



Belfast Harbour Commissioners Policies and Procedures

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Introduction

This Policy deals with the whole process of recruitment and selection within BHC.

The following sub-sections set out the policy and procedure for each stage of the recruitment process:

1. Authority to Recruit
2. Job Advertising
3. Recruitment Process
4. Engagements/Contracts
5. References
6. Induction
7. General

It is the Commissioners' policy to recruit and retain the best candidates to further the business and creativity interests of BHC. The recruitment and selection of the best candidate is critical and responsibility lies jointly with the Human Resources Manager and the Senior Management Team to ensure that the recruitment exercise, which can be costly, is effectively managed.

Recruitment authority

In the context of BHC operating a very strict headcount control system, authority to recruit new employees is only at the highest management level within each Division, confirmed by the Chief Executive.

Such authority is required for all recruits, irrespective as to whether they are additions to staff members or simply replacements.

Advertising

When advertising externally, BHC may choose to advertise directly or through an appropriate advertising agency, recruitment consultancy or employment agency. Such advertisements must be free of any discriminatory bias and must highlight BHC as an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Recruitment process

The Recruitment Process will be managed and administered by the Human Resources Department to ensure both BHC policies and employment comply with legislation requirements.

The variety of recruitments required, covering differing trades/professions, may on occasions require BHC to take a flexible attitude to its recruitment procedures, subject to the legislation and code of practice as detailed above.

However, where appropriate, BHC, through its Human Resources, will use a number of established techniques, including:

- Short listing
- Aptitude/Skill testing
- Psychometric testing
- Assessment Centre Techniques
- Interviews

In certain cases, the Human Resources Manager may decide to use the services of outside recruitment consultants to assist with the recruitment process, subject to the agreement of the Chief Executive and within BHC procurement policy and procedures.

Depending on the level of recruitment, an "Interviewing Panel" may be convened.

In such cases, the Panel will share joint responsibility for recommending recruitment.

In the case of Senior Management Positions, the Chief Executive will participate in the interviewing procedure and will jointly, with the Human Resources Manager, decide on whether or not an offer will be made.

All Senior Management appointments will be reported to the Board.

Appointments/contracts

Once the successful applicant has been decided upon, an official offer of employment may be made but, to ensure that all employment and legal requirements are complied with, this may **only** be made by the Human Resources Department.

Where the standard format is inappropriate, the appropriate Senior Executive and the Human Resources Manager will agree the specific employment offer. Where material changes are made, the offer of employment will be passed to BHC's appointed Legal Advisors for comments/clearance.

BHC will **not** be party to encouraging any new employee to unlawfully break his/her employment contract with his/her current employer. As such, where any potential recruit is currently covered by any contract restraints with his/her existing employer, this must be brought to the notice of BHC who will endeavour to assist in any way possible, including in special cases, legal assistance. However, it will be for the potential recruit to remove him/herself

from any constraint clauses before an offer of employment from BHC may be made.

BHC does not normally require its employees, new or existing, to enter into any Constraint Clauses which would prevent him/her from taking up employment elsewhere unless such employment could, in the opinion of BHC Management, in any way create a conflict of interest. However, the employee must be party to normal security and confidentiality arrangements, coupled with notice period by either party.

Most offers of employment will provide for a probationary period of six months, during which time, usually at three and six months, suitability and competence of the individual will be assessed. Only after the completion of a **successful** probationary period, supported by formal review, will the full employment contract and the full notice period come into force.

References

It is normal BHC practice to seek at least **two** written references when appointing a new employee. At least one reference must be from the current or last employer. Additional references may be taken at the discretion of BHC. A Standard Format and Questionnaire is provided for this purpose and will be sent to the referees by Human Resources.

There may be exceptions to this procedure, either because of urgency or because a particular candidate is already known to BHC, whereby an offer may be made without the taking up of written references, or before references are returned. However, it nonetheless remains an important policy in general **not** to make any formal offer of employment until satisfactory references are obtained. Provisionally, telephone references are an acceptable practice to BHC, provided they are conducted by a responsible member of staff, within Human Resources and subsequently confirmed in writing.

Any job offer made prior to the receipt of references must be conditional on the references being fully satisfactory.

Induction

BHC operates a detailed induction procedure, which is obligatory for all its new employees, to ensure that he/she becomes familiar with BHC Practices, Procedures and Culture, as quickly as possible. A fundamental reason for insisting that new employees participate in the Induction procedure is to ensure that he/she is fully cognisant with all Health & Safety procedures and requirements. Invariably the Induction procedure will be commenced by Human Resources within one month of the new employee joining BHC although where the new employee is considered to be taking employment that may be of a hazardous nature, the Health and Safety induction will be undertaken as a priority. The Head of Division must ensure the new employee is made available for the Induction procedure.

General

For the purposes of this directive, the Recruitment Section has been limited to the most critical aspects of the BHC Policy.

The recruitment of staff increasingly has been covered by national legal provisions. It is therefore, critical that no offers of employment, formal or otherwise, should be made without the full involvement of the Human Resources Department.

Similarly, the transfer of staff from one Division and/or Department to another, either by application or by redeployment, promotion or for training needs, will, in the main, require a change to employment and, as such, must be carried out within BHC's normal recruitment procedure, again with the full involvement of the Human Resources Department.

Medical examinations

It is a condition of employment that all new employees must undergo a pre employment medical screening. Under normal circumstances, this will be carried out by BHC's appointed Medical Advisor but, where this is not appropriate, BHC may request that a pre-employment medical be carried out by the potential employee's own General Practitioner or an alternative medical practitioner, provided that the content of the examination is defined by, and the results approved by BHC's Medical Advisor. BHC will meet the costs involved.

The requirement by BHC, for a medical examination for all new employees, is for the following purposes:

- a) To establish the fitness of the individual to perform a particular job
- b) To prognose, as far as possible, that he/she will continue to be able to do so
- c) To provide an opportunity to discuss with him/her any relevant health issues

BHC may require employees who are being transferred from one set of working conditions to another to be re-examined as a condition of the transfer, again to ensure that the above provisions are met.

In specific circumstances, which are linked to the nature of the job, a more detailed medical examination would be required. BHC would need to be satisfied, as far as could be reasonably ascertained, on the current fitness of the prospective employee, in addition to being assured of the individual's continuing ability to carry out his/her work and duties in a safe and healthy environment.

Occasionally, it may prove necessary for the employee to be re-examined by the BHC's Medical Advisor. Individual employees have a contractual obligation to comply with any such request for a medical examination.

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