

*Approved by Trustee Board: May 2024*

*Review Period: 3 Years*

hwunion.com

*Heriot-Watt Student Union*

***RECRUITMENT POLICY***

### 1. Overview

1.1 This policy covers the Heriot-Watt University Student Union (HWUnion) internal and external recruitment for career staff, casual workers and Trustees. This policy does not include recruitment of Full Time Officers who are elected as part of our annual election cycle. It is designed to ensure that our recruitment processes are fair and lawful, and help us to appoint the right people to the right roles.

1.2 We are an inclusive organisation that focuses on equality, diversity and inclusion in staff recruitment and that encourages applications from across all levels of society and all walks of life. We are committed to building a workforce who are capable and encouraged to develop within their roles.

1.3 We do all we can during our recruitment process to make sure that job applicants (people who send us job applications), job candidates (those whose applications we take through to subsequent stages) and general job seekers are not disadvantaged in any way, and in particular in connection with a protected characteristic such as age, sex, race or disability.

1.4 Our recruitment decisions, including in respect of speculative approaches and internal promotions and transfers, are based on non-discriminatory and objective criteria.

1.5 This policy does not form part of your employment contract, and we may update it at any time.

1.6 You should read this policy alongside our policies on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Data Protection.

### 2. Defining the role

2.1 When we need to recruit, we will carefully consider what the role involves. We will review and may update an existing job specification to make sure that it properly reflects any changing day-to-day duties and responsibilities involved.

2.2 We will list the qualifications, skills, attributes, knowledge and expertise that we are seeking (‘the person specification’).

2.3 If we think that the role could work as a part-time, job-share or other type of flexible working arrangement, we will take this into consideration as part of the recruitment process.

### 3. Our job adverts

3.1 Job adverts are prepared by the relevant manager, in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Chief Executive Officer, as appropriate and comply with equality law. In particular, we do not use wording that could discourage applications from some groups in society.

3.2 We may decide toadvertise a vacancy internally, externally or both.

3.3 We advertise vacancies in places that are accessible to as wide a pool of potentially interested job applicants as possible.

### 4. Your job application

4.1 We will try to address any request you may have, so long as it is reasonable. If you need information in an accessible format such as large print, for example, an application form, job specification or person specification we will be happy to provide this

4.2 We will not ask you to disclose details of criminal convictions unless that would be justified based on the role for which you are applying. If we do ask for this disclosure, we will be clear about what you need to tell us.

4.3 We will not ask you about your health before making a job offer unless this information is necessary for the role and we:

* need to know about any reasonable adjustments that should be made to the recruitment process (the information is retained separately from the application form);
* need to establish if you would be able to carry out an intrinsic part of the job;
* need to check if you have a particular disability where that disability is an occupational requirement of the job;
* are monitoring diversity (see **4.4** below);
* want to take positive action in respect of disabled people; or
* have to ask health or disability-related questions because of a legal requirement.

4.4 As part of our equal opportunities monitoring, we may ask you to answer questions about yourself, including your race, physical or mental health, and sexual orientation. This is for monitoring purposes only and to help us to identify any inequalities in our organisation. It constitutes personal information, and therefore we handle it carefully and confidentially, and store it separately from application forms. It is not taken into consideration when we are deciding whether to take an application forward in the recruitment process. That includes when we are deciding whether to offer you the job, and the terms of any offer.

4.5 With respect to paragraph 4.4, you do not have to give us all or any of the information we collect as part of our equal opportunities monitoring if you would prefer not to provide this. Whether an applicant does or does not complete a monitoring form has no bearing whatsoever on our recruitment decisions.

### 5. Shortlisting

5.1 Our processes are fair and must be seen to be fair. If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a conflict of interest, they should immediately tell their line manageror a member of the Senior Management Team. A conflict of interest could include a relationship or friendship with a job applicant.

