have a right to see the notes taken during the selection process, therefore all notes taken by the recruitment panel must be accurate and must not contain any information that could be misconstrued. This information must be clear and justify reasons for why applicants were either successful or unsuccessful.

The Interview Assessment Form and the recruitment file will be kept for a period of six months in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Keeping the recruitment documents for this period of time will help protect the Council against any potential claims.

Safeguarding: Personal Suitability Interviews

Where a position requires regular contact with a child or vulnerable adult, managers should include questions and/or assessment to determine whether that individual is personally suitable to undertake that work. This should be in the form of a Personal Suitability Interview, where a structured interview designed to assess candidate's motives, emotional resilience, attitudes and ability to form appropriate relationships can be tested and determined. This may form part of the formal interview or may be a separate interview.

Further information can be found in the Safer Recruitment Guidance for Managers. Please contact HR for advice on including this type of questioning or assessment.

The interview panel

The interview panel is selected by the recruiting manager and should meet in advance to discuss the interview plan. Those who have shortlisted the applicants should conduct the interviews and the same panel must conduct all interviews for that particular post. All panel members should be familiar with this recruitment policy and adhere to the guidance contained within.

Interviews should, where possible, consist of three panel members, ensuring that there is a gender balance and be appropriately structured in order to ensure consistency and fairness. It would not be appropriate for a person on the same grade as the post advertised, with no supervisory/line management responsibility for that post, to be on the interview panel. Stakeholders may also be asked to attend interviews in particular circumstances and where appropriate. For Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers, interview panels must consist of between 3 and 7 people, with a balance of Governors representing different areas (e.g. Parent Governors, Community Governor etc.) and at least one representative from the LEA on the interview panel, HR will only attend interviews in exceptional circumstances. If HR attendance is required, this must be agreed in advance and will depend on resources.

Notice periods for interview

Applicants should receive at least 5 working days' notice for an interview, unless the interview date has been stated on the advert. This is to ensure that applicants are given adequate time to make arrangements. Where possible, the interview date should be arranged in conjunction with applicant's availability outlined on their application form.

There should also be some flexibility around avoiding religious dates and times.

Language of the interview

If appropriate, the interview may be conducted in either Welsh, English or bilingually. Please pay particular attention to what language the candidate has selected on the front

page of the application form. It is the recruiting manager's responsibility to arrange for the interview/assessments to be conducted in the candidates preferred language

Competency based questions

A competency based interview is based on the premise that past behaviour is a good predictor of future behaviour, and can demonstrate skill, knowledge or ability in a real life scenario, rather than hypothetical. Competency based questions are essentially used to match the person to the job role

Competency based interviews are structured, with questions that relate directly to the essential competencies required for the post. Research into recruitment and selection methodology suggests that structured, competency based interviews can be one of the most reliable and accurate forms of assessment.

The questions asked at the interview should be prepared in advance by the interview panel. Questions should take into consideration the competencies and behaviours required for the post, using the Person specification as a guide. All questions must be clear, open and relevant.

The interviewer should put the same questions and offer the same information about the job to all applicants however it is acceptable for the panel to ask more probing questions in relation to the applicant's application form. These additional questions of course will be different for each applicant.

Answers to competency based questions should focus on the STAR technique. Applicants should be prompted to provide answers which include the following:

- the Situation
- the Task required as a result
- the Action they took
- the Result of that action

During the interview, each applicant should be questioned in such a way that information is obtained to allow all interviewers to compare the applicant against the essential

competencies of the job. The interview panel will be required to make comprehensive notes on the answers given by each applicant.

Strengths-based interview questions

Strengths based questions are based on the premise that someone who is able to use their skills and is motivated, will be more productive in a role. This type of questioning therefore focuses on drawing out of candidates what they are energised by in the workplace, and whether they are suited as a person to that role. Strengths based questions may appear less relevant to the job, but will be used to determine what someone's motivations are, where their strengths and weaknesses lie, what their ethics and values are. For some schemes within the council, it is important to determine these areas as the skills for the role can be taught.

The same principles as above will apply in that the interview panel will have prepared the questions in advance on the Interview Assessment Form and will score each consistently. Whilst the main questions will each be the same, probing questions are sometimes needed to gain a full answer and understanding from each candidate.

A mixture of strengths-based and competency based questions can work well, to determine whether the candidate is able to do the job (technical competency), how likely they are to stay with the organisation, and what their predicted levels of work performance will be. Studies show that strengths based questions are a much better indicator of someone's behavioural competency and for predicting work performance than traditional behavioural competency questions.

