Staff Selection and Interviewing by Jane Clarke is the seventh booklet in Managing Better – A Series on Organisational and Management Issues for the Community and Voluntary Sector published by Combat Poverty Agency.

The aim of the series is to provide accessible and clearly written booklets that offer a basic introduction to key management and organisational issues faced by community and voluntary groups. Each booklet provides practical advice and guidance on what constitutes good policy and procedure, using examples where possible, and refers readers to other sources for more specialised advice or training.

In Booklet Seven, Staff Selection and Interviewing, Jane Clarke’s original booklet has been updated by Peigín Doyle. The booklet looks at the process of recruiting new staff from the exercise of shortlisting applications to making a final decision. Staff are one of the most valuable resources an organisation has and employing staff requires a significant investment of money, time and energy. The booklet emphasises the importance of thorough and rigorous preparation by selection panels. It looks at how to work toward the elimination of bias in selection, ensuring a fair process for all applicants and the most effective outcome for an organisation.
STAFF SELECTION AND INTERVIEWING

By Jane Clarke
Revised for second edition by Peigin Doyle
Combat Poverty Agency
Bridgewater Centre
Conyngham Road
Islandbridge
Dublin 8
Tel: 01 6706746
Fax: 01 6706760
Email: info@combatpoverty.ie
Website: www.combatpoverty.ie
As part of its role as a national community development centre, the Combat Poverty Agency provides information, advice, training and resource materials for the community and voluntary sector.

Managing Better is a series of publications aimed at providing good quality information and practical assistance to those working in the community and voluntary sector.

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Selection of staff involves the systematic assessment of candidates for a position based on their skills and experience, training and qualifications, employment record, references and, traditionally, their presentation at interview.

The process of selection is, therefore, a very important investment in the long-term future of an organisation. Staff are one of an organisation’s greatest assets and the costs of not selecting well are very high. Each organisation should develop a set of systematic, formal procedures for the selection of staff so as to ensure fairness and equality to candidates as well as effective and appropriate selection for the organisation.

This book outlines what is involved in the process of selection under the following headings:

- Preparing for selection
- Equal opportunities in selection
- The selection panel
- Shortlisting
- Selection methods
- Interviewing
- Making the decision
- The letter of offer
- Follow-up
This booklet follows on from the first booklet in this series, *The Staff Recruitment Process*, which outlines how to go about seeking applicants for a job vacancy. Recruitment involves drawing up a job description, person specification, application form and advertising the position. The organisation will then receive applications and this is when the task of selection begins. Selection is a two-way process.

1. It gives management the opportunity to select well, by deciding on the basis of all the information gathered which person is most suitable for the position.

2. It gives candidates the opportunity to get further information about the job, the organisation and what might be expected of them so that they can be clear that this job is suitable for them.
The purpose of selection is to measure the candidate’s:

- competence to effectively perform the specific requirements of a job over a period of time
- ability to communicate and work co-operatively with future colleagues in teams and within the organisation overall
- ability to work on own initiative if necessary.

### 2.1 Planning the process

At the outset it is important to list all the tasks to be undertaken during the selection process, decide who will undertake them and agree a timetable. This includes the following:

- Deciding on the membership of the selection panel
- Training for equal opportunities selection
- Deciding on the selection method/s to be used
- Shortlisting
- Informing people who have not been shortlisted
- Informing people who have been shortlisted of the selection procedure
- Planning and preparing for the selection procedures, usually interviews
- Conducting the interviews (or other selection methods where they are being used)
- Making the decision
- Following up of references
- Informing management about the final recommendations for ratification
- Writing a letter of offer to the successful candidate
- Writing to the unsuccessful candidates
- Co-ordinating the handover to the person or people responsible for induction.

It is essential at all stages of selection to comply with Employment Equality and Equal Status legislation.
2.2 Matters to consider

Recruiting people who work with children
Organisations whose staff may come into direct contact with children or vulnerable adults should take all necessary steps to ensure that only suitable people are recruited, as part of a wider child protection policy. Such employers need to be particularly vigilant in how they recruit and interview potential staff, considering not only the requirements of employment and equality legislation but, even more importantly, the necessity to put the safety of children first. This requires thorough scrutiny of applicants including reference checks, confirming identity, possible screening of potential employees through the Garda Central Vetting Unit and using the interview to verify information supplied by candidates as well as elicit information about previous work experience or contact with children.

Work permits
Employers considering recruiting people who were not born in Ireland or not Irish citizens must comply with the Employment Permits Act 2006, which regulates the granting of employment permits to foreign nationals. At time of publication, citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA)\(^1\) and Switzerland, (with the exception of Bulgaria and Romania), refugees, spouses and parents of an Irish citizen and non-refugees who have been granted leave to stay in Ireland on humanitarian grounds are not required to have an employment permit. The need for employment permits for people from Bulgaria and Romania may change and organisations should keep abreast of changes in regulations governing recruiting non-Irish-born staff.

Employers seeking work permits must be registered with the Revenue Commissioners and with the Companies Registration Office and must be trading in Ireland. A work permit will not be issued to companies where the granting of the permit would mean that more than half of the employees would be non-EEA nationals. Permit applicants also have to show there is a market need for the staff by a ‘labour needs test’. This involves advertising the vacancy for three days with FAS/EURES employment network and in local and national newspapers to give EEA nationals a chance to apply.

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\(^1\) EEA (European Economic Area) consists of the EU member states together with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
There are two categories of work permits, those for jobs with an annual salary of €30,000 or more and those for a very limited list of occupations with salaries below €30,000 (the regulations on salary levels may change over time). The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment decides every quarter what occupations are not eligible for work permits.

**Data protection and confidentiality**

Information supplied by or on behalf of a candidate should only be viewed by people directly involved in the recruitment process and the record-keeping process should comply with data protection legislation.

The Data Protection Act requires that when seeking information, for example, from job applicants, only personal information that enables the organisation achieve its purpose or is relevant to the post should be gathered or held on file and it should only be kept as long as it is necessary for that purpose. Information provided by applicants and interview notes and grades should be kept securely and confidentially for six months, in case of queries or complaints about the recruitment or interview process. When there is no further reason to keep personal information, it should be destroyed.

Organisations should have a clear policy on holding personal information records. The organisation’s data controller should be advised how long and why personal records are being kept and ensure they are not kept any longer than is necessary.

