Policy Area 9: Effective Staffing

1. **Staff Recruitment Policy**

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QAA Context

The quality of the academic and support staff is critical to the success of the students, and consequently the success of the College. They are the single most important resource the College possesses. The need for effective and efficient staff is addressed in a number of different aspects of the UK Quality Code. The focus of this Policy is derived from four distinct chapters of the Code:

Chapter B3: Learning and teaching
The Expectation: Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Chapter B4: Enabling student development and achievement
The Expectation: Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Chapter B5: Student engagement
The Expectation: Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

As the Policy Area is subject to annual review and evaluation, some aspects of **Chapter B8: Programme monitoring and review** are also relevant.

As the Policy Area is narrowly defined only a limited number of the Indicators from the three identified sections are of relevance and are highlighted within the Policy Area.

1. Staff Recruitment Policy

Aim

The purpose of the recruitment process is to staff the College with competent personnel capable of making a significant contribution to the student learning experience and its enhancement, and in so doing promote the achievement of the College objectives

Policy Process

This Policy details the steps which are taken to recruit effective and efficient staff. These steps are followed in order to recruit successfully competent personnel who match the needs of the College. [B5: Indicator 4]

Identification of need

Before embarking on the recruitment process, the College recognizes there is a vacancy that is to be filled by a specific role. In so doing a job description is prepared which clearly identifies for what the job holder will be accountable. Where a job description already exists, it is reviewed and revised to ensure that the current job requirements of the vacant post are accurately reflected. [B4: Indicator 7]

The job description should fulfil the following purposes:

- To describe the main duties and responsibilities involved in the post;
- A basis from which to prepare an advertisement;
- A basis for the subsequent interviews.

Finding Candidates

There are many options available from which candidates may be sourced. The source chosen is governed by the type of vacancy required to be filled and the advertising budget. The following options can be used during the process:

- Previous candidates / employees
- Advertising – internal / external
- Local Job Centre
- Employment agencies
- Speculative letters, emails

Advertising

Advertisement is the most common source from which to obtain candidates and is most often used at the College for staff recruitment.

The job description and person specification form the basis of the advertisement and include the following points:

- Type of job
- Reasons for the vacancy
- Organizational information and location
- Brief description of the duties involved
- Details of hours, holiday pay and other benefits etc.
- Any essential or desirable qualifications and experience required
- Contact name
- Closing date
- Whether a candidate should telephone, write with CV, call in, or complete an application form

The College ensures that the advertising is non-discriminatory, and clearly states that equal opportunities exist for all candidates applying for the job, irrespective of their gender, background and ethnicity etc.   [B5: Indicator 5]

Shortlisting

Applications are considered by senior staff to determine who should be called for interview. They will establish if a candidate possesses the qualifications, experience and background necessary to carry out the duties. They can assess from a candidate's application if they are suitable to undertake the role.

Recording and Inviting for Interview and Rejection Letters

The information used to assess a candidate prior to the interview is stored for at least six months (even for unsuccessful candidates). Candidates who are successful are selected for interview and are invited accordingly. All prospective candidates are interviewed by the Head of Academics and Head of HR (other senior members are involved if the vacancy relates to a specific department or role). All candidates should provide details of what is required of them and a successful candidate should be given a full briefing. Prospective staff will be asked in the interview whether they have a health condition or disability in the interview so that reasonable adjustments can be made to enable them to do the job.

The comments or notes should be recorded about a candidate on an Interview Assessment Form for recollection and decision-making at a later stage. Unsuccessful candidates are sent rejection letters at this stage, or once the recruitment process is complete. [B3: Indicator 3]

References and other checks

At least two written references are sought for example from previous employers prior to a candidate's appointment. These are used to confirm the candidate's application and to get gauge how the candidate has worked at a previous job. It also helps the interviewer to judge whether the individual is suitable for the current job. Candidates are informed when references are sought from their previous employer and prior consent is recorded. However, where written records are not available verbal references are recorded. The College records relevant certificates and qualifications alongside a proof of eligibility to work in the UK (a passport or an ID card) prior to appointment. Photocopy or a scan copy of the original document is kept along with proof of ID for official records.

Offer of Employment and Statement of Main Terms of Employment

An offer of employment is made in writing as confirmation of the offer and to avoid ambiguity regarding the terms and conditions. The College ensures that an offer of employment is an accurate reflection of the terms and conditions on offer. A statement of Main Terms of Employment is issued to all employees who work for more than one month, irrespective of the number of hours they work each week. [B3: Indicator 8]

Records and Personnel Files:

Accurate and up to date staff files are an essential pre-requisite. The type of information that is recorded on the personnel files is as follows:

- Employee's name
- Status of an employee – i.e. full time, part time etc.
- Payroll data
- Personal information: address (any changes of address); Next of kin
- Training records
- Benefits allocated as part of the employment package
- Disciplinary warnings record
- Termination of employment information
- Ethnic background monitor form

Successful candidates are also required to provide:

- a full and detailed CV;
- original copies of all relevant qualifications and proof of identity. These must be photocopied and the photocopies endorsed with the phrase: 'original seen' and signed and dated by the interviewer. These photocopies are retained in the individual's staff file;
- the Employee Record Form;
- either a P45 or alternative tax form.

The following documents are issued to a successful candidate:

- Staff Induction Pack;
- Job Specification;
- Employee Handbook;
- Contract of Employment.   [B4: Indicator 2]

Recruitment Policy in Relation to Course Type

Teachers

College recruitment policy is aimed at employing, preserving and maintaining a long-term relationship with staff capable of teaching and developing a range of courses. We have full time, part time and freelance teachers who teach individual and group courses alongside other permanent staff.

Regarding recruitment of teachers, the process also includes a 30 minutes test lecture as part of the overall assessment of the candidate. The Programme Leader is designated with the responsibility of observing the test lectures.

Administrative Staff

During the recruitment process the College seeks to ensure all prospective candidates have the qualifications and work experience appropriate to the position and role for which we are recruiting. We recognize that formal qualifications are not hindrances to effective performance and therefore equal opportunities are provided to prospective candidates where appropriate skills and expertise are demonstrated in a candidate's CV and subsequently at interview. A post is advertised for a role, and after enquiries are received, candidates are shortlisted and called for interview via email.   A candidate's responses are assessed re a particular scenario presented at an interview session. A task; for example, in a role that requires numeracy skills, a candidate may be asked to complete a spreadsheet-based task.

Irrespective of the roles for which we recruit, the College is an equal opportunities employer and as such welcomes all applications.

Review and evaluation

The process is subject to annual review and revision in July each year as part of the annual Course Review process. [B8: Indicator 8]