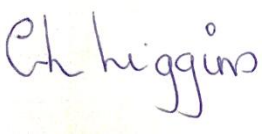
Recruitment & Selection Policy

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Approved by:

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Copies of this document can be made available in different formats.

Contents

Policy Statement 3
Scope 3
Access to the Policy 3
Roles and Responsibilities 3
Principles of the Policy 4
Legal Obligations 4
Supporting Applicants with Disabilities 5
Age-Friendly Employer 6
When a Vacancy Arises 6
Job Description and Person Specification 7
Job Evaluation Process 7
Redeployment and Ring-Fencing 7
Advertising 7
Application 7
Selection Panels 8
Shortlisting 8
Interview Attendance 9
Selection Process 9
After the Selection Decision 10
Pre-Employment Checks for All Roles 10
Our Commitment to Safeguarding 11
Storage and Retention of Recruitment Information 11
Complaints 12
Monitoring and Review 12
Version Control 12
Appendix A: Recruitment and Selection Flowchart 12
Appendix B Recruitment & Selection – Manager Quick Guide **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Policy Statement

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to being an equal opportunities employer, ensuring fairness, transparency, and inclusiveness in all recruitment and selection activities. This policy establishes our obligation to provide equality of opportunity in employment and to maintain a recruitment process that is fair, consistent, and reflective of our values.

To achieve this, Age UK Lincolnshire will:

- Comply with current UK employment legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Home Office right to work requirements, data protection legislation, DBS eligibility rules and relevant guidance from ACAS, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and GOV.UK.
- Promote recruitment and selection practices that are free from discrimination.
- Ensure no unlawful discrimination occurs against any individual.
- Appoint the most suitable candidate based on merit.
- Build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Maintain recruitment and selection processes that are fair, open, and cost-effective.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that recruitment and selection practices at Age UK Lincolnshire are fair, transparent, inclusive, and compliant with employment legislation, supporting the appointment of the best candidate on merit.

This policy also supports Age UK Lincolnshire's commitment to safeguarding, ensuring safer recruitment practices are applied consistently across all roles.

Scope

This policy applies to all internal and external applicants and potential applicants for vacancies within Age UK Lincolnshire.

Access to the Policy

Internal applicants can access this policy via the Documents Catalogue on Cascade.

To ensure accessibility for external applicants, the policy is available on the Age UK Lincolnshire website at https://www.ageuk.org.uk/lincolnshire/get-involved/job-opportunities/.

If you require this policy in an alternative format, please contact the HR Department for assistance.

Applicants and Department Managers are encouraged to review related policies, including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the Privacy Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Department Managers and the HR Team

- Ensure full compliance with this policy and all relevant employment legislation.
- Provide clear guidance and support to all individuals involved in recruitment and selection.
- Maintain accurate records of recruitment activities for audit and compliance purposes.
- Ensure job applicants are informed about this policy and any related procedures at appropriate stages of the process.

- Monitor recruitment practices to identify and address any potential bias or barriers to equality.
- Collaborate to ensure job descriptions and person specifications are accurate and up to date.

Candidates

- Review all relevant information about the role and recruitment process.
- Provide accurate and complete documentation within specified timelines.
- Communicate promptly regarding any reasonable adjustments required for the recruitment process.
- Act professionally and honestly throughout the application and selection stages.

Executive Team

- Oversee the implementation of this policy across the organisation.
- Ensure all hiring staff receive the relevant training to recruit safely, equitably and inclusively.
- Regularly review recruitment practices to ensure alignment with organisational values and legal requirements.
- Support continuous improvement by incorporating feedback and best practice into recruitment processes.

Principles of the Policy

Effective recruitment is essential to Age UK Lincolnshire's ability to deliver high-quality services. We aim to employ individuals with the right skills, experience, and qualifications to meet organisational objectives and uphold our values.

Advertising Vacancies

All vacant posts will be advertised internally and, where appropriate, externally. The Department Manager and HR Department are responsible for deciding the scope of advertising, seeking guidance from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Executive Team when necessary.

Reasonable Adjustments

Candidates requiring reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process will be fully supported to ensure accessibility and fairness.

Commitment to Equality

Our recruitment process will ensure that everyone involved in shortlisting, selection, and interviewing understands and applies the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

For a visual overview of the process, refer to the Recruitment Flowchart in Appendix A.

