

## Attracting suitable applicants

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*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Recruitment and Selection Policy – see section on ‘Attracting suitable applicants’.*

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### 1 Where to advertise

- 1.1 The university’s commitment is to inclusive and diverse recruitment and therefore job vacancies, whether temporary or permanent, will ordinarily be advertised both internally and externally in order to attract suitable applicants from the widest and most diverse field.
- 1.2 Jobs will normally be advertised in the following places (unless managers choose to ‘opt out’ of these advertising methods):
  - DMU Internal Vacancy Bulletin (available on the POD intranet page)
  - DMU external website
  - Jobcentre Plus (only for professional services positions)
  - [Disabled Go](#)
  - Jobs.ac.uk (only for academic and research positions)

#### Online advertising

- 1.3 Advertising jobs online can be effective as it can reach a wide audience at a relatively low cost. However, in order to help ensure it reaches a diverse pool of potential applicants eg disabled applicants, older people or people from certain racial groups, it may need to be used alongside other advertising methods. See [section 1.6](#) for other sources of advertising.
- 1.4 Adverts can also be placed through other major online publications for specialised or hard to fill posts, eg This is Leicestershire, The Guardian or specialist websites like Marketing Weekly.

### **Newspapers, journals and trade press publications**

- 1.5 Where appropriate, careful consideration should be given to which publications are likely to attract suitable applicants. For many roles an advert placed locally eg local newspaper may suffice. For more senior, specialist or harder-to-fill roles, it may be necessary to advertise in national publications and/or on their websites in order to attract suitable applicants.

### **Other sources of advertising**

- 1.6 Recruiting managers might also consider the following mechanisms depending on the type of job in addition to the traditional advert route in order to attract suitable applicants from a diverse pool:

- **Open days and recruitment fairs**  
Useful if seeking graduates or temporary staff during holiday periods.
- **Local notice boards / community centres**  
For instance these could be used in communities associated with the Mile2 project.
- **Recruitment agency**  
Recruitment agencies act on behalf of an employer to advertise a vacancy, screen incoming job applications, interview potentially suitable candidates, check their qualification and that they have the right to work in the UK, and present a shortlist of suitable candidates to the employer to make the final selection.

Details of the university's agency supplier 'Unitemps' can be found on the [POD intranet site](#).

- **External headhunting organisations**  
Exceptionally, for very specialised or senior roles, executive search consultants known as 'headhunters' can be used to search for a suitable candidate. They target not only applicants who have registered with them, but also approach people who are not actively looking for new employment, having first identified target organisations in which suitable candidates for the post are likely to be found.

If this is a service you wish to use you must seek permission from the Director of POD.

### **Diverse recruitment practices**

- 1.7 To help achieve a diverse pool of applicants job adverts should be accessible to everyone, including those with protected characteristics ie age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or no religion or belief), sex or sexual orientation. Advertising only in one place or in places unlikely to be seen by a diverse pool of people is to be avoided, eg advertising only in magazines aimed at a particular gender or age group.

- 1.8 It is not always necessary to use specialist media in order to attract certain groups. Using mainstream advertising sources but encouraging applications from diverse groups, using inclusive language and diverse imagery for instance in trade press or on a website, is often enough. It is suggested that wording, similar to that below is included if appropriate in larger publications adverts

*'De Montfort University is committed to achieving a diverse workforce and welcomes applications from all. We have family friendly policies (including flexible working and childcare vouchers), a prayer room, and staff groups for disabled staff; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexuals; and black and ethnic minorities. We offer excellent benefits including generous holidays and pension scheme access.'*

Or

*'De Montfort University is committed to open and diverse recruitment and positively encourages applications from suitably skilled people regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity.'*

- 1.9 Where it has been determined that there is under-representation of a protected group in a work area, efforts should be made to enhance the attraction of the job to that pool of potential applicants in particular. This is known as positive action. For example:
- where there is under-representation of women in science, technology, engineering or mathematics roles (STEM subjects), and a vacancy occurs in a team of ten that includes only women, the advertisement could state that the university encourages applications from women for this reason. However, the successful candidate must be appointed on merit and not because they have or do not have a particular protected characteristic.
  - Certain types of media could also be used if they are likely to be seen by members of a particular racial or religious group, or adverts could be placed in student halls of residence, where they are likely to be seen by predominantly young people (note other sources of advertising should also be used alongside these).
- 1.10 Whatever the source of advertising, it is important to be aware of how accessible the adverts are for disabled applicants, especially those with visual or auditory disabilities. For specific advice on this please go to [www.efd.org.uk](http://www.efd.org.uk) and/or refer to Clearkit™ a guide to the recruitment of disabled talent containing top tips, employer case studies, detailed guidance, sources of information and support together with downloadable checklists available at [www.clearkit.co.uk](http://www.clearkit.co.uk)

The advert should also cover any specific support provided to candidates with disabilities.

