## **Recruitment policy and procedures**

*Approved by the Board, 24/09/2020, due for review 24/09/2023*

**Introduction**

This policy sets out how The New Cross Gate Trust (The Trust) will undertake its recruitment of new staff, to ensure that all recruitment is undertaken fairly, transparently, and to attract the best candidates for the advertised role.

As an equal opportunity employer, The Trust will seek to:

* Ensure an open, fair and consistent approach to recruitment and promotion;
* Ensure that recruitment is on merit;
* Attract the best people to work for The Trust;
* Recruit within The Trust’s Equality and Diversity commitment and the requirements of the law;
* Ensure that recruitment processes are timely and cost-effective;
* Maintain and enhance the image of The Trust generally as a good employer.

**Recruitment and Selection Procedure**

The Trust will deploy a congruent and open recruitment process. When a vacancy is identified, the first step is to prepare a clear job description and person specification. The employer should ensure that both the job description and person specification for the vacancy are accurate and user-friendly. Both these documents are vital – they are sent to applicants, who will use them to decide whether or not to apply so it is important they sell the vacancy to the candidate. In addition, these documents form the basis for the criteria you use to assess candidates and make your appointment decision.

### Job Descriptions: Job descriptions must be written in plain English, avoiding jargon and abbreviations. The job description should:

### list the *main* tasks only – concisely identifying a maximum of 10-15 duties and/or tasks;

### be accurate and up to date and focus on the underlying requirements of the job, not how current jobholders may do the work.

Person specifications:The person specification should:

* be written in plain English, avoiding jargon and abbreviations.
* **c**ontain performance-based criteria that is clear and self explanatory.
* be based solely on skills that are essential to do the main tasks of the job.
* be based on what is listed in the job description, and *not* based on the skills or attributes of current jobholders

Pay: It is essential that positions of a similar level attract equal pay. The proposed pay scale for the post should be assessed against similar roles and agreed with the HR committee in advance of advertising the post. This should also abide by minimum wage requirements. The Trust is also signed up to the [London Living Wage](https://www.livingwage.org.uk/calculation) accreditation and this should be reflected in the pay for the role.

The person specification should also distinguish between essential and desirable skills, competencies and experience. Think about the skills required, and avoid making assumptions about the ways in which the skills were developed (e.g. “two years’ experience” says little about an individual’s actual skill levels). Where experience is required, consider what types of transferable experience (community roles, for example) are also relevant.

Where qualifications are essential, consider what equivalent qualifications are eligible.

Identify no more than six to eight skills for most posts (except for more senior or professional posts)

The person specification will specify which of the essential/desirable skills will be used in the shortlisting process.

**Adverts and advertising**:

The Trust will operate on the basis that vacancies will be advertised as widely as possible, taking into consideration the seniority of the job, likely pool of candidates and budget for recruitment.

At a minimum, all roles must be advertised openly via The Trust’s website. Additionally, the advertiser should consider which media would best attract the best likely candidates for each role. This is likely to include: distribution around local community networks and advertising via national job recruitment websites such as charityjob, indeed, or similar.

An alternative approach may be appropriate in a limited number of circumstances such as where the post is temporary or needs to be filled quickly.

All adverts should be checked to ensure that they do not contain any potentially discriminatory language. They should include:

* + The Trust’s logo,
  + a statement that The Trust is an equal opportunities employer and
  + that The Trust is a [London Living Wage](https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage) employer.
  + a contact email address or phone number.
  + reference to The Trust’s website where the documentation can be accessed.

**Application form**

To ensure that the application process is fair and transparent, the presumption is that recruitment will be undertaken by way of an application form (not a CV). There is a template provided as an appendix to this policy – please refer to Appendix 1.

A separate equality and diversity monitoring form (Appendix 2) should also be distributed with the application pack. Both of these documents should be made available on the website when the post is being advertised so that applicants can access and download the necessary documentation.

The application form should include information on who the form should be returned to, the closing date for applications and the expected day that interviews will take place.

Short-listing

Short-listing must be objective and based only on the short-listing criteria from the person specification. Responses will be scored against each short-listing criteria and total scores placed in rank order to determine which applicants will be invited to interview.

Short-listing will not be based on prior knowledge of the candidate or assumptions you make about the candidate’s ability to meet the person specification criteria.