Legal Obligations

The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework for preventing unlawful discrimination in recruitment and employment. Age UK Lincolnshire will ensure that recruitment decisions are based on objective evidence against the requirements of the role and that applicants are not treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Under this Act, the following Protected Characteristics are safeguarded:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

For further details, please refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Unlawful discrimination may include direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Recruitment arrangements, job adverts, shortlisting criteria, interview questions, selection tests, offer terms and pre-employment checks must be designed and applied fairly and consistently.

In addition:

- Age UK Lincolnshire must carry out right to work checks before employment starts, using current Home Office guidance and acceptable checking routes. This may include a manual document check, a Home Office online check using a share code, or an approved digital verification service where permitted.
- Expired physical Biometric Residence Permits must not be accepted as proof of right to work. Where a candidate has digital immigration status, the Home Office online checking service should be used.
- All recruitment and selection activities must comply with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, including secure handling of personal data, special category data and equality monitoring information.

For guidance on these requirements, contact the HR Department at HR@ageuklincolnshire.org.uk. Managers should use current internal HR guidance and the latest published guidance from GOV.UK, Acas, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Home Office and the Disclosure and Barring Service where relevant.

Supporting Applicants with Disabilities

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to applying all recruitment procedures fairly and consistently to every applicant. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we recognise that some candidates may require reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to the recruitment process. This may result in disabled applicants being treated more favourably than others, which is lawful and necessary to promote inclusion.

Disability Confident Employer

As a Disability Confident Employer, Age UK Lincolnshire actively works to improve how we recruit, retain and develop disabled people. Our commitments include:

Inclusive and Accessible Recruitment

- Making job adverts accessible.
- Providing information in alternative formats (e.g., large print).
- Accepting applications in alternative formats.

Communication and Promotion

- Advertising vacancies through a range of channels.
- Using the Disability Confident badge to demonstrate our inclusive approach.
- Reviewing recruitment processes regularly to remove barriers.

Interview Guarantee

- Offering an interview to applicants who declare a disability and meet the essential criteria for the role.
- In exceptional circumstances (e.g., high application volumes), we may limit interviews to those disabled candidates who best meet the criteria, as we would for non-disabled applicants.

Reasonable Adjustments

- Anticipating and providing adjustments throughout the recruitment process to meet individual needs.

Positive Action

Where lawful and appropriate, Age UK Lincolnshire may use positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups or to support disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria. Positive action must not be confused with positive discrimination; appointments must always be made on merit against the requirements of the role.

Age-Friendly Employer



Age UK Lincolnshire values the experience and contribution of older workers and is committed to fostering an age-positive culture. We actively encourage applications from individuals of all ages and take proactive steps to support their success within a multigenerational workforce.

Our recruitment processes are regularly reviewed to identify and remove barriers, ensuring opportunities are accessible to a broad and diverse range of candidates. We promote vacancies widely to reach varied audiences and create an inclusive environment where people of all ages can thrive.

When a Vacancy Arises

Recruitment and selection arrangements must be tailored to the requirements of the role, the nature of the vacancy, and the relevant job market. For a visual overview, refer to the Recruitment and Selection Flowchart in Appendix A.

Before initiating recruitment, the Department Manager, in consultation with their Director and ultimately the CEO, must determine whether the post is still required in its current form. This review may include redistributing workload or revising duties to meet current service needs.

Once the need for the role is confirmed, the HR Department, working with the Department Manager, should:

- Verify that the job role has been approved by the Executive Team.
- Assess whether the vacancy is suitable for redeployment of employees at risk of redundancy.
- Consider whether the role can be filled internally before advertising externally.
- Decide where and how the vacancy will be advertised and review the job advert provided by the Department Manager.
- Identify who will participate in the recruitment and selection process.
- Develop a clear and realistic recruitment timetable, considering advertising channels and timelines.

Job Description and Person Specification

Department Managers are responsible for clearly defining the role and the skills, experience, and attributes required to perform it effectively. A job description and person specification are essential components of the recruitment process and must be reviewed and updated for each vacancy.

If a job description is new or has undergone significant changes, a job evaluation must be carried out to determine the appropriate pay band for the position.

Job Evaluation Process

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to maintaining a fair, transparent and consistent approach to job evaluation. Each role will be assessed objectively against its responsibilities, required skills and organisational impact. The process supports equal opportunities, compliance with employment legislation and alignment with Age UK Lincolnshire's values of fairness and accountability.

Redeployment and Ring-Fencing

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to reducing the need for compulsory redundancies wherever possible. One way we achieve this is by offering redeployment opportunities to employees who are at risk of losing their current role.