For assistance with interview questions please contact the Organisation Development Specialist.

Values-based interview questions

Where a team or Service have clear Values established which they expect all staff to work towards, these can be used within the recruitment process. An employee who naturally shares those values will usually perform higher than someone who does not, and will

remain in post for longer. Interview questions focused on these values are scored in the same way as competency based interview questions, and candidates would still be expected to provide evidence to support their answers. However, a values-based interview question would ask for an example of when and employee has demonstrated a specific value, rather than a skill, and examples could therefore be from their personal life as well as their previous job roles.

For assistance with interview questions please contact the Organisation Development Specialist.

Assessments

Additional assessment methods can provide a better quality and quantity of information to base your final selection decision on. The recruiting manager and panel will need to decide if additional methods of assessment are required to the standard interview. The level, grade, applicants and criteria will be a good indicator of whether you should use additional assessment methods.

It would not be appropriate to use various assessments for jobs that require basic skills, as this may deter applicants from attending. Additional assessments methods must not be used ‘just because,’ they are to be used to gain further information that cannot be obtained at interview. Additional assessment methods may be more cost effective at senior level and also provide a more professional and fair approach to recruitment. The following points must be considered:

- The choice of assessment methods should stem from the requirements of the job and relate to the tasks and skills needed within that job.
- The job description and person specification have been reviewed and up to date.
- The assessments / tests used should be at the right level for the job.
- Any new exercises / tests should be piloted to ensure that any issues can be resolved before the assessment centre.
- The assessments/ tests should measure the applicant’s abilities to meet the requirements of the person specification and the competencies essential for

that role.

- Each candidate must be given the same assessments / tests, and in the language of their choice i.e. Welsh or English.

Selecting the right assessment

Recruiting managers should consider what competencies, skills, knowledge needs to be demonstrated to be assured of the candidate's suitability, and then consider which assessment will provide this evidence. They must be relevant to the job role and provide evidence of a criteria/multiple criteria that is not gained via the interview. Below is a list of example assessment methods/tests that may be used:

- Presentation
- Ability/Personality Tests (Occupational Personality Questionnaires (OPQ's), Management Scenario's, Reasoning Ability assessments; Verbal, Numerical, Inductive or Deductive)
- In-tray exercises
- Written exercises
- Role play exercises
- Group discussion
- Teaching a class or leading an assembly (school recruitment only)

If none of the above provide the evidence required, recruiting managers should discuss their needs with the Organisation Development Specialist who will assist in selecting or designing an appropriate assessment.

Please read the Psychometric Policy for details on using Ability and/or Personality assessments.

Assessment centres

Assessment centres consist of a number of exercises designed to assess the full range of personal attributes required for the job. Assessment centres combine multiple assessment techniques and each area of competence is measured by different means. They are

generally accepted as a fair method of selection, providing equal opportunities for all applicants and selecting on merit.

They are designed to provide recruiting managers with as much information as possible about applicants. Assessment centres offer an in-depth assessment and applicants feel that they have had a fair chance to demonstrate their abilities through a variety of assessments.

Assessment centres are suitable for posts that have a high level of responsibility and those which have an impact on organisational success at Head of Service, Director, Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher level. In exceptional circumstances, assessment centres may be used for highly skilled post but this will require Heads of Service/Governing Body permission. All assessment centres must have trained assessors taking part who will compare individual activities throughout the process and score each applicant individually.

Further information can be found in the attached Recruitment Guidance.

Decision

Once all interviews and assessments are fully complete and scores have been allocated to each candidate, the recruiting panel will use these scores to determine the successful candidate. When the selection decision is made, the ideal applicant will be the one who most clearly matches the person specification requirement. Recruiting managers must be satisfied that the selected candidate has demonstrated their skills, knowledge and abilities for the role through the selection process, and are the most suitable for the position based on factual and evidential information.

After the interview, all applicants are informed of the outcome as soon as possible, starting with the successful candidate first to ensure their acceptance of the offer. Should the selected candidate decline, the recruiting manager is able to offer the position to the next best candidate, providing they meet the essential requirements of the post.

All panel members' documentation must be returned to HR and retained within the recruitment file and will be held for a period of 6 months. The recruiting manager must email HR within 2 days of the interviews to confirm who was not successful, so that the HR team can send a confirmation email to the candidate.