It is a breach of data protection legislation to give an applicant information on how another person has performed in their application or interview, or to contact a referee without the person’s permission.
3.1 Recruitment and selection policy

Organisations should have a recruitment and selection policy that defines how the organisation recruits and selects, and provides guidelines for ensuring a fair and consistent approach. This policy should be drawn up in accordance with anti-discrimination legislation (see below) and an organisation’s own equal opportunities guidelines.

Employers should review all employment policies and procedures to ensure they take account of the practical implications of cultural and language diversity and do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person who has a disability.

A sample recruitment and selection policy is presented in the first booklet in this series, *The Staff Recruitment Process*.

3.2 Discrimination and the law

The Acts apply to discrimination related to any of the following nine grounds:

1. **Gender**: includes men, women and transgender
2. **Marital status**: includes single, married, separated, divorced or widowed
3. **Family status**: includes responsibility as a parent or guardian to a person who is under 18 years of age, or as a parent or carer of a person over 18 years with a disability who needs ongoing care or support
4. **Age**: applies to all ages except those under the minimum school-leaving age
5. **Race**: includes race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins
6. **Religion**: includes religious background, outlook or lack of
7. **Disability**: includes people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions
8. **Sexual**: covers heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual orientation
9. **Membership of the Travelling community.**

**The Acts cover:**
- Full-time, part-time and temporary employees
- Public and private sector employment
- Vocational training bodies
- Employment agencies
- Trade unions, professional and trade bodies.

**The Acts also extend to:**
- The self-employed
- Partnerships
- People employed in another person’s home.

Employers are liable for discrimination carried out by employees even if it was done without their knowledge or approval.
Employment agencies are covered by the legislation. Organisations should direct employment agencies in writing not to reject candidates on discriminatory grounds on their behalf. An agency may not exclude applicants on its own initiative, perhaps in the belief that a person with a particular skin colour or accent would be less likely to be selected for the job. Information supplied in order to secure a work permit should not be used as a basis for discrimination.

The Equal Status Act 2000, as amended by the Equality Act 2004, outlaws discrimination based on the same nine grounds by people who:

- Buy and sell a variety of goods
- Use or provide a range of services
- Obtain or dispose of accommodation
- Attend at or are in charge of educational establishments.

As in the case of employment equality legislation, complaints must concern one of the nine grounds of discrimination.

**Direct discrimination** occurs if an employer treats a person less favourably in relation to employment on any of the nine grounds listed in the legislation. It is also illegal to direct someone to discriminate.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs where a practice or policy that is not essential for the job, or a requirement that is hard to satisfy, has a disproportionate impact on a person or people covered by any of the nine categories covered. For example, excluding applicants because of childcare responsibilities or seeking qualifications that are not necessary for the job or that would be difficult for someone educated outside Ireland to acquire could be a form of indirect discrimination.

**Discrimination by association** happens when a person associated with another person that belongs to one of the nine specified categories is treated less favourably because of that connection.
Positive action

Employment and equality legislation does allow for positive action to promote equal opportunity across the nine grounds. This might involve informing advocacy groups or minority community networks of the job opportunity.

Most employment issues are dealt with by the 1998–2004 Acts, including: advertising of jobs; dismissal; equal pay; harassment; sexual harassment; victimisation; working conditions; promotion; access to employment; vocational training; and job classification etc. All disputes or claims under the Acts must relate to one or more of the nine grounds listed above, for example, gender or family status. Specifically in relation to recruitment and selection, the legislation covers the following areas:

- Defining the requirement of the job
- Advertising
- Application forms
- Shortlisting and interviewing
- Pregnancy

3.2.1 Defining the requirements of the job

Employers are obliged to ensure that only requirements that are essential for the job are listed. Therefore, the job description, person specification and advertisement should not include any unnecessary requirements. Including unnecessary job requirements may prevent suitable candidates from applying. For example, specifying an age limit for the job may amount to discrimination.

In the case of organisations that deal directly with children, it would be appropriate to define carefully the kind of person that would be most suited to such a post as well as listing the tasks the employee would be required to do and the skills needed for those tasks.

Vetting of applicants

At this stage in the recruitment process, it should be decided if the post is one that would require the vetting of successful applicants through the Garda Síochána Central Vetting Unit (CVU). At present, the CVU asks that it deal only with essential vetting applications. The
employer needs to balance that request against the level of risk if an unsuitable person is appointed to the post, how much direct contact the employee will have with children and the opportunities the post will offer of making contact with children outside of the employee’s work hours. The vetting process supplies information on convictions only and no details are given on allegations, cautions given or suspicions about unlawful behaviour.

When seeking a CVU check, the organisation must get the applicant’s written permission to do so.

It is advisable to consider at what stage in the process to apply for vetting as it may take some weeks. If the organisation waits until a final candidate has been selected, vetting may postpone filling the post or a vetting report may require the selection of an alternative candidate. It may be advisable to seek vetting of candidates at the shortlisting stage.

To avail of vetting, an organisation needs to register by applying in writing to the CVU, giving details of its services, employees’ access to children and the number of vetting requests it expects to make in the year. Following registration, the organisation designates an Authorised Signatory who is the only employee with responsibility for handling vetting applications. There is a standard Garda Enquiry Form, which must be completed for each application and submitted with evidence of an applicant’s identity.

Organisations should have a clear policy on what type of factors would exclude applicants especially if they are to work in children’s services.

3.2.2 Advertising
Under the legislation, discriminatory advertisements are illegal. As well as the usual media, advertisements include notices that appear on notice boards, newsletters, on buses, posters, printed supplements, emails and websites and anywhere in the public domain. Job advertisements should clearly indicate that the position is open to all qualified candidates, regardless of age, gender and the other outlawed grounds of discrimination. This is reinforced by stating that the organisation is an equal opportunities employer that promotes and welcomes ethnic and cultural diversity and by including a phrase
such as applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates from all sections of the community.

Stating in the advertisement that the interview location will be adjusted to facilitate people with disabilities may encourage such candidates to apply rather than rule themselves out from the start.

It is important also not to use job titles that specify one sex and to ensure that photographs or illustrations do not indicate a preference for one sex, culture or ethnic background. Creative use of photographs and other images can send out a message of equality and attract a wider range of applicants. Where advertising is being handled by an agency such as a graphic designer or public relations firm they should be informed that no material relating to advertising the job may be discriminatory.

The job should be advertised in such a way as to reach candidates from all nine grounds of equality legislation, for example, by using community media, translating the advertisement into different languages or requesting representative organisations to tell their members of the job opportunity.

There is a growing practice of online recruitment where job applications can be made and CVs sent electronically without the candidate being physically present or interviewed. Job advertisements on the web are covered by the Employment Equality Acts and web recruitment agencies or in-house web managers should be advised of the need to comply with employment equality legislation.

