



EASTERN SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

Recruitment Policy

Scope of Policy: All Staff and Contractors
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Recruitment policy

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1. Purpose

- ESPA recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. ESPA therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential to do this.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined below and all other relevant employment legislation.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure cover all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all staff recruitment except contractors. In order for the policy and procedure to be effective it is essential that any employee who is involved in any aspect of the recruitment and/or selection of staff is aware of this document and follows it. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the Directors and Senior Managers to ensure that this is the case.

3. Core Principles

- ESPA has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment.
- ESPA will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and ESPA.
- ESPA wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process and as required in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post.
ESPA will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

- ESPA will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities in order to meet this core principle. Any member of staff involved in the selection of staff should satisfy him or herself that he/she is appropriately trained and can comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure.
- Recruitment and selection is a key public relations exercise and should enhance the reputation of ESPA. ESPA will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- ESPA will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- ESPA will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost effective.
- If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the [Data Protection Act \(DPA\)](#). Applicants will have the right to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

4. Recruitment & Selection Procedure

There are a number of key stages in recruiting and selecting for a post. This procedure outlines the key stages. Further advice and guidance is available on the Human Resources website (see [Manager Guidance](#)) and from the Human Resources team. In addition, [Learning and Development](#) offers training courses designed to equip members of staff in key aspects of the Procedure.

4.1 Preparation Stage

- The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the area's strategic plans and budget has been completed.
- The recruitment of staff will take into account ESPA's need for new ideas and approaches and additionally should support ESPA's commitment to ensuring a diverse workforce by proactively seeking to attract groups that are under-represented in ESPA profile to maximise its ability to meet diverse student requirements.
- Recruitment should form an integral part of the staffing strategy for the area and should take account of the need for any 'positive action' initiatives in process. 'Positive Action' is lawful under the [Equality Act 2010](#) and refers to the steps that an employer can take to encourage applicants from people who share a protected characteristic (e.g. a certain gender or race) who underrepresented in a particular area of the workforce, for example:

- placing advertisements in the minority ethnic press, the women's press and any other publication which is targeted at groups which are underrepresented
- including statements in advertisements that encourage individuals from under-represented groups to apply for the advertised position
- If a manager believes that there may be potential difficulties in recruiting to a post they should contact the Principal for advice and guidance on comparative market rates and options for appropriate action.

4.2 Job Description & Person Specification

- A [job description and person specification](#) must be produced or updated for any vacant post that is to be filled.
- The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post.
- The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when writing the person specification to ensure that criteria used do not indirectly discriminate against certain groups of applicants.

4.3 Advertising

- As a minimum, all positions will normally be advertised within ESPA. This will help maximise equality of opportunity and provide staff with opportunities for career development, thus maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff. In exceptional circumstances the Principal may waive the need to advertise. This is likely to include the following circumstances:
 - positions requiring specialised expertise where the Manager in the department can demonstrate that a comprehensive search has been conducted and the nominated individual is the most suitable person for the position;
 - where the Manager can verify that the work is required for a specific purpose of no greater than twelve months duration;
 - where current members of staff are named on grants in order to ensure the individual's continued employment;
 - where a project includes a named tutor / teacher, and one of the factors for awarding the grant was the strength of the proposed team.

However, in the circumstances outlined above, if the successful candidate is likely to require a Tier 2 certificate of sponsorship to apply for permissions to work in the UK, the post must be advertised in line with UKBA requirements.

- In certain circumstances it may be more effective to use a recruitment agency. This should be discussed and agreed with the Principal. This will, however, not eliminate the need to advertise the position internally and any external

agencies or consultants who assist in the process must act in accordance with this policy and with respect to our equal opportunities requirements.

- Applicants should be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision regarding their suitability for the role. [Further particulars](#) that provide such information should be produced using appropriate pro-forma. These will be provided to applicants via the ESPA website or upon enquiry to the Admin team.
- Staff who have been in an acting position that subsequently becomes vacant will have to apply for the position when it is advertised, but in such cases the position can be advertised, in exceptional circumstances on an internal basis only.
- Applicants are asked to provide equal opportunities details when making their application to enable a robust means of monitoring the success of recruitment in relation to our diversity aims. This information is separate from the job application and applicants are free to indicate that they do not want to provide these details.
- ESPA have a legal obligation to comply fully with the provisions of the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act](#).
- All adverts must be placed through the Principal, except where alternative arrangements have been formally agreed in advance with the principal.
- All advertised vacancies will be placed on the ESPA website & social media pages.
- All [advertising](#) must be cost-effective and agreed in advance with Principal.