Denbighshire County Council is committed to selecting applicants who have been assessed according to their capability and offered to post based on justifiable criteria which is essential to that particular post. The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that all interviews and assessments are conducted in a fair manner and all applicants are treated equally.

Offers of employment

The recruiting manager will make a verbal offer of employment but they must make it clear that the offer of employment is subject to the following:

- Satisfactory references being received
- Medical clearance, where appropriate
- Receipt of satisfactory DBS Disclosure, where appropriate
- Receipt of original certificates of qualifications obtained (unless received at interview)
- Receipt of Right to Work in the UK document and proof of identity (unless received at interview)
- Receipt of applicant's original driving licence if their job requires driving for work reasons (unless received at interview)

Please also note that the successful applicant **will not** be able to commence employment until **all** of the above are received.

Recruiting managers must complete the Appointment Form in full and send to HR along with copies of the above documentation taken at interview. Recruiting managers must keep the Interview Assessment Form until all feedback has been given and then send back to HR with any other recruitment documentation.

Managers may wish to send an email outlining the basic terms of the offer, in order for the new employee to provide their current employer with their notice period. This email should state the job title, proposed start date, salary, hours per work, work base, and confirming their employment is subject to the above safer recruitment checks.

A contract of employment will be created by HR stating that the offer of employment is subject to receipt of all of the above. Managers should seek the advice of HR before withdrawing any offer of employment.

Informing unsuccessful applicants after interview

Once the successful applicant has verbally accepted the offer of appointment the recruiting manager must then inform all unsuccessful applicants by the date and method agreed at interview. It is the recruiting manager's responsibility to ensure that those who attended an interview/assessment centre are informed that they were unsuccessful.

Managers will need to email HR with the details of those who were unsuccessful after interview within 2 days of the interviews being held, and HR will then confirm this with applicants via email.

Feedback

Candidates who were unsuccessful may ask for feedback following an interview or assessment centre. Recruiting managers are responsible for providing this feedback and should do so within a reasonable timeframe of the request. When informing the candidate they have been unsuccessful, recruiting managers should confirm they are happy to provide feedback if the candidate so wishes, and that they can arrange a time to do so.

Providing feedback should not be done in the same phone call as the confirmation of unsuccessful interview.

Feedback must be factual and based on the candidates performance on the day. Include both areas where the candidate performed well, and areas where further improvement could be made. It is not helpful to simply say someone performed better on the day, and

recruiting managers should consider what was ‘better’ about the candidate they selected and how the unsuccessful candidates could improve for any future similar applications.

Safer recruitment checks during the selection and appointment process

It is the recruiting manager’s responsibility to ensure that certain checks are undertaken both during the selection process and after. Some are legal requirements and ensure that a selected candidate is not at risk to themselves or to others by accepting the job offer.

Gaps in employment

The recruiting manager must carefully assess each application form to ensure that any gaps in employment, training or experience are detailed and any anomalies are noted to ensure that they are explored at the face to face interview. This is a mandatory requirement for all posts. Records must be placed on the successful applicants file to demonstrate that the relevant checks have been explored and any reasons for these anomalies should also be noted.

Proof of qualifications

Applicants are asked to bring original academic qualification certificates that are required for the position, as stated on the person specification, with them to interview. This is requested within the ‘Invite to Interview’ email sent by HR/Schools.

Recruiting managers will normally be required to check qualifications listed within person specification at interview and take copies for HR to place on their personal file. Recruiting managers must undertake this check for all applicants irrespective of the post they are applying for.

If the successful applicant cannot produce original documents, or certified copies, written confirmation of his/her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body (by the applicant).

Any offer of employment is based on proof of qualifications.

Right to work in the UK

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act, 1996 makes it a criminal offence for an employer to employ those who do not have permission to live or work in the UK.

It requires all UK employers to make basic document checks on every person they intend to employ. Due to the changes introduces by the UK Government as of 1st January 2021, HR will conduct these checks.

As of 1st January 2021, the UK has introduced new measures for granting residency and the right to work in the UK in light of leaving the European Union. Until 30th June 2021, EEA and Swiss Nationals (including family members and those in a relationships with an EEA/Swiss national) may continue to evidence their right to work in the UK in the same way as prior to January 2021. This check is done manually using the list of documents outlines in the Right to Work in the UK guide, or via the Home Office online service https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work.

