

Recruitment & Selection Policy

1. Policy

Recruitment and selection of the best candidates is vital to the continued success of Cogent Skills ('Cogent') and this policy endeavors to enable managers to achieve this aim, whilst also ensuring that Cogent is compliant with employment law and safer recruitment practices.

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to those who need to recruit and ensure that when a role is vacant, the most suitable candidate is placed into the role based on skills, experience and ability.

2. Principles

- Cogent is committed to ensuring equal opportunities at all stages of the recruitment and selection process.
- The line manager responsible for the recruitment campaign is also responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, from all those supporting the recruitment process.
- Cogent follows Safer Recruitment practices in line with the commitment toward embedding Safeguarding within the organisation.

3. Procedure

3.1. Obtaining recruitment sign-off

- The RAF can be found on SharePoint.
- All roles must obtain approval from the Finance Director and the CEO, via the RAF and prior to recruitment commencing.
- A signed copy should be given to the HR and Payroll Manager, with an up to date job description. If both documents are not provided, recruitment cannot commence.
- If it is probable that a recruitment agency or an advertisement could be used as part of the recruitment process, this detail should also be included within the RAF.

3.2 Job Description

- A Cogent template should be used to complete a job description and includes:
 - The role purpose and responsibilities;
 - Key performance indicators (KPI's) that will be used to measure success (if applicable);
 - Skills, qualifications training knowledge and experience, required to complete the role.
- A copy of the job description template is on SharePoint.

3.3 Internal applications

- We will advertise all roles internally unless specialist skills are required, and these skills are not available internally.

3.4 Recruitment in redundancy situations

- If an employee is at risk or their role is redundant, they should be given every opportunity to secure an alternative role within Cogent.
- Details of any available roles within Cogent should be provided in redundancy situations and the recruiting manager should offer to meet with the employee to provide further information on the role.
- Whilst we will consider employees who are redundant above other candidates, the final decision will be taken based on the right skills and experience that are required for the role.

3.5 Secondment

- Please refer to the secondment policy for further information on secondments.

3.6 Using recruitment agencies

- Use of recruitment agencies should be coordinated via the HR department to ensure that Cogent are paying the agreed, negotiated fees.
- The HR department are also able to provide advice and support on the most appropriate agencies to use.

3.7 Advertising jobs

- Vacancies should be advertised on the Cogent website at the same time as external adverts.
- Managers may wish to advertise roles through our partners (such as FISS).
- The HR department, prior to go-live, should approve all adverts and can provide advice and guidance on the best places to advertise.

3.8 Applicant Information Pack

- All applicants will be given an Applicant Information Pack in line with our commitment to Safer Recruitment.
- Cogent's standard application pack includes the following documents:
 - Job description and person specification;
 - Safeguarding policy;
 - Self-disclosure form;
 - Recruitment and Selection policy;
 - Application form;
 - Pro-forma reference.

3.9 Short listing, Interviews and Assessment Centre

- Shortlisting for candidates must be complete by two recruiters, in accordance with Safer Recruitment practices. If there are any Safeguarding issues with any applicant information, then please refer to the Safeguarding policy and contact the Safeguarding Officer.
- Line managers can request support from the HR department, to provide advice on

the best assessment methods to be used, coordination of interviews and to be part of an interview panel, if required.

- Interviews should take place close to the closing date of the advertisement campaign, to ensure that the candidate remains available.
- The candidate should be provided detail on what is included at each interview stage in advance of the interview to ensure they are able to prepare.
- For external candidates who have been shortlisted for interview, candidates should bring with them proof of the right to work in the UK. (Refer to section 3.12).
- All candidates should experience the same selection process; this will also ensure that comparative feedback can be provided (if requested).
- Interviews must not be conducted by Skype or any other form of video conferencing for candidates who are under 18 years in accordance with Safer Recruitment practices.

3.10 Assessment methods

3.10.1 Competency Based Interview

- Cogent have competency questions that should be used in all interviews, other more specific industry and sector questions may also be added to the interview.
- If the candidate will be working with children, the extra section within the interview form should be used to indicate the candidate's attitude towards safeguarding.
- There is one template for employee interviews and a separate template for manager interviews. A copy of both templates can be found on SharePoint.

3.10.2 Psychometric Testing

- There should be a valid reason for using psychometric testing, and tests should be administered within the guidelines provided. The HR department can provide further information, and will arrange for psychometric testing to be used.

3.10.3 Assessment Centre

- Assessment centres can be used to help with recruitment and HR can support with the design and delivery. An assessment centre should consist of one or more of the following:
 - A competency based interview;
 - Psychometric testing;
 - A role related test (such as an in-tray exercise);
 - A presentation.

3.11 Offering a Role

- The role should be offered to the candidate in line with the detail signed off within the Recruitment Authorisation Form. If the offer exceeds the amount originally estimated, further authorisation should be sought from the Finance Director and CEO before proceeding.
- A role will be offered to the candidate on the understanding that all information that has been provided is factual and correct. If this is found to not be the case with information that is provided verbally or in writing, the candidate will be subject to further investigation and potential disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Alternatively, if the candidate has not commenced employment, the offer may be withdrawn.

3.12 Obtaining confirmation of the right to work in the UK & DBS Checks

- It is important that the candidate's right to work in the UK is confirmed prior to a candidate starting with Cogent.
- A copy of the right to work should be taken at interview. Documents that have been copied should be provided to the HR department who will ensure that the documents remain confidential.
<https://www.gov.uk/check-an-employees-right-to-work-documents>
- If the candidate is unsuccessful the right to work documentation will be confidentially destroyed.
- It may be necessary to complete a DBS check as part of Cogent's commitment to Safer Recruitment. If necessary, candidates will be advised of this during the recruitment process and a self-disclosure form must be completed prior to interview.
- Should the DBS not be returned in time for the candidate commencing employment, a risk assessment will be completed to ensure that there are no concerns from a Safeguarding perspective.

3.13 Rejecting a candidate

- If a candidate has not been successful, the HR & Payroll Manager can provide a template letter that may be used to inform candidates. However, details of the recruiting manager will be provided within the letter, should further in-depth interview feedback be required.

3.14 Recruitment and selection paperwork

- The HR department will confirm a written offer to the candidate, once the line manager has received verbal acceptance. An offer letter, contract of employment and other associated documents will be sent by HR within 3 working days of being notified of the offer.

- Should a candidate not be successful, the application and interview documentation will be kept for a maximum of 6 months in case feedback is required. After this time, the information will be confidentially destroyed.

3.15 Pre-employment checks

- Cogent require two written references (one from the most recent employer), prior to an employee commencing work. If a reference gives cause for concern, this will be discussed with the candidate, and could result in the offer being withdrawn in some circumstances.
- Cogent may also ask for proof of qualifications as part of the recruitment process.
- Cogent pay also require the following checks to be completed for some roles within the company:
 - Overseas check (if the candidate has spent periods of time overseas);
 - Teacher Status checks.

4. NOTES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

- Recruitment Authorisation Form (**RAF**);
- Application form;
- Safeguarding policy;
- Self-disclosure form;
- Pro forma reference;
- DBS Application form;
- Secondment policy;
- Job Description template;
- Competency based interview questions;
- Letter - candidate is unsuccessful ;
- Letter – Candidate Offer;