All candidates will be required to state on their application form if they are related to an existing Trustee or Trust employee. If this affects any candidates whom you shortlist, you must seek permission to proceed with their application from the HR Committee.

Those applicants short-listed will be emailed with an invitation to interview, providing details of the time and date of interview, and who they can expect to meet on the interview panel. Interview dates and times should normally be organised so that candidates have at least one week’s notice of attendance. The letter should also ask whether any particular adjustments are required to ensure that the interview process is undertaken fairly and with regard to The Trust’s policy of equal opportunity.

Selection interviews

Interview panel: The interview panel, including any Trustees, must have relevant experience of recruitment and selection processes. The personal requirements of candidates with disabilities, etc., must be accommodated, e.g., access, seating, lighting, presence of a supporter/advocate. Interviews must be conducted by a representative panel, including a Trustee, ideally comprising three interviewers.

As well as the interviewers, it is possible that The Trust’s partners may attend as observers. Such attendance should always be explained to the interviewees and the role of the observers should be made clear at the outset of the interview.

Interview questions and scoring: The interview panel should hold a pre-meeting to agree interview questions, decide who will lead each area of questioning, agree core and supplementary questions, agree who will chair the panel, and other issues about the conduct and assessment of the interviews. The interviewers should work as a team. A scoring sheet should be prepared to score (and weight) each response.

Core and supplementary questions must be directly related to the criteria set out in the person specification. Questions should aim to provide information about the extent to which the candidate meets all the criteria, but particularly the criteria that have not been adequately assessed by the application form or any tests. The set of core questions should not be excessive, as interviewers may also need to ask supplementary questions to probe the interviewees.

Supplementary and probing questions should seek to provide further information or clarify details from the interviewee’s application form, test results etc, or their initial responses to core questions and must all be based on the criteria set out in the person specification.

Each interviewer should complete a copy of the interview scoring sheet form for each candidate *before* discussions with other members of the interview panel, and *before* the next candidate is interviewed. Interviewers should include adequate comments and information on the form to justify their decisions and enable fair comparisons to be made between candidates.

After all candidates have been interviewed, panel members should compare individual assessments of each individual and jointly make a decision on the successful candidate. The panels’ decision must be recorded on the form as the official decision of the panel and signed by all members of the panel.

If there is more than one appointable candidate, then the interview panel can agree a list of Reserve Candidates. This can be done only at the time that the selection decision is made. All appointable candidates should be listed in an agreed rank order based on the agreed (or majority) view of the panel. The list should be kept with the recruitment file for future reference if needed. Should an identical vacancy occur at any time up to six months from the date of the interview, the first person on the list may be offered the post(subject to the individual signing a declaration that they details can be retained on file as per the GDPR guidelines). Any subsequent identical vacancies may be offered to the next person on the list and so on. A record sheet must be attached to the recruitment file giving information on who has been offered a post.

The reserve candidate process may be used only in the six months following the original selection decision. It is at The Trust’s discretion whether to use it or not.

Candidate testing: Testing candidates can provide additional information to facilitate the best recruitment decisions so you should include one or more tests, such as assessment exercises or work samples, in your recruitment process. Tests should be used in one of two ways:

* + To inform the interviewing process: tests can be used alongside the application form and interview to provide additional information which can be explored during the interview. Such test(s) should take place before the interviews are held, allowing sufficient time for the results to be available to interviewers to evaluate before the interview take place.
  + For short-listing: to provide additional information where short-lists produce an unmanageable number of applicants. In this case, only some of the shortlisted candidates will go forward to the interview stage.Test(s) must be chosen to assess one or more of the person specification criteria.

Paperwork: The interview pack, including application forms, all interview notes, all interview assessment forms, and the notification of appointment form for the successful candidate must be retained on file for not less than 6 months. This is the period of time during which a discrimination claim could be brought against The Trust. The data collected during the recruitment process is important for defending any potential claims.

Offers of employment

Verbal offers of employment are legal contracts and bind The Trust, it is therefore important that verbal offers are clearly conditional on satisfactory pre-employment checks, etc.

The manager should inform unsuccessful interviewees of the outcome and offer feedback.