During the Grace Period (1st January to 30th June 2021) applicants may choose to present their evidence in either format (online or manually). Following this period, all right to work checks will be done via the online system.

Those wishing to present their evidence of right to work in the UK using the Home Office online service may do so by visiting https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work. Applicants may then either email the link code to hrdirect@denbighshire.gov.uk or generate an email to this same address via the online system. The HR team will the check their right to work in the UK via https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work and inform the recruiting manager.

As of 1st January 2021, free movement has ended for the UK and employers must be granted a Sponsor Licence in order to employ any nationals from countries outside the UK's resident labour market (i.e. applicants needing to apply to work in the UK via the Skilled Worker Route). Denbighshire County Council does not currently hold a Sponsor Licence.

If the successful applicant has a time limit on their stay in the UK, repeat checks will be carried out in accordance with the dates within their identification document.

Any offer of employment is subject to evidence that the applicant has permission to work in the UK. Where an applicant has requested an extension to their visa, this does not constitute evidence of right to work in the UK. Managers are advised in these circumstances not to select for appointment, but please discuss this with HR prior to making a decision.

Safeguarding

To help deter, reject, or identify people who pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults, Denbighshire County Council operate recruitment and selection processes and procedures which places importance on the consideration of protection and safeguarding issues, promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults at every stage of the recruitment process.

Denbighshire County Council has a duty to ensure the suitability of all those it employs in whatever capacity. Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be made on applicants appointed to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Denbighshire County Council will reserve the right to apply checks to any post in the council in accordance with the risk assessment criteria outlined within the DBS Policy.

For those posts which involve working with children and vulnerable adults, we need to exercise particular vigilance and apply rigorous selection criteria. References must be checked, as must previous employment history. Interviewers must check if there are any gaps in employment and the reasons for these must be recorded on the Interview Assessment Form. This form must be signed by all members of the Selection Panel and returned to the HR with all other relevant documentation.

Please refer to the DBS Policy for further details.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Denbighshire County Council undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against people who have had criminal convictions. Applicants for certain posts will be asked to disclose their non ‘protected’ criminal convictions. Checks on criminal records known as ‘Disclosure’ checks will be carried out on applicants for posts which involve working with, for example, vulnerable young or older people, or in schools or care homes.

Denbighshire County Council will reserve the right to apply checks to any post in the council in accordance with the DBS Policy. Please see the DBS Policy for more information.

References

Recruiting managers should make all applicants aware that offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references being received. Applicants are required to give the relevant dates, names, addresses and contact details of references from their last two employers. If these two references cover a period of less than three years then they will need to provide reference details for all employers which will cover the three year period.

The purpose of a reference is to provide relevant and factual information regarding the applicant in question. References are a tool whereby past experience and performance can be an indicator of future performance in a similar role. The majority of organisations will only provide the basic factual information, which isn’t ideal, but can be used to validate what the applicant has put on the application form. The Council reserves the right to contact any previous employer of the applicant in order to verify their employment history.

References will only be obtained by HR after the successful candidate has been offered the position, and will not be used as a selection method during the selection stage.

All references must be requested in writing and must be receive in writing. Verbal or telephone references are not acceptable in any circumstances.

Character references will only be acceptable where the applicant has just left school or has not been employed in any capacity. Applicants must provide one referee from a senior member of staff from their school, college or university and the other should be a suitable character reference. A relative or partner will not be permitted to supply a character reference.

Recruiting managers are responsible for ensuring that the references are satisfactory. **Under no circumstances must an applicant commence employment before the required references have been received**. References should be checked against the application form to ensure that information provided by the applicant is consistent with what the reference states.

References are requested by HR. References for successful applicants will be kept on their personal file. Schools may use this reference template if they so wish.

References: internal applicants only

HR will require a satisfactory reference from the internal applicant's current line manager within the Council. HR will use the Reference Request Form.

Where the recruitment is internal only, recruiting managers are to request copies of the internal applicant's performance appraisals from the current line manager. Copies of probationary period documents can also be requested from their current line manager or HR if required. This does not apply to schools.

References: internal applicants for posts that require CSIW registration

Where an internal employee is successful in gaining a new role within the council that requires CSIW registration, 2 satisfactory references will still be required. For staff who have only had one role within the council, or who have been in this post for a significant amount of time, HR may accept 2 references from the same Service. For example, one may be from the employee's direct line manager, whereas another may be a personal reference from a customer, or could be from another manager within the department.