3.2.3 Application forms

Only essential information that is relevant to the job should be requested on application forms. For example, questions about religious affiliation or number of children are irrelevant to most jobs.

The application form should be presented so as to make it accessible to people whose first language is not English. Having an application form that can be sent electronically or accessed by computer may help people with a disability who use technical aids such as a voice-activated reader on a computer.
It is not good practice to invite online candidates to send photographs electronically with their application as this could be interpreted as either giving them an unfair advantage over applicants who send no photographs or, alternatively, putting them at a disadvantage in that it might invite discrimination based on stereotypes of age, ethnicity etc. When a work permit or visa is required by an overseas candidate who is not interviewed in person, however, it may be necessary to require a photograph.

In the case of organisations whose staff deals with children or vulnerable adults, it is appropriate to ask applicants to supply documentation, together with a signature and photograph, to confirm identity, to ensure an applicant is not assuming a false identity. They should be asked for details of past working or volunteer experience in this area of work and to make a declaration in writing relating to any past criminal record. In this situation, all candidates for the position should be treated in the same way.

**Declaration of a criminal record**

If a candidate declares a past criminal record or vetting through the CVU reveals a criminal record, the organisation should consider carefully if it is a barrier to employment, depending on the nature of the offence, the type of work the employee will be doing and whether the organisation deals with children or vulnerable adults.

Where an employee with a criminal record is being considered for a job dealing with children, Barnardos, the independent children’s charity, carries out a risk assessment and senior management make a decision on the applicant’s suitability for the post. The risk assessment is based on the following criteria:\(^{2}\):

- The organisation’s duty in law
- The nature of the crime
- When it happened and the circumstances involved
- The sentence
- The age of the candidate at the time of the conviction

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• Pattern and number of convictions
• Efforts to avoid re-offending
• Relevance of the conviction(s) to the post
• Safeguards against offending at work
• Possible reactions of employees, families, funders etc
• Disclosure at application stage.

3.2.4 Shortlisting and interviewing
The employer must ensure that there is no direct or indirect discrimination in the shortlisting and interviewing process. Interviewers should receive training in the requirements of the equality legislation. Interview boards should comprise both men and women and be drawn from diverse backgrounds.

3.2.5 Pregnancy
It is direct discrimination on the basis of sex not to consider a candidate adequately for a job because of pregnancy.

3.3 Non-discriminatory selection
In addition to legal requirements, a body of best practice has been developed to help organisations ensure all candidates receive fair and equal treatment while protecting children and vulnerable people with whom they may work.

Organisations committed to equal opportunities should endeavour to use non-discriminatory assessment methods in order to best predict which candidate will be most suitable for the job when appointed. People should only be selected on the basis of their ability to do the work and no one should be denied a job for reasons that have nothing to do with their competence or capacity.

3.3.1 Eliminating bias
Selection is an area in which there is a strong possibility of discrimination, either directly or indirectly, against members of marginalised and disadvantaged groups and other minorities, e.g. women, members of the Travelling community, lesbian and gay men, people from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with a disability.
The potential to discriminate can either be overt, e.g. asking a woman about her childcare arrangements, or it can be hidden, e.g. assuming without any evidence that a person with a disability would not be suitable for the job. It may be unconscious and unintended, e.g. stereotyping a person because of appearance or ethnic origin.

People involved in the recruitment process, in particular members of the interview board or selection panel, should be properly briefed on how to avoid unwitting or intentional discrimination and to comply with equality law.

Fair selection involves working to avoid bias and treating all candidates equally. This starts with being aware of and acknowledging prejudices and stereotyping. The selection procedure, including shortlisting, interviewing and other methods, should be designed to counteract prejudices and stereotypes. Attempting to ensure that all candidates are treated equally does not involve arranging an identical experience for each of them but it does mean, in as far as possible, offering each candidate an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and experiences in relation to the post.

It is important not to ask discriminatory questions and not to make assumptions. Decisions must be made on the basis of the information given and evidence about the ability to do the job. Candidates should be asked broadly the same questions in the same ways and the answers must be evaluated in the same manner.

Specifically in relation to selecting and interviewing applicants, organisations should do the following to ensure that everyone is treated equally and fairly:

- Provide training for staff dealing with recruitment and the selection panel to ensure that the whole process complies with equality legislation and with best practice in relation to diversity in the workplace
- Where necessary consult with advocates and representative organisations to find out what is regarded as appropriate behaviour and conversation for applicants from black, minority ethnic or Traveller communities, so as to ensure language barriers
or other misunderstandings don’t prevent candidates from performing at their best
• Ensure that credit is given for qualifications obtained abroad and for previous work experience
• If possible ensure the interview board is culturally and ethnically diverse
• Where necessary arrange for translation facilities at the interview
• Ensure the interview location is easily accessible to a candidate with a disability.

**Education qualifications gained abroad**

When assessing applications from people educated outside Ireland, fair credit should be given for education qualifications. Qualifications Recognition–Ireland, under the auspices of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, is the Irish centre for the recognition of foreign qualifications. It assesses foreign qualifications and relates them to the nearest comparable qualification in Ireland, within the 10-level National Framework of Qualifications.

**Medical test**

Where a medical test is deemed to be necessary, it should relate to the skills needed to perform the job and not to fitness in general. The appointed doctor should be advised of the position for which the candidates are applying and the skills required of them.

Where a medical test shows a candidate to have a medical condition or disability, it should be presumed at the outset that he or she is available for appointment and it should not be a ground for refusing an appointment. Special treatment or facilities to accommodate the needs of a candidate with disabilities should be assessed and provided, on condition that they don’t give rise to more than a ‘nominal cost’ in which case they are not legally required.

Where a disability or medical condition leads to advice that the candidate not be appointed on health and safety grounds, such advice should be discussed first with the candidate and a second opinion or a safety assessment of the workplace may be required.
3.3.2 Dealing fairly with external and internal candidates

In the case of an internal candidate, i.e. a member of staff, a volunteer or a project/service user, it is important to adhere to agreed procedures and care should be taken not to discriminate for or against this person.

Questions should enable internal candidates to spell out their relevant skills and experience. Familiarity with people’s personal circumstances should not influence the decision-making process.

In cases where the internal candidate/s do not get the job it is good practice to be sensitive in breaking the news, to give them a full explanation of why not and to offer feedback and suggestions for development. This feedback should be clear, specific, prepared in advance and agreed by the panel. Feedback to a candidate who is not being appointed, whether internal or external, should focus only on that candidate’s performance at interview. It cannot, because of the rules of confidentiality, refer to other candidates’ relative performance or merits.

