



Recruitment Procedure

Information Sheet: Selection Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of this Information Sheet is to provide clarifying information to Hiring Managers who develop selection criteria.

Q1 What purpose do selection criteria serve?

Selection criteria are the skills, knowledge and qualifications that have been defined as essential (or desirable) to meet the requirements of a position.

The purpose of the selection criteria are to:

- provide both candidates and the Appointment Committee with a definitive list of the skills, knowledge and qualifications that the position requires;
- create a benchmark against which all candidates can be fairly judged, initially at the short-listing stage and then at the interview and final selection stage;
- assist in ensuring that selection is based on merit.

Selection Criteria are developed in line with the applicable Classification Standards in the University of Adelaide [Enterprise Agreement](#) and uploaded into the [University's online recruitment system](#) prior to the commencement of the recruitment process.

Q2 What should I consider when developing selection criteria?

- Decide which criteria are essential for the satisfactory performance of the job and which criteria are only desirable and list them separately.
- Keep the number of essential criteria ideally at 5 and no more than 10 and the desirable characteristics brief.
- List criteria in priority order.
- Avoid setting the criteria either so high that they become unrealistic or so broad that most candidates will satisfy them. The requirements should be realistic.
- Exercise care in the selection of adjectives to describe the extent to which a particular attribute is required. (e.g. 'some knowledge of ...', 'extensive experience in ...')
- Consider desirable characteristics where it is difficult to differentiate the relative merit of candidates on the basis of the essential criteria.
- Write criteria in a way that aids the assessment of a candidate's skills by using terms that describe observable specific behaviours rather than personal qualities, as these are less easy to measure. For example, the term 'initiative' describes a personal quality that can be defined in different ways by different people and in different job contexts. It would be better to define it in terms of behaviour in the selection criteria as, for example, 'the ability to identify tasks which need to be done and to complete these tasks with limited supervision'.

Continued

Recruitment Handbook	Recruitment Procedure	Effective Date:	15 November 2014	Version 1.0
Authorised by	Manager, Recruitment and Workforce Planning	Review Date:	15 November 2017	Page 1 of 2
Warning	This process is uncontrolled when printed. The current version of this document is available on the HR Website.			

Information Sheet: Selection Criteria (continued)

Q2 What should I consider when developing selection criteria? (continued)

- Ensure essential specialist knowledge generally relates to the relevant field of practice, with knowledge of the specifics of the University environment included as 'desirable'.
- Decide whether minimum qualifications identified are essential, as many skills and abilities can be acquired without formal education. Refer to the applicable Classification Standards Descriptions in the [Enterprise Agreement](#) for additional information.
- List educational qualifications not considered to be 'essential' as 'desirable' for the specific position.
- Take care not to overstate the attributes which are essential, as this may limit the group of people likely to apply.
- If the degree of achievement on particular criteria is regarded as having greater weight than for other criteria, ensure this is stated as part of the selection criteria. In some circumstances, for some essential criteria, a level of competence above the minimum required carries greater weight than for other items in distinguishing between suitable candidates.
- Avoid using terminology which might be unfamiliar to external candidates.
- Describe the skills and experience required but not the type of person who might have them, for example:
 - Do use: "demonstrated ability to supervise administrative staff"
 - Don't use: "minimum of 5 years supervisory experience", or "mature person with supervisory experience".
- Ensure there is a logical and consistent link between the selection criteria and the job advertisement.

Further Information

If you require further information, please contact the [HR Recruitment Team](#).

Recruitment Handbook	Recruitment Procedure	Effective Date:	15 November 2014	Version 1.0
Authorised by	Manager, Recruitment and Workforce Planning	Review Date:	15 November 2017	Page 2 of 2
Warning	This process is uncontrolled when printed. The current version of this document is available on the HR Website.			