References: for posts that require an enhanced DBS

For posts that involve working with children and / or vulnerable adults and where the applicant has worked in these sectors previously, then one of their references must be related to the work they carried out with children and / or vulnerable adults.

Any references received that are ambiguous, vague or unspecific will require the recruiting manager to verbally address these issues of concern with the referee. Written records must be kept and secured regarding any verbal / telephone discussions that take place.

Information given by the referee must also be scrutinised against the applicant's application form to ensure that the information is consistent with what the referee has stated. Any discrepancy with the information must be taken up with the applicant.

Information given by a referee regarding past disciplinary actions or allegations should be considered on a case by case basis. Where an issue was resolved some time ago, where an allegation was unfounded or did not result in disciplinary sanctions and where there have been no further issues raised since are less likely to cause concern. Issues that were not resolved satisfactorily or a history of repeated allegations or disciplinary sanctions is likely to be a cause for concern.

References for posts within Domiciliary Care

Domiciliary Care is provided to people who still live in their own homes but who require additional support with household tasks, personal care or any other activity that allows them to maintain their independence and quality of life. For all posts within the Domiciliary Care Service, the candidate must provide two referees. Where they have moved employers in a care setting over the last 5 years they must provide every employer's details as a referee within that 5 year period. If their last employer was not one in a care setting, one reference must be from their latest position in a care setting.

Medical fitness and suitability for the role

Successful applicants will be required to complete a Job Analysis & New Starter Health Assessment Form. Occupational Health will then assess whether any reasonable adjustments are needed in order to carry out the role. This form is to be completed before the successful applicant commences work and is purely for the purpose of making reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Where appropriate e.g. occupational requirement for the post, the offer of employment will be subject to satisfactory medical clearance. An employee must have satisfactory medical clearance before they will be able to commence employment.

The recruiting manager and the Head of Service/Headteacher/Governing Body will be responsible for any reasonable adjustments that need to be made within the workplace to enable the successful applicant to commence employment. Occupational health will be able to advise the recruiting manager and Head of Service/Headteacher/Governing Body about possible reasonable adjustment options.

For further information please contact Occupational Health.

Additional Considerations

Denbighshire County Council's values

All recruitment will be conducted in accordance with our corporate values:

- Integrity
- Pride
- Respect
- Unity

We expect all recruiting managers and those involved in recruitment to demonstrate these values throughout the process, and for any selected candidates to also demonstrate these values.

Market Supplement

Denbighshire County Council recognises that in order to provide a high quality service to the people of Denbighshire, it is essential that the Council recruits and retains a workforce of the highest standard. However, there may be occasions when market forces produce a situation where a particular service within the Council is experiencing severe recruitment and/or retention problems related to a particular post.

Please refer to Market Supplement Policy for further details.

Relocation

Upon commencing employment with DCC an officer may be eligible to receive specific financial assistance should they find it necessary to relocate from their principal residence and subsequently purchase a new property and relocate to the area.

Governing Bodies may wish to adopt this policy and have the power to alter both the financial limit of expenses to be claimed, and/or the duration of the time in which to claim. The financial limit within the corporate policy is set at the current tax-free amount as set nationally. Governing Bodies may wish to alter the amount an employee may claim depending on their financial resources. Governing Bodies may also wish to change the period in which an employee can claim from the existing 12 months up to a maximum of 24 months.

Please refer to the Relocation Policy.

Interview expenses

Applicants will not be reimbursed for any interview expenses unless the interview/assessment centre requires an overnight stay because it is to be held over two

days. The amount that can be claimed will be capped as per the travel and subsistence rates for employees.

Time off for interviews / assessments

Where practical, reasonable time will be granted to employees who attend interviews / assessments within Denbighshire County Council during working hours. Reasonable time off with pay will also be granted for interviews or assessments for vacancies (to include secondments) within organisations covered by the Redundancy Modification Order.

Where a working partnership has been created between the council and an external organisation, reasonable time off with pay will be granted for interviews/assessments during normal working hours.

Employees wishing to attend interviews for vacancies external to the council, or outside of the above parameters, should use their own time to do so (annual leave or flexi leave).

Induction

It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that all new employees to Denbighshire County Council are fully inducted and complete the relevant e-learning modules within the set timeframes. A positive induction will result in higher retention rates and higher performance earlier. The Corporate Induction process is outlined fully on the Denbighshire website within the HR pages.

