Inclusive recruitment checklist

This checklist is for recruiting managers and their panels to use when designing an inclusive recruitment process from the job advert, job description and through to interview. It may also be helpful to consider some of these questions before you need to recruit to a role.

The checklist is not exhaustive; each role is different and some of these suggestions will be more suitable than others. Some we are keen to try out in different circumstances but with a balance on the resource it takes for us to employ some of these activities. Please use the checklist as a starting point and as a reminder of how we can progress towards greater inclusivity at each stage of the process.

As part of the recruitment process you will have the opportunity to meet with our HR representative to discuss your options, so please do raise any of your actions from the checklist below – and if you need any more support, you can contact the equality team. It may also be helpful to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of your recruitment design, to help you think through the impact on different groups of people.

To ensure we are reaching a diverse pool of candidates, we are committed to advertising our permanent posts externally as standard – other than in exceptional circumstances. Temporary positions may still be advertised internally.

Any feedback on your experience of using some of these ideas would be very useful to share with the rest of the line managers team, and please do document the process for use in future case studies.

Job description

1. **Review use of language and jargon**
   In the overview, role detail and person specification. Compare with job descriptions from other institutions and from internal vacancies. Check your language for gender bias http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/
2. **Consider the requirements for formal qualifications and experience**
   Are these essential to the role? How much of the person specification needs to be essential versus desirable?
3. **Demonstrate our commitment to an inclusive and anti-racist workplace**
   Can you weave this throughout the job description? Consider using some standardised text to be included in the job description and/or the job advert.
4. **Consider the layout and use of text**
   Would this be suitable for a neurodivergent candidate? Are you using numbered lists and breaking up large chunks of information? Would other formats be more accessible – could this be offered (perhaps upon request)?
5. **Consider reviewing colleague feedback**
   Is there any feedback available from recent exit interview or even the person who may still be in the role as they work their notice period?
6. **Check with colleagues**
   Can you get some feedback from someone in your team, from other managers or from someone external? Getting a different opinion may help spot complex language or jargon and provide some different ideas.

7. **Ensure that your documentation is accessible**
   What format are you using – doc or PDF? Have you used an [accessibility checker](#)? Can the documentation be used with a screen reader?

Job advert

1. **Demonstrate our commitment to an inclusive and anti-racist workplace**
   Can you weave this throughout the job advert? Consider using some standardised text, a video, examples of recent activities we have done, or key actions under the EDI plan. Ensure all aspects of EDI are clearly covered, including neurodiversity.

2. **Include relevant information about working practices and benefits**
   Can you add in details around agile working and what would be required in terms of working from home? What flexibilities are available – can you point to guidance around job shares and reduced/compressed hours? What staff development opportunities are available – can you give specific examples or demonstrate our commitment?

3. **Support candidates with their application**
   Consider sharing an application guide to give some guidance for candidates on how to complete a personal statement that reflects the person specification, how to give STAR examples, and reminds them to upload this to the system alongside their CV.

4. **Consider who potential candidates can contact**
   Whilst you will probably share your email address so that they can ask questions about the application process and the role, consider sharing the contact information of a member/s of the team so that applicants can also have a separate conversation about the workplace. Many candidates do not have the privilege of a ready-made network, especially if they do not already work in the area or the sector.

5. **Consider where you could share this job advert**
   Consider reviewing the pool of professional bodies and mailing lists and ask colleagues to share with their own networks and across different platforms. You could use a short video that introduces the role, or some links to examples of our work.

6. **Consider the layout and use of text**
   Would this be suitable for a neurodivergent candidate? Are you using numbered lists and breaking up large chunks of information?

7. **Support candidates with getting familiar with libraries and the campus**
   Would potential candidates for this role benefit from a virtual or in-person open house? Could they come to the Library and submit an application on the same day?

8. **Consider how you will share the job advert**
   Will you be sharing the job advert on social media? Are you using inclusive language; is your tone more informal or formal, are you appealing to people who already work in HE or a broader group, have you checked your language for gender bias? Different tones and approaches will be best for different roles.

9. **Check with colleagues**
   Can you get some feedback from someone in your team or from other managers? Getting a different opinion may help spot complex language or jargon and provide some different ideas.

10. **Be clear about possible accommodations**
    How can you make it clear to potential disabled applicants or who may be neurodiverse, that we have tried to consider their needs but if they have any further requirements, please can they get in touch to discuss? Can you be explicit about what these accommodations might look like?

Could further accommodations be made with the role itself, and can you frame this on the job advert too?

Application and Interview

1. **Plan your interview questions carefully**
   What sort of questions are you going to ask – can you keep these short or frame them more as different topics for discussion e.g. rather than a question about communication, have a space for a discussion about it instead? Can you be explicit about which part of the person specification you are addressing in each question? Can you break up lengthy questions into manageable sections? Ensure your questions are direct and avoid language that could be misinterpreted or uses colloquialisms.

2. **Consider follow-up questions**
   Can you discuss this in advance with the panel to ensure you are using them equitably across each candidate where necessary?

3. **Check with colleagues**
   Can you try out the questions in advance on a colleague to make sure they make sense, and will provide answers that demonstrate the skills/competencies you are looking for? Can you ask someone to check for jargon and that the questions are not too long?

4. **Consider the diversity of your panel**
   You should consider who is best suited and perhaps has experience with the role, or who would provide a useful perspective, and balance this with your needs to have a gender and ethnically diverse panel. Can you ask someone who would be a peer or perhaps share the opportunity across the Library – many more people have now completed the recruitment training. You may also want to consider panel members who work across the institution (this could help with diversity too) or even students.

5. **Have an explicit conversation with your panel about bias**
   This usually includes whether any candidates are previously known to you but use the opportunity to dig deeper and agree how you will work together to address any bias if you spot it.

6. **Consider sharing the interview questions in advance**
   Will this be all the questions or a selection? Ensure you can send these out with the interview invitation and be explicit with the candidates as to why you are sharing them and any other information that may help. If you are keeping some questions back to ask on the day, explain this to the candidates.

7. **Design an inclusive assessment**
   Do you need to use a test, presentation, or activity? How can this test specific skills and behaviours and how clear are you about this? Do you need to make any adjustments to ensure your assessment is inclusive e.g. for neurodiverse candidates? Consider asking colleagues in your team to be part of the assessment and include their feedback in your decision; ensure you check for bias. If you have shared your questions in advance, consider using the assessment to check for the ability to think on their feet if this is a requirement of the role.

8. **Consider how much you are asking applicants to do**
   Performance can lessen as people get tired (both interviewees and those interviewing). Do you need to build in a break? Are the expectations of what will be required clear ahead of the interview day?

9. **Consider the environment and timing of the interview**

Is there a suitable space on the ground floor – and if not, ensure your candidates have the option to use the lift. Are there any other adjustments you could easily make rather than a candidate asking about it? Could you provide any information about the environment when you invite candidates to an interview? Have you considered sensory needs – are there bright lights and distracting noises? Could a wheelchair fit at the table? Are you able to offer any flexibility around timings – some candidates would prefer a morning/afternoon time slot.

10. **Provide detail in advance**

    Can you provide candidates with a clear agenda of what will be expected on the day, rather than just an interview time? Can this be provided in a table or other visual format? Are there any other details that candidates may find reassuring, such as what the room will be like, where you will meet them, what equipment may be available, whether a visit/tour will be available, and how to find the campus?