Larger organisations sometimes have a staff development policy that provides for prioritising promotion opportunities for staff when vacancies occur. This is a way of encouraging staff development, rewarding commitment to the organisation and holding on to skilled and experienced staff. In these cases, posts are usually advertised internally in the first instance. If the internal competition does not result in an appointment then the post is re-advertised publicly. The selection criteria should be the same for internal and external candidates. This kind of policy might not be practical in smaller organisations where there may not be a range of possible candidates with the required skills.
4 THE SELECTION PANEL

The panel should be set up at the beginning of the selection process and ideally the same group of people should follow through from shortlisting to interviewing to decision-making to appointment. This is very important to ensure consistency and fairness as well as effectiveness and efficiency.

The panel should be chosen carefully to include a gender balance and a mix of people from within the nine grounds, particularly if applicants from a range of backgrounds are to be interviewed. This should not be left to the last moment before shortlisting as it may require a lot of discussion and consideration. The panel should be representative of management, staff and, where appropriate, project/service users. It is usually advisable to include the staff member who will be supervising the new worker. It is also advisable to have an outsider from a similar field of work who can bring objectivity and balance to the process. Three is often the recommended number on an interview panel, though community and voluntary organisations often have four or five interviewers. It is considered good practice to ensure that both genders are represented on the panel.

Panel members should have the skills, knowledge and ability to assess whether the candidate meets the criteria in the job description and person specification. Preparation for the interview process involves training where possible and familiarity with the job description and person specification. Panel members should be trained in how to comply with employment, equality and data protection law and,
when necessary, in best practice for selecting staff to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Role plays are particularly helpful for panel members who have less experience in interviewing as an effective way of building confidence and preparing for interviews.

Confidentiality is a very important issue in the selection process. The panel will accumulate considerable personal information about candidates through the application forms, CVs, interviews and references. The members need to be aware of their responsibility to treat all of this information with the utmost confidentiality. Care should also be taken to ensure a confidential procedure for the opening and filing of applications, references and any other correspondence related to selection.
The purpose of shortlisting is to decide who will be interviewed. It is virtually impossible for the selection panel to do its task without a well-prepared job description and person specification. The essential criteria in the person specification should form the basis of the selection.

The criteria should not under any circumstances be changed at the interview stage. Shortlisting should be on the basis of the requirements of the job description and the person specification and the information supplied on the application form or in the CV and letter. Even if there is only a small number of applicants it is still worth shortlisting to avoid interviewing applicants who do not meet the essential requirements in the person specification.

5.1 Application forms

The use of application forms is becoming more common in community and voluntary organisations. A letter and CV may give the selection panel only the information that the applicant wants to give, whereas the application form determines what information is included. The other advantages of application forms are that it is easier to compare like with like, which helps in the initial shortlisting of candidates. The form may also be more conducive to equal opportunities as every candidate addresses the same questions. The form can provide a basis for interviewing. It is advisable to draw up a specific form for each job to ensure that the shortlisters will get the information required to determine if the applicant meets the essential requirements of the person specification. This is a useful way, in addition to drawing up the job description and person specification, for the organisation to
focus on what it wants from a worker. It is important not to include any questions that are not relevant to the job.

5.2 Familiarity with candidates

The selection panel should not go through any applications before the closing date as this may lead to discrimination against subsequent applicants. It is important to consider what to do if a member of the panel knows any of the applicants personally or by reputation. When the panel have seen the applications they should be offered the opportunity to state if they know an applicant and be given the opportunity to withdraw from the panel at this stage. This is often not practical given that the chances of members of the selection panel knowing an applicant previously are quite high. The Irish community and voluntary sector is a rather small sector in a small country. In this case the panel members need to be confident that s/he will be objective and very careful throughout the process to take a balanced view.

In any event, there should be no discussion of any person’s qualities based on information that has not emerged during the selection process or on stories about them in another job. It is the selection panel’s job to ensure that the interview procedures and questions elicit the relevant information and provide for the best possible decision.

5.3 Shortlisting criteria

Ideally, shortlisting should entail a meeting of the full selection panel. It should take place as soon as possible after the closing date for applications. All members of the panel should be given copies of the job description and the person specification as well as the application forms or CVs. Some or all members of the panel may have been involved in drawing these up as part of the recruitment process. When the panel meet together for the first time it is helpful to decide on a chairperson who will structure and facilitate the process of decision-making and keep account of the time.

Shortlisting should be on the basis of the criteria from the person specification. Only applicants who, on the basis of the information given in their application form or letter and CV, meet all the criteria,
should be shortlisted for interview. This highlights the importance of agreeing at the beginning what is absolutely essential for the job as opposed to what is desirable. Panels normally aim to interview six to eight people. If there are more than eight people who meet the essential criteria the panel should use the desirable criteria from the person specification to shorten the list.

If there are still many more than eight people who meet both the essential and desirable criteria it is advisable to have two sets of interviews; the first set should entail a short, preliminary interview to narrow down the numbers for a second in-depth interview. If there are no candidates who meet all the criteria then the selection panel needs to consider whether it will interview those who come closest, or whether there is a need to review and repeat the recruitment process.

5.4 Shortlisting form

There should be a standard shortlisting form with the essential criteria from the person specification written across the top sheet of paper and the applicants’ names down one side. Each panel member is given one of these sheets and is asked to assess whether each person meets each of the criteria fully, partly or not at all. From this the panel agrees which candidates are definitely in, definitely out or borderline. Based on this the final list for interviewing is agreed.

It is clear from the shortlisting procedure outlined above that its effectiveness depends to a large extent on having a carefully thought out person specification. It is good practice and courteous to inform all applicants who have not been shortlisted as soon as possible, usually within a week of the closing date.

Information to shortlisted candidates

The shortlisted candidates should be informed of the decision as soon as possible with information such as:

- Date and time of interview
- If they need to bring anything to the interview
- Estimated duration of the interview
- If other selection methods will be used
• How to get to the place where the interviews will be held (buses, car parking etc)
• Whether there will be second interviews and when.

The letter should invite all candidates to state if they have a disability or special need that requires an adjustment to the interview setting and let them know that the adjustment will be made. Candidates with special needs can be offered a contact point for enquiries.
Staff Selection and Interviewing

An extensive range of research has been done into the most effective ways of selecting candidates for a job. Results indicate that individual interviews are a very limited way of assessing a person’s suitability for a position. It is widely recommended that organisations use a combination of different methods.