Probationary period

All new entrants to Local Government will be required to serve a 6 month formal probationary period to give them an opportunity to establish their suitability for the job. During this period there will be 3 formal reviews, one at 3 months, one at 5 months and one at 6 months. Managers must complete the forms on iTrent and HR will confirm satisfactory performance in writing once this has been closed and all mandatory induction e-learning modules are completed.

Managers are expected to take reasonable steps to maintain appraisal of the new employee throughout the probationary period, giving advice or warning in an honest effort to determine whether he or she can meet the required standard.

This does not apply to those on Teachers terms and conditions. Please refer to the Probationary Period Procedure.

Returning to the council after TUPE

Where an employee is transferred under TUPE and returns voluntarily to local government within five years, with no breaks in employments, continuity of service for contractual purposes is preserved. There must be no gaps between employments, and is only applicable for annual leave, occupational sick pay, and occupational maternity/adoption pay. For all other purposes such as redundancy calculations, continuous service is broken and begins from the latest council start date.

Declarations

The Council will require any job applicant to state in writing whether they are the parent, grandparent, partner, child, stepchild, adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of an existing councillor or employee of the Council or the partner of such persons.

No applicant related to a councillor or an employee will be appointed without the authority of the relevant Corporate Director or the Chief Executive, where the post is in a service or function managed by him/her. In the event that the applicant is related to the Chief Executive or a Corporate Director, authority to appoint must be obtained from at least two of the following:

- Chief Executive
- Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
- Head of Finance and Property (Section 151 Officer)

None of the above shall authorise the appointment of an officer related to them.

Seeking support for appointment

The Council will disqualify any applicant who directly or indirectly seeks the support of any councillor for any appointment with the Council. No Councillor will seek support for any person for any appointment with the Council.

The full Council will appoint the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Executive and Corporate Directors following the drawing up of a shortlist of appropriate applicants for the post by the Special Appointments Committee of the Council.

Politically restricted posts

Certain posts in the Council are identified as ‘Politically Restricted’ as laid down by the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989.

Applicants who apply for ‘Politically Restricted’ posts cannot become (or remain) an Elected Member of any local authority, other than a parish or community council, a Member of Parliament or a Member of the European Parliament, a member of the Scottish Parliament or Welsh Assembly. They are subject to prescribed restrictions on their political activity through the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990.

This includes canvassing.

Successful applicants to ‘Politically Restricted’ posts would have certain restrictions placed upon them during the course of their employment. A guidance document is available from HR for further information.

Also, in accordance with S.116 of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Authorities (Executive and Alternative Arrangements) (Modifications of Enactments and Other Provisions) (Wales) Order 2002, an Elected Member of an authority cannot be appointed to any paid employment with the Council for 12 months after his/her membership ceases.

Outside commitments

In line with the code of conduct, employees may need to have written consent to take any outside employment (paid and unpaid), and must not undertake any outside employment which conflicts with the authority's interests. This is particularly important in specific jobs where outside commitments may have an impact on the Working Time Directive or the council's reputation.

Training for recruiting managers

All recruiting managers / Governors involved in the recruitment and selection process should be appropriately trained to ensure that selection decisions do not discriminate and the aims the Recruitment and Selection Procedure are also achieved. All recruiting managers who are on interview panels should have completed the appropriate Equalities e-learning module and should be familiar with this policy and their role in the process.

Complaints

It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager, in the first instance, to respond to any complaints from job applicants regarding the failure of the Council to follow its policy or procedure. Support and advice is available from HR. Internal applicants can make a complaint about the recruitment and selection process under the grievance procedure. The recruiting manager should be aware of the stages an internal employee can follow.

Work Schemes

For information regarding work schemes such as Graduates and Work Experience, please see the relevant information on the Denbighshire website.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How do I apply for a vacancy?

You can apply for a vacancy online via web recruitment. This system will keep your details on the system meaning you can apply quicker next time. CV's on their own cannot be accepted, and instead must be emailed to hrdirect@denbighshire.gov.uk to be included with their online application form.

To request an application form in an alternative format, for example, braille, audio tape or disk, please contact Corporate Customer Service Centre on 01824 706101 or email customerservice@denbighshire.gov.uk

In certain instances, for lower graded roles where there is no requirement for reading or writing skills, alternative recruitment formats may be available whereby applicants attend an interview with their CV and supporting documents, and do not have to complete an application form for consideration. Where this is the case, this will be clearly explained on the advertisement. If this is not stated clearly on the advertisement, applicants must follow the above measures to apply for a job.