5. Selection of Candidates

5.1 Shortlisting

- [Shortlisting](#) may involve the whole panel but must be carried out by a minimum of 2 people to avoid any possibility of bias, one of whom would normally be the direct line manager.
- Shortlisting and selection panels for academic appointments must meet the minimum composition requirements and should be constituted with due consideration to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.
- Notes of the shortlisting decisions for each candidate should be recorded by each member of the panel on the appropriate form and should be returned to the Principal once the shortlisted candidates for interview have been selected.
- Shortlisted candidates should be provided with details of the selection process, including any tests, in writing giving as much prior notice as possible and a minimum of 5 working days before the interview. In accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#), they should also be asked to advise if there are any particular arrangements or reasonable adjustments that could be made so that they can participate fully in the selection process.
- All candidates (internal and external) should be assessed objectively against the selection criteria set out in the [Person Specification](#) and only candidates

who meet all the essential criteria should be short-listed. Assumptions about the qualities of internal candidates should not be made.

5.2 Selection & Interview

- Interviews should normally be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the Principal.
- Selection is a two-way process: candidates are assessing the role and ESPA. Those involved in recruitment should consider how best to convey a positive image.
- It is recommended that a range of selection methods that are suitable for assessing both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification are established, as this will enhance objective decision making which is difficult through interview alone.
- Interview questions and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification.
- Notes recording the salient points of the interview should be taken, ideally by the interviewers, so that they can refer back to these when assessing candidates against the person specification and making decisions. Notes of the interview and any other notes on the candidate taken during the recruitment and selection process should be passed back to Admin following the selection process and will be kept for a minimum of 6 months following the selection process.
- In situations where there is more than one candidate who is suitable for appointment, but one or more of the candidates requires ESPA to sponsor them under the Tier 2 skilled worker category to obtain the right to work in the UK, in accordance with immigration rules the panel should give preference to any of the candidates who do hold a continuing [right to work in the UK](#). ESPA will ensure that it complies with all current immigration rules by reviewing its recruitment processes and management guidance as and when changes occur.
- In the event that a candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged by the Chair of the panel, although he or she may delegate this to another member of the panel where appropriate.
- Unsuccessful interview candidates should be dealt with courteously and sensitively and will, as a minimum, receive telephone or written notification of the outcome of the selection process.
- Where there is an international candidate and a candidate from the UK who are equal after the selection process is complete and both meet the requirements of the role, then the candidate from the UK must take precedence, and be offered the role. This reflects the statutory employment requirements.

5.3 Referees

- Information sought from referees should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided. It should be noted that many organisations have a policy of not providing personal references and therefore references provided may only confirm details of current appointment. This is much less likely to be the case with references for academic posts which are of a more personal nature.
- For academic posts, two references will be taken up, one normally prior to interview and the second, upon being offered the role. The second reference is an employment reference from the current employer. This is a reflection of established practice and relates to the nature of the references. For support posts two references will be taken up, normally for the selected candidate and after the interview, one of which should be from the current or most recent employer.
- If the appointment is urgent, the Principal may seek to obtain a [verbal/telephone reference](#) for the successful candidate providing that standard procedures for doing so are followed.
- Referees should not be contacted without the candidate's consent and the information provided should be treated as confidential by the panel members.
- In certain circumstances a school or personal reference is acceptable.

See section on [References](#) for further information.

5.4 Making the Appointment

- It is recognised that in many cases it is desirable to make a verbal offer very shortly after the selection process to enhance ESPA ability to recruit the selected candidate. In such cases the verbal offer will normally be made by the Chair of the selection panel, although he or she has the discretion to delegate this responsibility if felt appropriate.
- ESPA recognises open contracts as the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees and will appoint new and existing staff to indefinite contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify use of a fixed-term contract.
- Appointments will usually be made at the grade minimum of the advertised salary scale unless directly relevant experience would justify additional increments.
- Once a selection decision has been made, the Admin team will produce a written offer of employment following receipt of an [appointment form](#) (which includes salary recommendation) from the Chair of the selection panel, in line with agreed service standards. Offers of employment are normally subject to satisfactory references, medical clearance, checks of qualifications and any other checks as appropriate, such as Asylum and Immigration checks, DBS

checks (for posts that are exempted from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act).

5.5 Induction

Induction is the final stage of the recruitment process. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed the line manager/Head of Department is responsible for preparing a comprehensive induction programme for the new employee.

Declaration - I, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of this Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Name:

Kelly-Ann Gordon

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelly-Ann Gordon', written in a cursive style.

Position within ESPA:

Principal

Date: 15.07.2020