If a vacancy is identified as a suitable alternative for an employee in this position, they will be given the opportunity to apply before the role is advertised more widely.

Shortlisting and any subsequent appointment must still be based on the individual meeting the essential criteria for the post, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Advertising

Department Managers, working with the HR Department, may opt to advertise vacancies exclusively through internal communication channels. This approach encourages career development and provides opportunities for internal progression and promotion.

Where a broader applicant pool is required, the Executive Team or Department Manager may decide to advertise the vacancy both internally and externally. External advertising may include the organisation's website, social media platforms and relevant online recruitment platforms.

Job adverts must use inclusive, objective and role-relevant language. Wording that could discourage applicants because of age, disability or any other protected characteristic must be

avoided unless there is a lawful occupational requirement. Terms such as “recent graduate” or similar age-related language should not be used unless objectively justified.

Application

Speculative applications, including CVs or unsolicited enquiries, will be acknowledged courteously; however, they will not be retained for future recruitment consideration.

For most vacancies, CVs alone will not be accepted. Applicants must complete the official application form. Where a disability prevents completion of the standard form, the HR Department will provide appropriate support to ensure accessibility.

Internal applicants are required to submit an alternative online Internal Application Form.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to use the job description and person specification to clearly demonstrate their skills, experience, and suitability for the role.

At Age UK Lincolnshire, we recognise that technology is transforming the way people apply for jobs, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a useful tool to support candidates’ applications. However, applications must reflect the candidate’s own voice and capabilities. AI should assist—not replace—the applicant’s personal experience and authenticity.

Where Age UK Lincolnshire uses any digital tools, automated processes or AI-supported methods in recruitment administration, these must not replace human judgement. Any such tools must be used transparently, proportionately and with appropriate checks to ensure decisions remain fair, explainable, evidence-based and free from unlawful bias.

Selection Panels

It is important to define who will participate at each stage of the recruitment and selection process. All key decisions, including shortlisting and interviewing, must be made by a panel of at least two members to ensure fairness and accountability.

While panel composition may change between stages, it is strongly recommended that at least one member remains involved throughout the process to maintain consistency.

For interviews involving internal candidates, it is advisable that a member of the HR Team participates to ensure fairness and adherence to policy.

Panel members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, including any personal relationship with a candidate, prior involvement in the application, or other circumstance that could affect impartiality. HR will advise whether the panel member should withdraw from the process.

Shortlisting

Ordinarily, shortlisting will commence only after the job advertisement has closed. However, where multiple vacancies exist or there is an urgent need to fill a position, Age UK Lincolnshire reserves the right to close the advert early once sufficient applications have been received. This will always be clearly stated within the job advert.

The HR Department is responsible for ensuring that:

- Application forms are redacted prior to review to remove personal details (e.g., age, disability) and minimise potential bias.
- Applicants are assessed strictly against the agreed criteria outlined in the person specification.

- All applicants who have declared a disability and meet the essential criteria are shortlisted for interview, and the panel is informed to facilitate any necessary adjustments (unless exceptional circumstances apply as previously briefed).
- A full record of shortlisting decisions is maintained for audit and compliance purposes.
- Applicants are promptly notified if they have been shortlisted.
- Applicants who are unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage are informed by email. Feedback will not be provided at this stage.

Where a large number of applicants meet the essential criteria and applying desirable criteria does not reduce the pool to a manageable size, the shortlisting panel must agree on additional, justifiable criteria based on the person specification.

If no applicants meet the essential criteria, the vacancy will be reviewed and may be re-advertised.

Equality and diversity monitoring information must be collected and stored separately from application information. It must not be made available to interview panel members or anyone making selection decisions, except where information is needed to arrange reasonable adjustments or apply a lawful Disability Confident commitment.

Interview Attendance

All applicants are expected to attend their interview at the scheduled time. Wherever possible, interview dates will be clearly stated in the job advert to allow candidates sufficient time to plan.

Interview dates will not normally be rescheduled to accommodate individual commitments, except in exceptional circumstances.

Selection Process

The HR Department is responsible for determining the appropriate selection methods, with advice available from the organisation's Employment Law Consultant where required.