## 2 What to include in the advertisement

- 2.1 The key to success for any advert is to grab the reader's attention in the first couple of lines. Sell the benefits of the role, and the nature of the university/department's activities. Be specific about what the role is and mention any genuine training or development opportunities.
- 2.2 Advertisements, whether online or on paper, should be clear and indicate the:
- Main purpose and key requirements of the job (including requirements that arise from the circumstances of the job purpose and duties. For example the ability to work evenings and weekends, or the need for a satisfactory standard/enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check)
  - Reward package
  - Hours
  - Whether the job is temporary and the length of the contract.
- 2.3 The job description and person specification should be used to guide the wording of the advert. Be clear about the skill set the successful candidate will have, focussing on the most important skills required rather than specific qualifications and experience (unless essential to do the job). This will help limit the number of unsuitable applications received, and the advert will be more inclusive, helping to encourage a more diverse pool of applicants.
- 2.4 The content and length of the advert should reflect the source of advertising, ie jobs advertised online should be short, snappy and no longer than two or three sentences, whereas adverts that are to appear in the press will need to provide more detail. It is suggested such adverts are approximately 200 words.
- 2.5 Refer to the reader as 'you' in the advert eg 'you will have a successful track record of managing complex projects'. This helps people to visualise themselves in the role.
- 2.6 Do not use jargon, including language or acronyms understood only within the higher education sector as this might reinforce current imbalances and discourage quality applicants from outside the sector.
- 2.7 Where appropriate the standard [advert template](#) should be used. See [appendix 1](#) for sample advert.

### **Avoiding discrimination**

- 2.8 All advertisements must be free of unlawful discrimination. Review the language to ensure it is inclusive and does not deter certain groups from applying, particularly those with protected characteristics ie age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or no religion or belief), sex or sexual orientation.

2.9 The advert must not include language that could have discriminatory connotations, for example:

<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Instead say</b>
Dynamic, energetic, mature, young graduates, new blood	Such words are subjective and may also have discriminatory connotations depending on the context eg it may look as though the university is looking for applicants of a particular age and/or may deter disabled applicants.	Be clear about the skills needed to perform well rather than subjective and hard to measure descriptors of personal attributes.
Male/Female, fit/able-bodied, Handyman, Spokesman.	These terms constitute direct sex/disability discrimination.	State the specific requirements of the job ie able to lift and carry equipment.
Must speak and/or write excellent English	This may not be necessary for all posts eg cleaner. The unjustifiable use of this requirement may indirectly discriminate against certain racial groups.	Only state if requirement is absolutely necessary.
Must have a clean, full driving licence.	This may not be necessary for all posts. The unjustifiable use of this requirement may indirectly discriminate against those who cannot drive due to a disability.	Only state if requirement is absolutely necessary.

2.10 Any pictures used in job advertisements should not create a stereotypical image eg by being only men or women.

### **Occupational Requirements (ORs)**

2.11 There may be occasions when it is necessary to stipulate in an advert that applicants must have a particular protected characteristic in order to do the job eg they must be of a particular age, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief. These are called 'Occupational Requirements' (ORs). For example, a university chaplain may be required for a particular religion, or a male actor is required to play a male part. However, the rules on when it is permissible to specify an OR are clearly defined in law and will be rare. The

relevant HR adviser must be consulted before an OR is stated in the person specification and advert.

See [guidance on Person specifications](#).

### **3 Review your advert**

3.1 Reflect on the advert once it has been written, reviewing it from the point of view of the target audience.

Think about the following:

- Is the language and style appropriate to give a clear, concise message?
- Does the advert encourage the reader to find out more?
- Does the tone seem remote, overly formal or bureaucratic?
- Visually, does it appear as a lot of tightly packed text?
- Is it appropriate for the source of advertising?

## Appendix 1 - Sample advert

### **FACULTY OF**

#### **Administrative Assistant**

**Full time, permanent**

**Grade C: £17,677 - £21,021 per annum**

We are seeking an Administrative Assistant to join the *TEAM* team. Working in a team with other administrative staff, your role will be to: provide secretarial and administrative support; draft and type routine correspondence and other documents; design quality presentation materials; and create and maintain manual and electronic records and files, including those of a confidential nature. You will liaise with staff, students and external visitors at all levels, providing general help and information on a range of matters.

You will be able to work well in a team, using your own initiative and with minimal supervision. You will have excellent organisational skills, good attention to detail and an understanding of the importance of confidentiality and data protection issues in a work environment.

**Please quote reference**

**Closing Date**

**Interview Date**