This gives the selection panel the opportunity to assess the candidates’ abilities in a variety of areas and therefore they have a fuller picture of each person. However, it is not advisable to use a method in which panel members have no experience or with which they are not confident.

The methods of selection should be planned on the basis of the skills and experience required for the job. For example, if it is essential that the successful candidate has good word processing skills the panel can set up a practical exercise to test these skills. Practical exercises can be used to test a range of skills, e.g. writing, editing, presentation or budgeting skills. Candidates can be asked to provide written answers on how they will deal with a particular scenario. For the position of manager or team leader it may be useful to set up exercises in decision-making, delegating or prioritising at the second interview stage. They could be asked to give a written account of how they would deal with a particular problem in a team.

Where selection tests are used they should not contain questions or tasks specific to only one culture that would exclude applications from other minority groups or tests that are not relevant to the job.
Some organisations always have a second interview for senior positions for which the candidates are asked to prepare a presentation. The presentation could be on a particular policy area or a development plan for the organisation. The advantages of such a presentation are that the candidate can show their communication, presentation, planning and comprehension skills.
The most common form of selection used in community and voluntary organisations is interviewing. Interviews are more reliable and effective when the interviewers have had training and preparation for their task and when the interviews are well planned and structured.

The aims of a selection interview are:
(a) to comprehensively assess the suitability of each candidate for the job in terms of requirements listed in the person specification, and
(b) to give the candidates relevant information about the organisation and particular job.

7.1 Planning for interviews

Good planning will reduce anxiety and therefore enable panel members to give their full attention to the actual interview. This will also affect the atmosphere in the interview panel and help put the interviewee at ease. Difficulties or disarray in the panel are easily picked up by the candidates and can be very unsettling. The interview panel needs to take time together to sort out:

a) Clarifying and agreeing selection criteria
The selection criteria should be taken from the person specification. The panel need to take time to ensure that they are all agreed on these criteria with a common understanding of what they mean. There should be an interview marking form for each member of the panel with the names of the candidates and a list of the criteria. The panel should assess each candidate against
each criterion. They usually do this individually directly after the interview.

There are a number of different ways of doing this, e.g.

• By marks out of 10, which are totalled for each candidate at the end
• By marks from 5 for Outstanding, four for Good, 3 for Acceptable, 2 for Marginal and 1 for Poor. These are totalled at the end
• As Not Met, Partly Met or Fully Met
• As Poor, Fair, Excellent
• By a weighted scoring system according to the importance of each factor in the person specification.

Whatever method is chosen, it is essential that the panel agree in advance how each candidate will be assessed in the most fair and consistent manner possible. It is helpful to remind the panel to avoid trying to match the next employee with the characteristics, attainments and aptitudes of the previous employee.

b) Planning questions

From their agreed understanding of the selection criteria the panel then plan what questions will give them the evidence they need to make a choice between candidates. The interview is for a limited time so it is essential that each question is focused and purposeful. The questions should be designed to make sure that the panel gets the information needed to assess whether this person will be the most suitable for the position.

Interview questions should only relate to the job requirements. When framing questions employment and equality legislation should be borne in mind. Care should be taken to avoid questions whose content or wording might be perceived as giving rise to unequal treatment of one candidate compared to another of a different age, gender, marital status etc. Questions should deal with a candidate’s skills, talents, qualifications and help him or her demonstrate their capacity to do the job.
If questions about how a candidate’s personal circumstances would affect their ability to do the job are directly relevant to the job in question, all candidates should be asked the question and assessed in the same way.

The panel should decide in advance who will ask which questions and in what order. The panel also needs to clarify what information they should give to the candidates during the course of the interview, for example:

- **Terms and conditions**
  It is important that the panel is clear about the range of terms and conditions being offered. Be clear about the period of probation, if there are unsocial hours to be worked, the nature of the contract, permanent or fixed term, and the salary scale.

- **Making the decision**
  It is good to be explicit about the timing of the decision-making and how the decision is to be communicated to the candidates.

c) **Interview practice**
   If one or more members of the interview panel have not interviewed before it is helpful to practise agreed questions to check that they are clear and well communicated. Role plays are very useful for practising interviewing skills.

d) **Roles on the interview panel**
   The panel needs to allocate roles, responsibilities and question areas. It is important not to stereotype members of the panel in the process. It is advisable to have a chairperson of the panel. The four key tasks of the chairperson are:
   1. To facilitate the panel in planning the interview process together
   2. To facilitate and direct the interviews according to the agreed structure and timing
   3. To ensure that the panel reflects on how they are working as a team throughout the day as necessary and make changes accordingly
   4. To facilitate the panel discussion and decision-making process.
e) The panel as a team
The panel needs to work together as a team so it is very helpful for members to consider in advance how they will deal with potential problems and disagreements. They also need to ensure that they have a shared understanding of what equal opportunities interviewing entails. It is advisable to discuss how they can interrupt each other if they think it is necessary. It helps to take time after the first interview to evaluate how it went and how the panel are working together.

f) Structure of the interview
The interview should be planned so that it relates directly to the job description, the person specification and the candidate. If it is a large panel it is important to ensure that the interview is not just a series of short, superficial exchanges with each member. It is useful to tell each candidate the plan for the interview at the outset. A standard format for interview is outlined in 7.2.

g) Timetable for the interviews
All interviewers should be feeling well and rested because they will need to concentrate and listen carefully throughout. For this reason it is wise not to cram too many interviews into one day, six to eight at maximum. To make the best selection and to be fair to all candidates the interview panel needs to be able to maintain attention and remember all the interviews with equal clarity.

There should be a copy of the timetable for the day, with the timing and spacing of interviews, breaks and running order with the candidates’ names, for each member of the panel and for the person working on reception. The length of interviews depends on the job and is usually from half an hour up to an hour. It is essential to give the panel adequate time to ascertain fully the interviewee’s skills and experience in each of the requirements specified in the person specification. If there are two sets of interviews for a position the first is usually shorter and the second is longer, giving the panel an opportunity to explore areas in greater depth.
h) Venue and physical environment
The physical environment for the interview and for candidates waiting to be interviewed is very important. The furniture in the interview room should be arranged to help both the candidates and the interview panel concentrate, feel comfortable and be at ease. Avoid long or wide tables, dim light, excessive background noise and seating patterns that make eye contact difficult.

Put up notices that indicate the interview and waiting rooms are in use and ensure that there will be no interruptions during the interviews. Make sure that there is somebody to let the candidates in, get them a cup of tea or coffee and show them where the bathroom is. In order to safeguard confidentiality, it is also good practice to ensure that interviewees do not meet each other while waiting.