During the interview stage, the shortlisting panel, supported by the HR Department, must ensure that:

- Reasonable adjustments are provided for applicants who require them.
- The interview structure is appropriate for the role, typically comprising a set of standard questions supplemented by follow-up questions based on candidate responses.
- Additional questions or assessments are prepared for second-round interviews, if required.
- Applicants are assessed against the agreed criteria, with decisions based solely on merit.
- Interview notes and final selection outcomes are accurately documented.
- Any gaps in employment history are explored during and after the interview to ensure clarity and compliance.

The recruitment process is a two-way exchange: we assess the applicant, and the applicant assesses us as a potential employer. To support this, applicants should:

- Be informed about the selection process and assessment methods.

- Understand how they will be evaluated.
- Have the opportunity to ask questions and learn about the role and Age UK Lincolnshire.
- Be advised on how and when they will receive the outcome of their application.

After the Selection Decision

Once a decision has been made, the successful applicant will receive:

- A formal offer of employment; and
- A written Statement of Particulars

Please note that any offer of appointment is conditional upon satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks, as determined by Age UK Lincolnshire.

Where the successful applicant has a disability, the HR Department should work closely with them to identify and implement any reasonable adjustments or support necessary to enable them to perform their duties effectively.

Health or disability-related questions must not be asked before a job offer is made unless a lawful exception applies, such as identifying reasonable adjustments for the recruitment process, confirming whether the applicant can carry out an intrinsic function of the role, equality monitoring, positive action, or an occupational requirement. Any post-offer health information must be handled confidentially and only used where relevant and lawful.

All unsuccessful candidates will be notified promptly. External applicants will not receive feedback, while internal applicants will have the opportunity to discuss constructive feedback with their Line Manager to support their ongoing development.

Pre-Employment Checks for All Roles

All permanent, fixed-term and zero-hours positions at Age UK Lincolnshire are subject to the completion of appropriate pre-employment checks, proportionate to the role and applied consistently.

References

At least one reference should normally be obtained from the applicant's current line manager or most recent employer/academic institution.

If the applicant has been in full-time education within the preceding three years, a reference should be requested from the relevant academic institution.

Proof of Identity and Address

Applicants must provide photographic proof of identity and one document confirming their permanent address.

Right to Work in the UK

Applicants must provide evidence of their legal entitlement to work in the UK before employment starts. Checks must be completed in line with the latest Home Office employer guidance, and evidence of the check must be retained securely in accordance with data protection and retention requirements.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Check

- **Basic level:** May be requested where appropriate for roles that are not eligible for a standard or enhanced check.

- **Standard or enhanced level:** Must only be requested where the role is legally eligible for that level of check.
- **Enhanced with barred list check:** Must only be requested where the role involves regulated activity or otherwise meets the legal eligibility criteria for the relevant barred list.

The HR Department is responsible for confirming DBS eligibility before any standard, enhanced or barred list check is requested. Eligibility must be determined by the duties and activities of the specific role, not simply by job title or service area.

Driving Requirements

- The original driving licence must be produced, verified, and copied for the employee's HR file in accordance with Age UK Lincolnshire's retention policy.
- A copy of the employee's business insurance is required if they will use their own vehicle for work purposes.
- Vehicle tax and MOT status will be checked online.

Driving Licence Checks

- Confirming the licence belongs to the individual and displays the correct address.
- Comparing photographic likeness (or alternative ID if no photo-card licence is available).
- Ensuring the licence covers the appropriate vehicle category for the role.

Additional Requirements

Certain posts may be exempt from aspects of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 or may require additional checks because of the nature of the work. HR is responsible for ensuring that any request for disclosure information is lawful, proportionate and relevant to the role.

Applicants for roles requiring DBS clearance must disclose relevant convictions, cautions or other information only where this is lawfully required for the level of check and role eligibility. Spent convictions must not be requested or considered unless the role is exempt and the disclosure is legally permitted.

HR will complete all checks using a standard recruitment checklist to ensure compliance. For regulated roles, an enhanced checklist will be used to meet all requirements set by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

If an applicant fails to meet the required standards, HR Coordinators will notify the HR Manager, and steps will be taken to withdraw the offer or terminate employment as appropriate.

Recruitment check compliance will be monitored periodically by the Executive Team, with any recommendations implemented by the HR Manager.

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to safer recruitment and to ensuring that safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout the recruitment process. Application forms and interviews will include appropriate safeguarding-related questions. Pre-employment checks, including references and Disclosure and Barring Service checks where eligible and required, will be completed before employment begins. All employees will receive safeguarding information as part of induction and must complete mandatory safeguarding training.