The manager responsible for the post being filled should contact the successful candidate and give them a verbal, *conditional* offer of employment. Candidates should be alerted to the fact that pre-employment checks will now be taken up and this may take several weeks. In addition, the manager should advise the candidate that they should not give notice to their present employer until they have been informed that the pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

* The manager will send a letter to the successful candidate within three working days, making them a conditional offer of employment.
* The manager will take up pre-employment checks which will include, as appropriate:
  + National Insurance number checks [*photocopy of NI card, P60 or p45 to be taken and retained on file*]
  + References (at least two references, one of which will be from their most recent employer) [*these should be written references and retained on file*. *If the reference provides any issues of concern, this should be followed up with a phone call to the referee*]
  + Checks on [entitlement to work in the UK](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/773780/An_employer_s_guide_to_right_to_work_checks_-_January_2019.pdf) [this will require a *copy of passport showing that the applicant is a UK national or evidence of the right to work is to be taken and retained on file*]
  + Disclosure and Barring Service checks (these are specifically for posts involving work with children and vulnerable adults that are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, however, it is The Trust’s position that all posts within the organisation could potentially be categorised in this way); [*applicant will be referred to The Trust’s DBS provider to have this check undertaken, unless they are currently subscribed to the DBS update service, in which case, this will be checked online*]
  + Qualifications [*applicant will be asked to bring in copies of their qualifications, which will be photocopied and retained on file*]
* Once The Trust has satisfactorily completed all the pre-employment checks, it will tell the successful candidate that their offer of employment has been moved from conditional to unconditional and that they can hand in their notice and contact The Trust to arrange a suitable start date. This will also clarify that the offer of employment is subject to a 6-month probationary period.

**Day one of employment**

**Once the employment has been confirmed, the following documentation and processes will be required to set the applicant up as a new employee:**

* A contract of employment will be prepared setting out the key terms of the employment and issued to the successful candidate no later than their first day of work. There is certain information that must legally be included in a contract of employment, therefore a standard contract template must be used.
* HMRC, the external payroll provider and the pension provider must all be immediately informed of the new employee and their terms of employment. A ‘new starter checklist’ is provided as an appendix which collects all of the key information that is required. Please refer to Appendix 3.
* The employee will be provided with a copy of all employment related policies. A list of these is provided in Appendix 3. They will be given time to read all of these and will be asked to sign a form to confirm that they have read and understood the policies provided. Initial induction will be provided, including a discussion of key issues around health and safety and safeguarding, subject to further training being scheduled.
* The employee will also be provided with necessary keys, access codes and IT equipment.
* The employee should provide details of: emergency contacts; bank details to which their salary should be paid; a copy of their leave sheet and timesheet if appropriate.

**Probation**

The Trust’s probationary procedures apply to all new entrants during their first 6 months of employment. It also applies to all temporary contracts of three months**’** duration or longer. This is essential as a temporary contract may be extended or the employee may obtain a permanent position with The Trust. The time in the temporary contract will count towards the six-month probationary period.

During the probationary period, the employee is responsible for demonstrating their suitability for the post. The manager is responsible for providing the employee with guidance and training. By the end of the probationary period, the employee must demonstrate the capability to work to acceptable standards without requiring an undue level of supervision.

The new recruit’s manager should continuously assess the new individual against the job description and person specification, and their attendance record during the first six months of their employment. That assessment should include consideration, where appropriate, of quality and quantity of their work; flexibility; customer care; conduct; reliability; attendance and timekeeping; and any other key areas relating to the job’s requirements.

The manager is responsible for giving clear and regular feedback regarding the employee’s performance. Where there are any areas of concern but the manager is not recommending dismissal, employees must be made aware of these concerns, as well as the methods to achieve the required level of improvement. A note should be kept of the meeting.

If these concerns continue (or new concerns arise) the manager should advise the employee that this could result in the probationary period being extended to provide further time to assess performance.

6 month review - When the employee is approaching 6 months of employment, a date should be set for a formal 6-month review meeting. The employee should be given reasonable notice of the meeting. The manager should maintain a record of the meeting on a standard form (Appendix 4) and the recommendations, which should then be seen and signed by the probationer, and then retained on the probationer’s file.

If the employee’s performance has been satisfactory, the manager should confirm the probationer’s permanent appointment in writing as soon as the six months has been completed.