5.2 Shortlisting for permanent/career staff roles will be carried out by more than one person.

5.3 We treat all applications confidentially and assess each by applying a pre-agreed scoring system that is based on the job specification and the person specification.

5.4 We will contact the successful and unsuccessful applicants as soon as possible after making our decision about who to take forward to interview.

### 6. Interviewing

6.1 If we interview you, we will give you as much notice as possible of the date for your interview.

6.2 We will try to accommodate your needs around the timing and format of interview(s), and will make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates.

6.3 We may use one, or any combination, of the following as part of our interview process, with reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants where necessary:

* Presentation
* Skills assessment
* Meetings with potential colleagues and/or students
* Telephone interview

6.4 Interviews will be carried out by the relevant line manager and will normally include a minimum of two interviewers, one of whom will be trained in HWUnion recruitment procedures. If a second round of interviews is needed, we may decide to include a member of the Senior Management Team on the interview panel.

6.5 Interview questions will be based on the job specification, person specification, your application form and any selection test results. Questions will be as objective as possible and you will be scored objectively based on your answers.

6.6 If we do not identify a suitable candidate, we may decide to re-advertise the vacancy or a different version of the vacancy.

### 7. Making a job offer

7.1 We will write to the successful candidate with an offer. That offer will include details of the terms and conditions of employment. We will explain how to accept our offer, including the timescale for that response.

7.2 A job offer will usually be made subject to certain conditions. These include one or more satisfactory references, proof of professional qualifications, and confirmation of the right to work in the UK. We may also decide to make an offer conditional on a satisfactory medical examination and/or the results of any other specific checks that it is reasonable, necessary and proportionate for us to carry out.

7.3 When it comes to seeking references, we will decide whom we wish to contact for a reference, based on those you have indicated in your application. However, we will only make contact with them once you have confirmed your specific consent for us to do so. If you do not consent to us taking up references, the offer of employment will have to be withdrawn.

7.4 We will provide feedback to unsuccessful internal and external candidates who request it.

### 8. Starting in the new job

8.1 We aim to introduce you to your new role as smoothly as possible. Your line manager will give you all the necessary information and guidance for that to happen.

8.2 You will usually have to complete a probationary period in order to make sure that you and we are content with progress and for the employment to continue.

### 9. Data protection

9.1 During the recruitment process we will need to collect, handle and store various data about you. This is likely to come from different sources including:

* your application form and covering letter;
* your CV;
* your assessments;
* notes of your interview;
* employer references;
* results of pre-employment checks.

9.2 We will only collect data that is relevant to the recruitment decisions we need to make.

Relevant data will be held confidentially, stored securely and retained for as long as is necessary, in line with our Data Protection and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy. Only information that has a bearing on your employment relationship will be transferred to your personnel file.

9.3 External unsuccessful applicants will be asked if they wish us to retain their personal details on file for consideration against future vacancies in line with retention dates set out in our GDPR policy.

9.4 Further information regarding how we collect and process your data can be found in our Employee Privacy Statement (which includes potential employees) on our website at www.hwunion.com/privacy.

### 10. Enforcing this policy

10.1 If you are an existing employee of HWUnion and believe that you have been discriminated against in breach of this policy, you should speak with your line manager in the first instance or to a member of the Senior Management Team if that is more appropriate. You may feel that you need to take the formal step of raising a grievance, in which case you should follow the processes outlined in the HWUnion Grievance Policy.

10.2 If you are a prospective employee of HWUnion and believe that you have been discriminated against in breach of this policy, you should contact the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

10.3 If you make a complaint under this policy in bad faith (where, for example, you know the allegation you are making is not true), we may regard such action as a disciplinary matter. In serious situations, this could lead to dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

10.4 If you are found to have breached this policy by unlawfully discriminating against someone during the recruitment process, we may consider such action to constitute misconduct. We might deal with it by providing (additional) training, issuing a warning or, in serious cases, considering dismissal.

### Review Tracking

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