The interview should allow all candidates to compete with each other equally therefore adjustments should be made to enable candidates with a disability to compete equally. Examples of how to facilitate candidates with disabilities would be to choose an accessible interview location with their needs in mind or adjust the interview setting to make it accessible. Candidates can be invited to state a disability or a special need in the letter requesting them to attend the interview, giving enough time to arrange the necessary adjustments. When shortlisted applicants are being invited to the interview, they should be told about disability car parking spaces and shown the location of building lifts.

i) Agreeing a decision-making procedure
The panel also needs to agree in advance how they will make a decision. It is recommended that the panel takes time after each interview to score candidates individually according to each of the selection criteria and then to have a short collective discussion. Members should be reminded that in order to ensure fairness their assessments must be made on the basis of evidence from the interview rather than gut reactions or intuition. It is essential to have time for reflection and note-taking after each interview as people forget things easily. At the end of all the interviews, the panel should take time to make their decision by comparing their assessments and discussing each candidate. If the panel have used
an interview marking form, the final decision may be on the basis of this.

j) Records
The following official records should be kept for six months after the interviews are completed in order to be able to deal with any subsequent complaints:

- Job description
- Person specification
- Job advertisement
- Application forms
- Shortlisting procedure
- Selection criteria
- General framework for questions as planned in advance and where possible particular questions that arose during the interview
- Interview assessments for each candidate
- References
- Any correspondence with candidates and
- Final decision and the reason for making it.

This is particularly important should a query arise over the selection of a candidate or should a candidate allege that an interview board illegally discriminated against him/her. A person has six months from the date of the interview to bring a claim under the Employment Equality Acts. The time limit may be extended to 12 months where a person has reasonable cause for the delay. All other informal records held by individual members of the panel should be destroyed.

Under data protection legislation information should be held only for as long as it is necessary and then should be removed from the organisation’s records.

k) References
It is important to clarify in advance what status will be given to references and at what stage in the selection process they will be
sought. References can be sought for all shortlisted candidates before the interviews. However, it is more usual for the selection panel to look for references for the first and perhaps second-choice candidates after these decisions have been made. Generally references are not seen as a source of objective information so they should be weighted accordingly. References are most useful for checking out factual information, e.g. qualifications, length of service, sick leave record, attendance record, terms and conditions and reasons for leaving a job.

It is advisable to plan what information is required of referees and not to ask for more than is necessary. The panel should write to referees (usually two) with a list of specific questions as above and relating to criteria in the person specification and enclosing the job description. This process of writing for references and waiting for the reply may take a week or more so it is important to take this into account in planning. If the selection panel does not have sufficient time for this it is possible to take up references over the phone but the referee should also be asked to put the reference in writing.

It is important to consider the possibility that a negative reference may be due to personal bias. In the case of a negative reference about a candidate who the panel considers very suitable, it may be necessary to check it out further by discussing it with the candidate to get his/her version of events. One of the referees should be the candidate’s current or last employer. It is against data protection legislation to look for references without first informing the candidate and obtaining their permission.

In the case of jobs that involve dealing with children or vulnerable adults, written references are extremely important. It is recommended that both written and telephone references be required for staff and volunteers alike. They should be thoroughly checked through questions at interview and later on if the candidate has been successful. It is not enough that referees know the candidate; they should know them well enough and in an appropriate capacity to be able to judge their suitability and capacity for the job.
Certain essential questions must be asked of referees when filling posts in children’s services. These include: does the referee know the person well enough to give an informed view on their suitability and capacity for the job; and does the referee know of any reason that would make the candidate unsuitable for the position?

In this area of work it is important to check back on people’s work or volunteer history, both to ensure that it is authentic and that nothing occurred that would make them unsuitable for the job. Also, if an applicant has worked as an employee or volunteer in another childcare or similar organisation but has not supplied a referee for that organisation, it is advisable to seek permission to contact that organisation also.

When checking references for posts in childcare it is also advisable to check any gaps in the applicant’s address history and employment record.

7.2 Standard format for interview

A standard format for interviews is as follows:
1. Introduce interviewers and explain the format of the interview.
2. Check that the candidate is clear about the job and give information about the organisation and the terms and conditions of service.
3. Ask the candidate to explain his/her interest in the job and suitability for it.
4. Clarify information in the candidate’s application form or CV.
5. Seek additional information about the candidate’s skills, experience and other details relevant to the person specification.
6. Ask the candidate further questions in order to assess the extent to which s/he meets the criteria in the person specification.
7. Give the candidate an opportunity to ask questions or to add any points or further information.
8. Tell the candidate when to expect information on the outcome.
9. Thank the candidate and close the interview.
7.3 Conducting the interview
Establishing a calm and encouraging atmosphere

Candidates perform best in interview when they feel reasonably at ease and are treated with respect and genuine interest. Remember that the purpose of an interview is not to see who can deal with this stressful situation best, rather it is to gather evidence in order to decide which person best fits the selection criteria. It is in the interests of the organisation to conduct the interview in such a way that candidates have the best opportunity to show their abilities, experience and qualities.

The panel should aim to establish a rapport in a calm atmosphere and try to put the interviewee at ease. Interviews should start on time. Greeting the candidates properly is one way to put the candidates at ease. Each member of the panel should introduce themselves, giving their position in the organisation or their role on the panel. If the panel members will be making notes during the interview the candidates should be alerted to this out of courtesy. It is also helpful for the candidate if the panel members look interested even when not asking questions.

Gathering evidence through questions

The panel members need evidence in order to assess the candidate according to the requirements in the person specification. They get evidence through asking clear, direct questions, listening carefully to all answers and concentrating throughout the interview. The panel members should not talk too much and should not interrupt unless necessary.

Open questions should be used as much as possible as they encourage candidates to express their views and can be used to explore attitudes as well as facts. Open questions usually begin with what, when, why, where, how and tell me about. An example of an open question is 'What experience have you had of supervising staff?' rather than 'Have you had experience of supervising staff?'

This can be followed with what is called probing or funnelling in order to get more detailed or specific answers. For example, the question above could be followed with 'What do you find most
difficult about supervising staff? Probing can just be by nodding or saying yes, which encourages the candidate to continue, by saying 'Tell me more about that' or by repeating the last few words of the sentence, 'So you enjoy administration?'