How will I know if you have received my application form?

When you apply online, you will receive an automated emailed to say your form has been submitted.

I am having problems with web recruitment, what should I do?

External applicants can reset their own password by using the 'Forgotten Password' option. Please note that HR are unable to reset your password for you. Internal applicants only can contact HR to reset their passwords.

If you are experiencing any other problems with web recruitment, please make a note of any error messages/screen prints etc. before calling HR.

When using web recruitment can I start the form in Welsh and change to English half way through?

No, if you start the application in one language you will need to complete the application form within that same language. If you do want to change part way through you will have to delete the current application form and start again in the chosen language.

I won't be able to submit my application form in time to meet the closing date. Could I submit it at a later date?

Closing dates are set so the recruitment process can be planned and managers know when they have to shortlist for interview. Closing dates are therefore not changeable.

Can I apply for a job on the closing date?

Yes, however the application must reach us before 11:59:59pm on the closing date.

Do you accept CVs?

CVs will only be considered in support of your fully completed application form; remember you must always supply the additional information requested to identify how you meet the criteria listed on the person specification.

I am interested in several jobs you have advertised; can I fill in one form for the various jobs?

No, each of our jobs has a unique reference number with a job description and person specification relevant to that job. Each application form must be tailored to each job.

The person specification asks for an NVQ level 4 as essential criteria. I have an NVQ level 3, am I eligible to apply?

When devising a job profile and a person specification the recruiting manager will have considered what the absolute essential requirements are to carry out the role competently.

If you have an NVQ level 3 but the requirement asks for an NVQ level 4 then you will fall short of the essential criteria. However, if you have an equivalent qualification at a similar level to NVQ level 4 then this may be considered.

Why does the Council monitor equality and diversity information, and what does it do with the information?

The equality and diversity information which you are asked for when you complete an application form is used to help the Council monitor the effectiveness of its recruitment policies. It is not used as part of the selection decision. This information will be treated in strict confidence, securely maintained and will not be disclosed to the recruiting manager or panel.

What happens to the personal information on my application form?

This information will be treated within the strictest confidence and with the utmost regard for the Data Protection Act 2018. The equality and diversity section will be separated and used for monitoring purposes only. The interview panel will not have sight of this form. Your personal details will be stored for a maximum of six months at which time they will be confidentially disposed of. If you are successful in your application your personal information will be kept securely on your personal file.

Will I have to disclose a criminal record?

You will have to disclose non ‘protected’ offences if you are applying for a post that is exempted under The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Posts that are exempt include those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. If the post you are applying for is exempted, you will be asked to undertake an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar anyone from working with the Council. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and the background of the offence.

Any information provided by applicants will be treated in strict confidence, securely maintained and only used in connection with your application.

Please see the DBS Policy for more information.

How do I know if the post requires a check from the Disclosure and Barring Service?

This information will be contained within the job description and information you receive about the job.

The post I am interested in is advertised as full-time. Can I work part-time or job share?

The Council has many flexible working options available and many jobs within the council can be carried out either on a part-time / job share basis. For further information, please contact the recruiting manager.

I have a disability. What does the Disability Confident Scheme for applicants with a disability mean for me?

As a Disability Confident Employer, Denbighshire County Council strives to adopt a positive action strategy and encourage more people with a disability into employment. Where an applicant with a disability meets the essential criteria for a post they will automatically be invited for interview. Applicants who wish to be considered as part of this scheme must tick the relevant box on the application form. All shortlisted applicants will be sent an ‘Invite to Interview’ asking the applicant to contact HR if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made by the recruiting manager for the interview.

The essential criteria states that the post holder will be required to travel around Denbighshire. I do not hold a current driving licence. Does this mean my application may be unsuccessful?

No, not necessarily. So long as you can prove that you are capable of travelling on public transport in order to meet the requirements of the role, and public transport is easily accessible to you this should not affect your application. If you think this may affect you or cause particular difficulties, you should seek further advice from the recruiting manager as to the amount of travel that may be required to be able to carry out the job effectively.

How will I know if I have been shortlisted for interview?

You will receive confirmation of the date, time and venue via email from HR. The council aims to give you at least a week's notice, although where this has been stated on the advert pack it might be less. If you have not heard within three weeks of the closing date, then you may assume that on this occasion your application has been unsuccessful.

Can I arrange another interview date if I am not available for the scheduled interviews?