If the employee**’**s performance has proved unsatisfactory and actions to address this have not resulted in any improvement, then the manager should consider dismissal. If termination is recommended, the employee can have their trade union representative attending the meeting to observe and clarify any procedural issues. If appropriate, after the termination interview, the employee should be informed both verbally and in writing that termination on the grounds of unsuitability will be recommended, including the reasons for this. The recommendation (with reasons) should be retained on file, with copies of the probation assessment meeting notes and any other relevant correspondence. The employee**’**s notice period will commence from the date when the recommendation in writing is given to the probationer, with the written notice and their appeal rights.

If the manager is unable to make a decision about the probationer up to the six month’s service, it may be appropriate to extend the probationary period. This would be appropriate in the following situations:

* where the probationer’s performance has previously been satisfactory but has recently deteriorated;
* Where the employee has not been performing satisfactorily, but it is considered that a further period of probation may help in improving their performance; or
* where through the absence of either party, the manager has not had sufficient time to assess performance.

Extension to probation - In consultation with the employee, probationary periods should not be extended for a period longer than three months beyond the initial six-month period. If the employee does not agree to the extension, then the manager should decide on the appropriate course of action, for example recommending dismissal or extension of probationary period at management discretion.

If the extension relates to unsatisfactory performance, the manager should inform the employee in writing what standards of performance are required, when the performance will be reviewed and that, if standards are not met, dismissal could be a possible outcome.

At the end of the extended probationary period, if the performance has proved satisfactory, the employee should be informed verbally with the manager confirming the permanent appointment in writing. If the performance remains unsatisfactory, then a recommendation to dismiss should be made.

Appeals: Employees have the right to appeal against the decision to dismiss to the Chair of the HR Committee. The decision will be final and there is no further internal right of appeal.

Data Protection

The Trust’s processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its [data protection policy](https://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-documents/data-protection-policy/162690/). In particular, data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with The Trust's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under The Trust’s [disciplinary procedure](https://www.xperthr.co.uk/policies-and-documents/disciplinary-procedure/16170/).

**Appendix 1. Application form**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Post Applied for: XXXX**  Please complete all sections of this form to give us an accurate overview of your experience, skills and qualifications.  **Please return this application, by XXXXX . Late applications will not be considered. T**o: **XXXX** If completing by hand please use black ink.  **Interviews will take place on XXXX** | | | | |
| **Personal Details** | | | | |
| **First Name:** | | | **Surname:** | |
| **Address:**  **Postcode:** | | | **Telephone number:**  **Email address:**  **Nationality**: | |
| Please select the option below that best describes your work status in the UK:  I have a full British passport  I have the right to work in the UK  Other. Please provide details\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | |
| Please explain how you believe you meet the person specification for the role. Give as much information as necessary to demonstrate your abilities, skills, experience and knowledge and how they relate to this role. This includes voluntary and leisure interests. Make sure you show how you meet the criteria on the person specification listed as shortlisting points.  Continue on a separate sheet if necessary. | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **Employment History – Please provide details of your employment history, starting with the current or most recent.** | | | | |
| **Employer** | **Post held and main duties** | **Dates of post** | | **Reason for leaving** |
|  |  |  | |  |
|  |  |  | |  |
|  |  |  | |  |
| **Please add additional rows if required** | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **Please provide details of your qualifications, starting with the most recent** | | | | |
| **Qualification** | **Grades awarded** | **Date achieved** | | **School/College/other institution** |
|  |  |  | |  |
| **Please add additional rows if required** | | | | |
| **Please provide two references, one of whom should be your last employer** | | | | |
| **Full Name:**  **Company (if applicable):**  **Address:**  **Telephone Number:**  **Email:** | | **Full Name:**  **Company (if applicable):**  **Address:**  **Telephone Number:**  **Email:** | | |
| **I declare the information I have given to support my application is true and accurate.**  **Signed: Date:** | | | | |

**Appendix 2:**

**Equality Monitoring Questionnaire**

**1. Are you (please delete as appropriate): Male Female**

**2. Please select your age group**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Under 18 |  |
| 18-24 | 45-49 |
| 25-29 | 50-54 |
| 30-34 | 55-59 |
| 35-39 | 60-64 |
| 40-44 | 65+ |

