

# Procedure



## **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE RECRUITMENT/ HEADHUNTING**



## EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE RECRUITMENT/ HEADHUNTING

### INTRODUCTION

1. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) aims to maintain a competent, flexible and quality conscious workforce. To achieve this, the best available candidates will be selected and all employees will be provided with the opportunity for career development. This procedure clarifies the criteria to be utilised when a necessity arises for recruiting an individual to a vacant post under exceptional circumstances.
2. Whilst SYFR acknowledges the benefits of recruiting from within, the organisation is mindful that balance is required between promoting internally and recruiting externally. It is accepted that for certain roles, skills will need to be sourced from outside the organisation.
3. SYFR allows a very limited range of exceptions to the principles of selection on merit based on fair and open campaigns. Exceptions will be used sparingly and will certainly not become the norm. Each request to exercise an exception must be considered on its merits with all possible alternatives explored and exhausted before granting approval. The use of exceptions must be approved on an individual basis by the Head of Human Resources.
4. For the purpose of this procedure, exceptional circumstances can be defined where a vacancy exists that cannot be filled under 'normal' recruitment procedures for the following reasons:
  - The post has been advertised internally and externally and either:
    - a. No applications have been received *or*
    - b. The quality of applications did not meet basic criteria
  - The post demands specific, specialist skills that cannot easily be sourced within the internal or local labour market
  - The grade of the post will result in a limited potential pool of applicants
  - The post is critical to the operation of SYFR and thus requires filling at exceptionally short notice
5. Exceptional circumstance recruitment may involve either;
  - a. utilising an approved recruitment agency to source the most appropriate candidate for post *or*
  - b. an existing employee utilising their contacts/networking skills to identify a candidate
6. The candidate in question will still be required to attend, and be successful at, an interview with the advertising line manager. Appointment will not be automatic upon recommendation.

<sup>1</sup> The Dignity at Work Partnership is a partnership between the Government, Unite (the UK's largest union) and major public and private organisations. For further information on the Partnership, see [www.dignityatwork.org](http://www.dignityatwork.org)

## **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE RECRUITMENT/ HEADHUNTING**

7. It is the responsibility of all involved in the management of the Exceptional Circumstance Recruitment process to be aware of, and adhere to, the contents of this procedure.
8. As a member of the Dignity at Work Partnership<sup>1</sup>, SYFR is committed to promoting a positive working environment where the dignity and respect, to which all employees are entitled, is not undermined. No employee should be treated less favourably on the grounds of race, gender or gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or spiritual belief, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, marital/parental status, family ties, trade union or political belief, hours worked, or any other reason, either directly or indirectly.

### **SCOPE**

9. This policy applies to all vacant posts that require filling subject to the criteria as outlined in paragraph 4.

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

10. In filling any vacancy, line managers will be expected to follow a systematic process designed to ensure the most cost effective and efficient deployment of the organisation's current and potential employees. The recruitment procedure will normally be initiated by line managers with the advice and administrative support of the Human Resources Recruitment and Selection Team.
11. Workforce planning will provide the context for all decision making within recruitment. The Exceptional Circumstance Recruitment Procedure will only apply where there is a permanent, established vacancy.
12. This procedure will be initiated when the manager of an established vacancy wishes to fill a post permanently under exceptional circumstances. Managers must consult with Human Resources (HR) in order to seek the approval of the Head of HR before the procedure is instigated.
13. The Human Resources function will produce an annual report on any vacancies filled using this procedure, which will be forwarded to representative bodies. HR will also review this procedure annually to ensure a fair and equitable process.

### **PROCESS – STANDARD POSTS**

14. The line manager of the established vacancy will have initially completed an Authority to Recruit Form (Appendix A) which must be signed and forwarded to the HR Directorate.
15. Consideration must be given to whether, in the first instance, it is advisable to advertise the post through 'normal' recruitment procedures. If the post is not deemed sufficiently specialist and there are likely to be suitable candidates available, the vacancy should be advertised internally and externally (and circulated to other Fire and Rescue organisations).

## EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE RECRUITMENT/ HEADHUNTING

16. The advertising line manager should consult the HR function if the advertisement of the post yields either:-
  - a. No applications *or*
  - b. Sub-standard applications (i.e. not meeting basic, essential criteria)

If it is agreed that re-advertising is neither cost effective nor appropriate, then exceptional circumstances recruitment will apply.

17. The advertising line manager should complete the Exceptional Circumstance Recruitment form (Appendix B) and return to the HR Directorate.
18. The HR function will then issue an internal advert to employees inviting them to consider whether they can identify a friend/contact/ex-colleague who would be suitable for the vacant position. The advert may be targeted at employees within a certain field i.e. for an accountancy vacancy, the HR function and Finance Directorate may be contacted.
19. The HR function will then contact an appropriate agency (see Appendix C) and instruct them, on the basis of a Job Description and Person Specification, to locate an appropriate candidate.

### PROCESS – SPECIALIST POSTS

20. If the post is deemed specialist then, in consultation with the HR function, this procedure may be initiated.
21. Consideration must be given as to why the post is deemed specialist and detailed information should be provided on the form (Appendix B). Criteria may be:
  - Technical expertise
  - Specific qualifications
  - Contextual experience
  - Grade of position
  - Urgency of appointment.
22. Once the criteria have been considered and HR consulted, the completed form (Appendix B) should be returned for approval by the Head of HR.
23. Once agreed, the stages in paragraphs 16 – 18 will be followed.

***If you require any further guidance on this policy please contact the  
Human Resources Function***