Storage and Retention of Recruitment Information

All recruitment and selection records will be stored and managed in accordance with Age UK Lincolnshire's Record Retention Policy.

Information relating to unsuccessful applicants will be securely retained for a period of six months, after which it will be disposed of safely and in compliance with data protection legislation.

Recruitment records, including application forms, shortlisting notes, interview notes, selection scores and pre-employment check evidence, must be stored securely with access restricted to those who need it for recruitment, audit, safeguarding or legal purposes. Equality monitoring information must be stored separately and anonymised wherever possible.

Complaints

Age UK Lincolnshire is committed to ensuring that all applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, have a positive experience throughout the recruitment process.

If an applicant or potential applicant wishes to raise a concern or complaint, they should refer to Age UK Lincolnshire's Complaints Policy, which outlines the procedure for submitting and escalating complaints. This policy is available on our website or upon request from the HR Department.

Monitoring and Review

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the HR Team through periodic audits of recruitment activity and reporting to the Executive Team. Any identified issues or areas for improvement will be addressed through corrective action and updates to procedures or training as required.

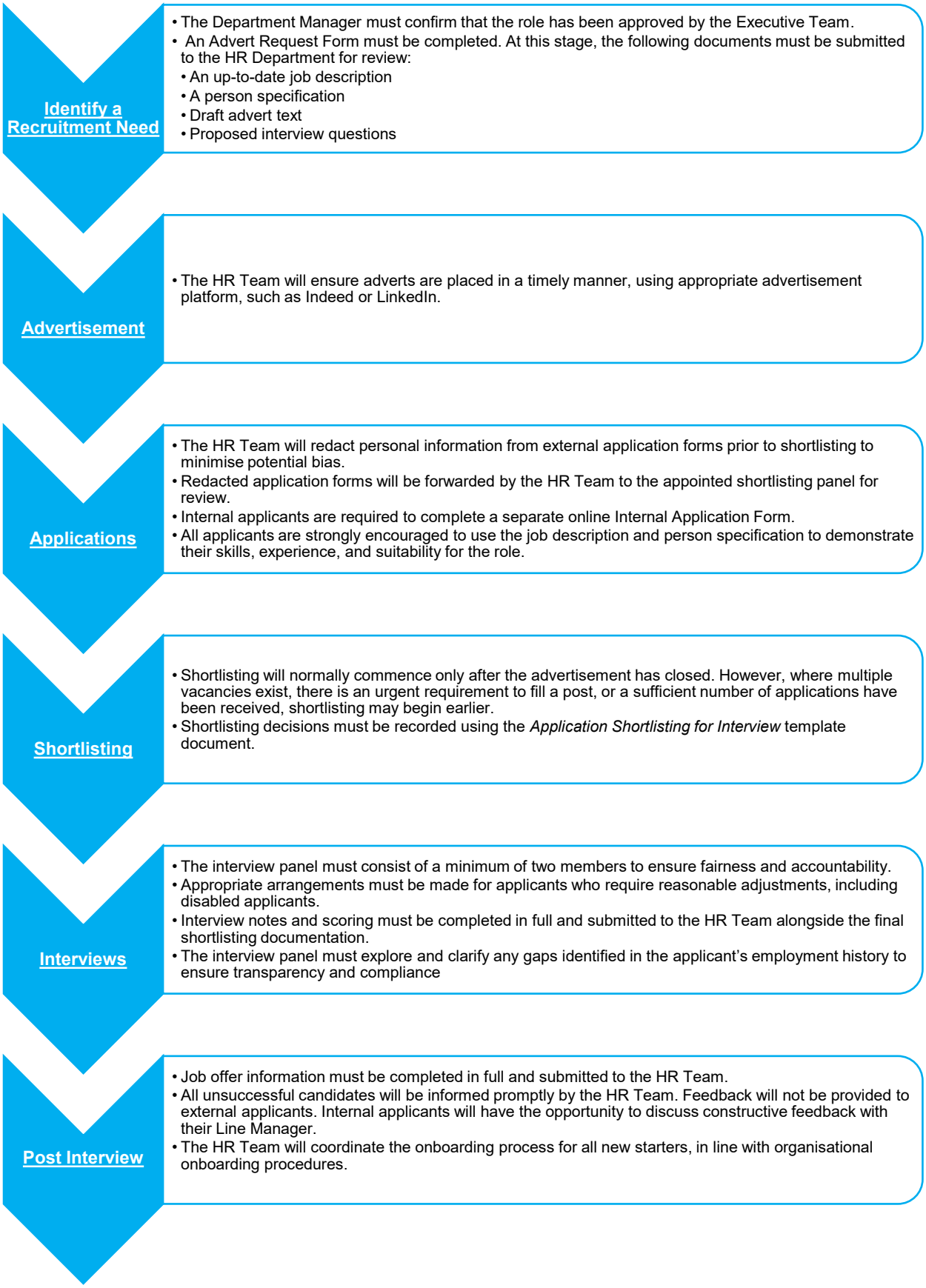
This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner where required to reflect changes in employment legislation, Home Office right to work guidance, DBS eligibility guidance, data protection requirements, relevant case law or recognised best practice.