### **4. Do you consider yourself disabled? *(Please tick one box)***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No |  | Yes | **If yes, what is the nature of your disability?** | Physical | Sensory |
| Mental | Learning |

5. **Are you registered as disabled?** *(Please tick one box)*

No Yes

6. **Please tick one box to describe your ethnic group:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **White** | |  | **Mixed** | |  | **Asian or Asian British** | |
| British | |  | White & Black Caribbean | |  | Indian | |
| Irish | |  | White & Black African | |  | Pakistani | |
| Turkish/Turkish Cypriot | |  | White & Asian | |  | Bangladeshi | |
| White Other *(Please state)* | |  | Other *(Please state)* | |  | Tamil | |
|  |  | Asian Other *(Please state)* | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Black or Black British** | |  | **Other** | |  |  |  |
| Caribbean | |  | Chinese | |  |  |  |
| African | |  | Vietnamese | |  |  |  |
| Somali | |  | Other Ethnic Group   *(Please state)* | |  |  |  |
| Black Other *(Please state)* | |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix 3: Employment checks checklist**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Completed** | **Date** | **Signed** |
| **On conditional offer being made and accepted** |  |  |  |
| Take up 2 references – both received satisfactory. |  |  |  |
| Check ID (passport or driving license). Copy and file. |  |  |  |
| Check qualifications. Copy and file |  |  |  |
| Confirm right to work in the UK. Copy and file. |  |  |  |
| Arrange DBS check |  |  |  |
| Clear DBS received |  |  |  |
| **Confirm unconditional offer.**  **Discuss any flexible working requests.**  **Agree start date** |  |  |  |
| Prepare contract – send two copies to new employee, one to keep and one to be retained on file |  |  |  |
| **On day one** |  |  |  |
| Emergency contact information completed and filed. |  |  |  |
| Health form completed |  |  |  |
| Declaration of interests form completed and filed. Any issues identified flagged to trustees. |  |  |  |
| Bank details form completed, loaded on to payroll system and filed. |  |  |  |
| New Starter checklist sent to payroll provider with new staff P46. |  |  |  |
| New starter set up on pension system |  |  |  |
| Copy of leave sheet provided |  |  |  |
| All policies provided to new started and asked to sign when completed.  Staff code of conduct  Absence from Office  Health and safety  Safeguarding (children and adult policies)  Equality and diversity  Financial procedures (if handling funds)  Data protection / GDPR requirements |  |  |  |
| Discuss draft job description and immediate tasks |  |  |  |
| Discuss initial health and safety and safeguarding |  |  |  |
| Set of keys provided (if appropriate) and pin codes for entry |  |  |  |
| **Within three months** |  |  |  |
| Safeguarding training to be completed |  |  |  |
| **By end of 6 months:** |  |  |  |
| 6 month probation review undertaken and form completed. |  |  |  |
| Any extension to probation to be recorded or appointment to be confirmed as permanent |  |  |  |

**Appendix 4. Report of 6 month Probation Meeting**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **This form should record any issues brought to the attention of the probationer, and any points that the probationer has made in response. Also any actions, arrangements for further training or targets agreed to address the issues raised.** | | | | |
| **1. Quality of work** (standards achieved, meeting deadlines, etc.) | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **2. Quantity of work** (appropriate levels of output) | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **3. Flexibility** (work within teams, etc.) | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **4. Customer care** (includes relationships with both public and clients) | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **5. Reliability** (and/or **initiative** where required) | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **6. Conduct,** including relationships with other employees and team members | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **7. Attendance** | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **8. Timekeeping** | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **9. Other comments** | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **10. Any further comments by the probationer** | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| **Recommendation (please tick)** | | | | |
| The employee’s probationary service is satisfactory. I recommend their transfer to permanent status and have advised the employee accordingly | | | |  |
| The employee’s probationary service is unsatisfactory and I have informed them that I would be recommending termination of their employment. | | | |  |
| We have identified some areas for improvement and I recommend extending the probation for a further three months. The probationer has been advised. | | | |  |
| **Report completed by** |  | | | |
| **Designation** |  | | | |
| **Signed** |  | Date |  | |
| **Probationer** | I confirm that my probation interview took place on \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_  And that I understand the recommendation regarding my probation | | | |
| **Signed** |  | Date |  | |