Closed questions should only be asked when the interviewers want a specific piece of information, e.g. 'Would you be available to take up this position in two months time?' It is better not to ask leading questions, i.e. where it is clear what answer is required. For example, 'Don’t you agree that training for management committee members is very important?' Multiple questions, where more than one question is asked, should be avoided as they are usually confusing, e.g. 'Do you think our high turn-over of volunteers is as a result of the lack of training opportunities, and how does this compare with other similar organisations you know?'

It is more useful to ask for concrete examples of how the candidate has dealt with specific incidents in the past rather than asking hypothetical questions, e.g. 'What do you do when?' rather than 'What would you do if?' It is often useful to ask the candidate for their views on specific problems in the organisation at present.

If members of the panel are unclear about any answers it is much better to check it out with the candidate there and then rather than saying to the others later I wasn’t sure what she meant by that. It is also very helpful for both the interviewee and the panel if the chairperson briefly summarises as the interview progresses. Summarising accurately is a way of bringing together and reflecting back what the candidate has been communicating. Summarising helps ensure that the panel have understood what the candidate has been saying and allows clarification of misunderstandings. It also encourages and stimulates the person to say more. It shows the interviewee that the panel has been listening to what s/he has been saying.

7.4 Communicating effectively

An interview is a conversation with a purpose. Good interviewing is above all about effective communication. The key features of communication are:
• Active listening
• Eye contact
• Clear, direct questions and answers
• Trying to understand what is said
• Observing non-verbal communication, e.g. body language
• Summarising
• Reflecting, e.g. so you are saying that …
• Self-respect and respect for others.

These are the skills we use in our everyday communication and they can be developed further through training.

7.5 Checklist for interviewers

Here is a checklist for interviewers to help them ensure that they are well prepared.

• Am I very familiar with the job description?
• Am I very familiar with the person specification?
• Have I read the application forms and CVs thoroughly, highlighting any issues I want to follow up on?
• Am I clear about the format for the interview?
• Have I planned and practised my questions?
• Am I clear about the terms and conditions of the post?

7.6 Re-advertising

If there are too few candidates for interview or if no suitable candidate is interviewed the organisation should re-advertise and begin the process again. It is advisable to plan to recruit more widely than the first time. This is expensive in terms of money and time but it is likely to be worthwhile in the long term because suitable staff are vital to the achievement of the aims of the organisation. It is advisable to review the targeting of the first advertisement and assess whether or not the post can be re-advertised in a more focused way, e.g. through newsletters aimed at people in a particular field of work or geographical area.
The decision should be made very quickly after the interviews and other selection methods are completed. The panel should make a first and second choice, where possible, in case the preferred candidate does not take the job or has poor references.

When the panel has selected a preferred candidate and checked references, the next step is to inform management of the first choice and how the decision was reached.

It is preferable if management has delegated full responsibility for selection to the panel and therefore takes and ratifies the panel’s recommendations unless there are extraordinary reasons to question it.

It is important to record why the other candidates were not chosen as well as why the successful one was. If the panel cannot decide between two or three candidates it will be necessary to interview again.

It is generally at this stage that management, with the advice of the interview panel, decides at what point on the salary scale the person will be placed. Salary is the most public expression of the value the organisation places on the successful candidate. An explicit and fair salary policy guarantees equity and positively seeks to develop all available talent. The salary scale for the position should be agreed at the time of drawing up the job description. Choosing a scale involves examining the job to establish what are the requirements, e.g.
• experience
• qualifications and training
• level of responsibility
• whether supervision or management of other employees is required.

The organisation should then compare it with equivalent jobs in other similar organisations and the public sector in order to settle on a fair scale. The point at which a new employee is placed is usually related to the above factors and the rate at which they were paid in their previous employment.

It is important to ensure that qualifications and length of service are not being overvalued in comparison with quality of experience, as this perpetuates the effects of lack of opportunity and other discrimination on particular groups, for example people who have taken time out of the workforce to undertake family responsibilities. When management is deciding at what point on a salary scale to place the successful candidate it is advisable to scrutinise the relevance of any qualifications in order to ensure equity.
Usually the successful candidate is informed verbally. This should be followed up immediately with a letter of appointment offering him/her the position.

This letter should give the job title, date of commencement and outline the main terms and conditions of employment:

- Job description
- Proposed salary scale and point on the scale at which the person will be placed
- Hours of work including whether the position is full time, part time or a job share
- Nature of employment (permanent or fixed term)
- Place of employment
- Method of payment
- Holidays
- Sick pay

Organisations often send a copy of the employment contract and the organisation’s terms and conditions document with the letter so that the candidate can study them before accepting the job. Under the Terms of Employment (Information) Act, 1994 all new employees should receive a written statement of their terms of employment within two months of starting employment. The letter should also specify the time within which the person is expected to reply in writing regarding acceptance of the offer.
This letter forms part of the contract of employment. The candidate may want to negotiate some of the terms before accepting the job. If this happens it is important to write up the new terms and have it signed by both management and the new staff member. When the person accepts the offer of employment, the contract of employment has legally come into being.
There are a number of important follow-up tasks to the selection process. When the successful candidate has accepted the position it is courteous and respectful to write as soon as possible to other candidates to inform them and to thank them for their interest.

It is also good practice to tell unsuccessful applicants that if they want further information about the decision they should contact the organisation. The panel needs to discuss at this stage what feedback to give to candidates, who will give it and how, e.g. phone or letter. It is recommended to agree and note specific feedback which is in keeping with the interview records. Obviously feedback can only be given directly to a candidate in relation to his/her own performance at interview. It would be a breach of confidentiality law to discuss the relative merits of other candidates in this discussion.
Finally, it is advisable for the panel members to take the time to evaluate the selection process so that they have the opportunity to learn from the experience and to make recommendations to the organisation about any changes that are needed to improve the process for the next time.

It is useful to monitor candidates' experiences of the recruitment and interview process to test its accessibility and fairness from the point of view of people from the nine categories of discrimination. Taking a statistical check of how candidates from different backgrounds fare in the interview process will help give an overview of success or failure patterns for different types of people. This will help identify any barriers or unconscious bias that is preventing equal treatment for everyone.
1 Selection of staff involves the systematic assessment of candidates for a position based on their skills and experience, training and qualifications, employment record, references and presentation at interview.

2 It is important to plan for the process of selection, listing the tasks ahead and agreeing a time frame.

3 The selection process must be in keeping with equal opportunities legislation and best practice guidelines to ensure that all applicants are treated equally and without discrimination, conscious or unconscious. Particular attention should be paid to equal employment and equal status legislation.