It is extremely difficult to accommodate alternative interview dates where all interview panel members can reconvene and it will also delay the recruitment process. This is why the council ensures that the majority of job advertisements specify the interview date so applicants know in advance when they are required to attend if shortlisted for interview.

Applicants are also asked for dates when they are not available to attend an interview within the application form, and the recruiting panel will try their best to accommodate this, however this cannot be guaranteed.

Can I arrange another interview time if I am not available?

HR will try to provide you with another interview time where possible however this cannot be guaranteed.

Will my references be requested before my interview?

No, references will only be requested for the successful applicant after the offer of employment has been made. Please note that all offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references being received.

Do my references have to be from a previous employer or can I provide character references?

You will need to provide the names and details for references which cover the last three years of employment, and from your last two employers.

Character references will only be acceptable where the applicant has just left school or hasn't been employed in any capacity. Applicants must provide one referee from a senior member of staff from their school, college or university and the other should be a suitable character reference. A relative, friend or partner will not be permitted to supply a character reference.

How will I know if I have been successful after interview?

A member of the interview panel should contact you by telephone to inform you if you have been successful or not. This will be followed up by an email.

If I am successful, when will I be able to start work?

Your new manager will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient start date. Successful applicants will not be able to commence employment until we have cleared all our safer recruitment checks; satisfactory references, DBS clearance (where applicable), medical clearance, Right to Work in the UK evidence, driving licence (where applicable).

Where on the salary scale would I start?

All new entrants in to the Council start at the beginning of the grade. However, in exceptional circumstances where an applicant can demonstrate and provide evidence that

they bring a higher level of skills, qualifications and experience to the post then, with the agreement of the recruiting manager and Head of Service, they may start at an agreed point on the grade.

Internal Denbighshire applicants only - If you are appointed to a post within your existing grade, then you will be paid a salary in accordance with the new grade which is at least one spinal column point in excess of the salary you would have received on the old grade on the date of appointment or promotion

Teacher terms and conditions only – Teachers who are not registered with the EWC will be paid on the unqualified pay table. Those who are registered will be paid on the qualified teacher pay table, and will be paid in accordance with pay portability. HR will contact the relevant HR department of the applicant's previous school to confirm the salary they are currently paying, and the expected salary as of 1st September of the new academic year. The teacher will then be paid in accordance with this salary.

I currently work for another authority. Will my previous service be counted?

Yes, if there is not more than a week's break between moving from one authority to another. Continuous service will also be counted if you currently work for the Local Police Authority, various schools and some other public sector bodies, those covered by the Modification Order. To check please speak to the recruiting manager or HR.

If I am unsuccessful after shortlisting and/or interview, can I get feedback?

Yes, if you contact the recruiting manager they will be able to provide you with feedback or you can contact HR who will be able to pass your feedback request onto the recruiting manager to respond.

Do you have a register for people interested in employment with Denbighshire County Council?

Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to maintain a general register of people interested in possible future positions within Denbighshire County Council. Therefore, we cannot accept speculative application forms or CVs.

What if I have feedback or a complaint?

If at any stage of the recruitment process you feel aggrieved that the correct procedures were not followed, you were treated less favourably or you want to pass on some feedback please write to: HR, Denbighshire County Council, PO Box 62, Ruthin, LL15 9AZ or email hrdirect@denbighshire.gov.uk

If I am successful in gaining an interview, will the Council pay my expenses?

Applicants will only be able to claim interview expenses where the recruitment involved an assessment centre held over two days. The applicant will be able to claim overnight accommodation and travel in accordance with our travel and subsistence policy.

Applicants will need to contact Payroll and complete the ‘Claim for travelling, accommodation and/or subsistence expenses’ form before any expenses will be reimbursed.

I am 14 years old, am I able to apply for a job with Denbighshire County Council?

As part of the Purple Book terms and conditions, it states that junior entrants to local government service shall normally be appointed between the ages of 16 and 18 following an interview.

Can I offer the second best person a job if we have the same job vacant within 3 months of the original advert?

Sometimes more than 1 person would have been suitable for the job on the day. Where a second vacancy becomes available within a reasonable time frame, on the exact same job description as the role they previously applied for, the recruiting manager is able to contact the person second in line and offer them the new position. A reasonable timeframe would be within several weeks, 3 months is considered too long. Consideration must be given to redeployee's, and anyone on the redeployment list who could be suitable will be offered first refusal.