Version Control

Version Number	Effective Date	Summary of Amendments	Author
v1.0	February 2021	Reviewed and maintained the core recruitment procedure, including equality, selection, pre-employment checks, retention and complaints.	HR Department
v2.0	November 2023	Updated policy structure, added Disability Confident and Age-Friendly Employer sections, and strengthened application, shortlisting, feedback and retention arrangements.	Head of HR & Governance
v3.0	January 2026	Rebranded for Age UK Lincolnshire and substantially refreshed wording, structure, safeguarding, monitoring and manager guidance.	Head of HR & Governance

v3.1	July 2026	Updated legal compliance, right to work, DBS, data protection, AI, positive action, conflicts of interest, safeguarding and formatting.	Head of HR & Governance

Appendix A: Recruitment and Selection Flowchart



Appendix B: Recruitment and Selection – Manager Quick Guide

Purpose

This quick guide supports Department Managers involved in recruitment by summarising key responsibilities and decision points. It should be used alongside the Recruitment & Selection Policy and associated templates.

1. Before Advertising a Vacancy

As a Department Manager, you must:

- Confirm that the role is still required and has been approved by the Executive Team.
- Complete the Advert Request Form.
- Submit the following documents to HR for review:
    - Up-to-date job description
    - Person specification
    - Draft advert text
    - Proposed interview questions

HR will review documentation to ensure compliance, fairness, and consistency.

2. Advertising the Vacancy

- HR is responsible for placing adverts in a timely manner using appropriate platforms (e.g. internal channels, website, Indeed, LinkedIn).
- Interview dates should be agreed in advance and included in the advert wherever possible.
- Reasonable adjustments must be considered at all stages of advertising and selection.

3. Applications and Shortlisting

Applications

- All applicants must complete an application form (CVs alone are not normally accepted).
- Internal applicants must use the Internal Application Form.
- HR will redact personal information from external applications before shortlisting to minimise bias.

Shortlisting

- Shortlisting should normally begin after the advert has closed, unless:
    - Multiple roles exist;
    - There is an urgent requirement; or
    - A sufficient number of applications has been received.
- Shortlisting decisions must be recorded using the Application Shortlisting for Interview template.
- Applicants must be assessed strictly against the person specification.

Disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria must be shortlisted, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

4. Interview Panels

- Interview panels must consist of at least two members.
- Panel membership should be agreed in advance and applied consistently.
- For internal candidate interviews, HR involvement is strongly recommended.

Panel responsibilities include:

- Making appropriate arrangements for reasonable adjustments;
- Asking agreed, role-appropriate questions;
- Exploring any gaps in employment history;
- Completing interview notes and scoring fully and accurately.

All documentation must be returned to HR following interviews.

5. Selection Decisions and Offers

- Decisions must be based solely on merit and evidence against the agreed criteria.
- Managers must complete the Job Offer Information and submit it to HR promptly.
- HR will issue the conditional offer and complete all pre-employment checks.

6. Informing Candidates

- HR will notify all unsuccessful candidates.
- External applicants do not receive feedback.
- Internal applicants may receive constructive feedback from their Line Manager to support development.

7. Pre-Employment Checks and Onboarding

HR is responsible for completing required checks, including:

- References;
- Right to work;
- DBS (where applicable);
- Driving checks (where required).

Once checks are complete, HR will coordinate onboarding and induction.

8. Complaints and Queries

Any concerns or complaints raised by applicants must be directed to the Complaints Policy. Managers should not attempt to resolve recruitment complaints informally outside this process.

Key Reminders for Managers

- Follow the policy and templates at all times.
- Document decisions clearly and objectively.
- Treat candidates fairly, consistently and respectfully.
- Seek advice from HR at an early stage if unsure.