

Preparation for Shortlisting

Prior to the shortlisting meeting the selection panel must have a clear understanding of the process:

- How will completed application forms be sent out?
- What are the marking criteria?
- What preparation is required before the meeting? E.g. Panel members to have individually scored each application against the agreed scoring schedule
- Ensure each panel member has a copy of the person specification and marking grids to record their scores and comments
- What is the target number to shortlist?

Ensure that the panel have discussed the guidance in the next section prior to the shortlisting meeting

Shortlisting

Consistency of Panel Membership

The selection panel must not change between shortlisting and final offer (and for this reason should have committed to all the necessary meeting and interview/assessment dates from the outset). The full selection panel should be involved in the shortlisting process, with the assistance of an LA adviser, who has the right to attend any meetings of the selection panel and offer advice. The selection panel have a duty to consider this advice before making their final shortlisting decisions.

Shortlisting Stages

The key outcome of the shortlisting meeting is to identify the candidates who most closely meet the person specification (including all the 'essential' criteria). Keep a full written record of all decisions made and why they were taken, using the [template Shortlisting Grids](#) (which are available for download from the headteacher recruitment section of the cyps.info website) to ensure information on all candidates is recorded objectively and clearly, allowing you to mark individuals and then collate the scores into a single table. Recording your reasoning throughout the screening process will also help you to provide detailed, constructive feedback to anyone not selected for interview. This is for two reasons:

- It is possible for a selection decision to be challenged under equal opportunities legislation and your records will provide important evidence if this has to be defended at an employment tribunal. For this reason, all notes relating to decisions made throughout the recruitment process must be kept securely for six months after the interview date and then destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Policy. Be aware when making notes that candidates can ask to view them.

- Candidates requesting feedback should expect to receive constructive, frank and honest comment that will be useful to them in any future applications

Shortlisting Marking Criteria

T = Threshold (meets threshold)

Used for pass/fail criteria. There is evidence the candidate meets the threshold i.e. qualifications

0 = Unacceptable (weakness or not observed)

This is no evidence that the candidate meets the minimum criteria. The candidate is neither able to meet the minimum criteria nor shows any sign of being able to do so within reasonable timescales and with reasonable training input

1 = Less than Acceptable (needs development)

The candidate shows *some* understanding or knowledge of the criteria and has the potential to develop the skills and knowledge required with appropriate training and development within 3 months

2 = Acceptable (meets standards)

The candidate has evidenced that they meet the minimum requirement specified for the position

3 = More than Acceptable (strength)

The candidate has evidenced that they exceed the minimum requirement. This area is considered a strength

Stage 1 – Individual scoring

The pre-agreed recipient of the completed application forms should remove all personal details and equal opportunities data, and allocate a unique candidate reference number to each candidate. This should be written on each page of the application (and to the detached personal details pages) to ensure candidates can be easily identified once shortlisting is complete.

If any candidate has a disability, a note should be made to indicate this to the panel; write the word 'disability' but do not provide details. This will ensure that where schools use the double tick disability symbol, they will automatically offer an interview to all applicants with a disability who meet the essential selection criteria.

Distribute the application forms to all members of the selection panel prior to the shortlisting meeting with copies of the pre-prepared shortlisting grid. A copy of the marking criteria should also be sent to panel members.

Each panel member should then allocate initial scores by completing a grid for each candidate. Candidates should be scored against the pre-agreed five or six key competencies as outlined in the person specification, giving each candidate a score of between 0 and 3 based on their evidence of this competency. This will ensure the process is consistent and that you are assessing against criteria you have prioritised as essential to be in post.

Stage 2 – compare scores as a group

The selection panel should meet to discuss the initial scores, ‘filter out’ any applications that do not meet the essential criteria and then shortlist. Candidates must meet all of the essential criteria that can be assessed from the application form alone to be shortlisted. If you are unable to shortlist because there are no suitable candidates you will need to re-advertise. If your school is signed up to the Two Ticks Disability Scheme, disabled candidates who meet the (demonstrable) essential criteria must be short listed for interview.

Stage 3 – More detailed shortlisting

The next stage is to narrow the field further, attempting to meet your pre-defined target number of shortlisted candidates. You may of course end up shortlisting more or less candidates than your agreed target, depending on the strength of the field. With a sufficiently strong field, you may be able to identify reserves to call on should any candidates drop out before the interviews date(s). You must not shortlist against criteria such as length in previous post, or indirectly discriminate against certain candidates i.e. by failing to shortlist any candidates who have had a career break.

You must also check the following:

- Have all sections of the application form been completed?
- Are there any discrepancies in the information provided? In line with guidance on Safeguarding Children, any unexplained gaps in employment, repeated changes in employment without clear career or salary progression or clear reasons for leaving, or a mid career move from permanent to supply or temporary work must be noted and explored when deciding whether or not to shortlist a candidate. If you do shortlist, these discrepancies must be explored at interview to establish context
- Are the named referees appropriate? Please see the section on ‘compliance’ for further guidance

Inviting Candidates to Interview

Once shortlisting is complete the names and personal details of candidates can be revealed so that the school can invite successful candidates to interview. The LA also advises that the panel acknowledge receipt of all application forms and inform unsuccessful candidates, by email where possible. If using the LA to take applications, acknowledgements will be done automatically. Unsuccessful candidates should be encouraged to seek feedback, and provided with the contact details (e-mail and/or telephone contact) of the LA Adviser.

There is a standard letter 'invitation to interview' which is available for download from the headteacher recruitment section of the cyps.info website

When inviting candidates to interview, please also ensure you ask them to bring relevant documentation including:

- Proof of identification / right to work in the UK.
- Original qualification certificates
- Relevant documentation for an enhanced DBS check.

You may also wish to include additional documents such as a map of the area and/or school, directions or information on parking. Some locations might require a particular postcode if being used for satnav purposes. You might provide an interview expenses claim form or alternatively make this available at interview.

At this point you may wish to provide further documentation for shortlisted candidates such as a summary of the School Development Plan. This will provide candidates with more detailed information on the school and allow you to ask probing questions on these documents at interview. Please see the Application and Information Checklist for guidance on what additional information to provide and what documentation to provide for shortlisted candidates only

Once you have invited candidates to interview, you should seek references immediately (where candidate permission has been given) to ensure you have received them before the assessment process begins wherever possible. You should also refer to the Safer Recruitment Shortlisted Candidate Checklist for key points to cover once candidates are selected for interview at appendix 1. See section 6 of this guidance for further information on compliance. Remember, you cannot ask absence or health-related questions at this stage (see 1.9)

Shortlisting Checklist			
Task	Lead	Date Completed	Comments
Prepare Shortlisting Grids			
Ensure panel are fully briefed and trained on shortlisting process			
Undertake shortlisting			
Notify unsuccessful candidates by email			
Send letter or email to successful candidates including details of documents candidates are required to bring to the interview to demonstrate eligibility to work in the UK, qualifications, and for DBS clearances .			
Request references (see next section)			
Key Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Application forms • Job description • Person specification • Completed Needs Analysis • Template Shortlisting grid (for individual panel members to score applications prior to shortlisting meeting) • Final Score Shortlisting grid • Invitation to Interview template 			