4 Organisations working with children or vulnerable adults must be vigilant for their safety when selecting staff.

5 The selection panel should be set up carefully, well in advance and should be responsible for the complete process from shortlisting to decision-making. Members of the selection panel should have experience and/or training in selection methods. These include shortlisting, interview skills and compliance with equal opportunities and other relevant legislation.

6 The panel needs to plan the selection procedure thoroughly, including whether to use other methods in addition to interviews. Other selection tests should be relevant to the job and avoid indirect discrimination.

7 Interviews are more effective and fair when they are well planned and the panel is working as a team.
8 Adjustments to the interview setting should be made to ensure equal opportunities for candidates with a disability or special needs.

9 The decision about which candidate is most suitable should be made on the basis of the evidence collected through the selection procedure in light of the predetermined criteria.

10 The letter of offer to the successful candidate will form part of the contracts of employment so it should be prepared carefully.

11 It is advisable for the selection panel to take time to evaluate the selection procedure for their own learning and to make recommendations to the organisation for the next time.
USEFUL CONTACTS

The Equality Authority
3 Clonmel Street,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 417 3333
Business queries: 01 417 3336
Fax: 01 417 3331
LoCall: 1890 245 545
Email: info@equality.ie
Website: www.equality.ie

Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform
74 St. Stephen’s Green,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 602 8202
LoCall: 1890 221 227
Website: www.justice.ie

Employment Rights Information Unit
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Davitt House,
65a Adelaide Road,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 631 3131
LoCall: 1890 201 615
Website: www.entemp.ie

Equality Tribunal,
3 Clonmel Street,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 477 4100
Fax: 01 477 4141
LoCall: 1890 344 424
Email: info@equalitytribunal.ie
Website: www.equalitytribunal.ie

Office of the Director of Equality Investigations
3 Clonmel Street,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 417 3300
Fax: 01 417 3399
LoCall: 1890 344 424
Email: info@odei.ie
Website: www.odei.ie
Work Permits Section:
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Telephone: 01- 631 3333/631 3308
Fax: 01-631 3268
Lo-call Telephone service for outside (01) area: 1890 201 616
Email: workpermits@entemp.ie
Website: www.entemp.ie

Employment Appeals Tribunal
Davitt House,
65A Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 631 2121.
Fax: 01 631 3266.
Lo-Call Telephone service for outside (01) area: 1890 220 222
(ask operator to be put through to Employment Appeals Tribunal)

The Health and Safety Authority
10 Hogan Place,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 614 7000
Fax: 01 614 7020
Website: www.hsa.ie

Maternity Benefit Section,
Department of Social and Family Affairs
Social Welfare Services Office,
Oliver Plunkett Road,
Letterkenny,
Co. Donegal.
LoCall: 1890 690 690
E-mail: maternityben@welfare.ie

Rights Commissioners
Tom Johnson House,
Haddington Road,
Dublin 4.
Telephone: 01 613 6700
Fax: 01 613 6701
LoCall: 1890 220 227
Website: www.irc.ie

Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
31-32 Parnell Square,
Dublin 1.
Telephone: 01 889 7777,
Fax: 01 887 2012
Email: congress@ictu.ie
Website: www.ictu.ie

IBEC
Confederation House,
84-86 Lr Baggot Street,
Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 660 1011
Fax: 01 6601717
Email: info@ibec.ie
Website: www.ibec.ie

Department of Health and Children
Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street, Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01 635 4000
LoCall: 1890 200 311
Fax: 01 635 4001
Email: info@health.gov.ie
Website: www.dohc.ie

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Barnardos
NCRC Resource Centre, Christchurch Square, Dublin 8.
Telephone: 01 454 96 99
Email: ncrc@barnardos.ie
Website: www.barnardos.ie

Citizens Information Board
(formerly Comhairle)
Hume House, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
Telephone: 01 605 9000
Fax: 01 605 9099
Email: information@ciboard.ie
Website: www.citizensinformationboard.ie

Office of the Data Protection Commissioner
Block 4, Irish Life Centre, Talbot Street, Dublin 1.
Telephone: 01 874 8544
Fax: 01 874 5405
Email: info@dataprivacy.ie
Website: www.dataprivacy.ie

National Disability Authority
24/25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4.
Telephone: 01 608 0400
Fax: 01 660 9935
Email: nda@nda.ie
Website: www.nda.ie

Qualifications Recognition – Ireland
National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, 5th Floor, Jervis House, Jervis Street, Dublin 1.
Telephone: 01 887 1500
Fax: 01 887 1595
Email: info@qualificationsrecognition.ie
Website: www.qualificationsrecognition.ie

Combat Poverty Agency
Bridgewater Centre, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8.
Telephone: 01 670 6746
Fax: 01 670 6760
Email: info@combatpoverty.ie
Website: www.combatpoverty.ie

Pavee Point
46 North Great Charles Street Dublin 1.
Telephone: 01 878 0255
Fax: 01 874 2626
Email: pavee@iol.ie
Website: www.paveepoint.ie
**Useful websites**

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) [www.nccri.ie](http://www.nccri.ie)

The National Action Plan Against Racism [www.diversityireland.ie](http://www.diversityireland.ie) (providing information on anti-racism and cultural diversity in Ireland)

[www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie) (lists all legislation)

[www.irlgov.ie](http://www.irlgov.ie) (the government website, with links to government departments, publications, the Irish statute book and more)

Barnardos National Children’s Resource Centre has published a book on personnel practice which is available from the NCRC. Call 01 4549699 for more information.
USEFUL REFERENCES


Clarke, J., Guide to Good Employment Practice in the Community and Voluntary Sector, Dublin: Combat Poverty Agency, 1995


Pillenger, J., An introduction to the Situation and Experience of Women Migrant Workers in Ireland, Dublin: The Equality Authority, 2006


**Some relevant legislation**

- Equal Status Act 2000 and 2004
- Equality Act 2004
- Terms of Employment (Information) Act 1994 and 2001
- Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003

For information on all aspects of recruitment up to the stage of shortlisting, there is an accompanying booklet in this series, *The Staff Recruitment Process*. This booklet outlines how best to plan for and implement procedures for staff recruitment, including drawing up job descriptions, person specifications and advertisements.
Staff Selection and Interviewing by Jane Clarke is the seventh booklet in Managing Better – A Series on Organisational and Management Issues for the Community and Voluntary Sector published by Combat Poverty Agency.

The aim of the series is to provide accessible and clearly written booklets that offer a basic introduction to key management and organisational issues faced by community and voluntary groups. Each booklet provides practical advice and guidance on what constitutes good policy and procedure, using examples where possible, and refers readers to other sources for more specialised advice or training.

In Booklet Seven, Staff Selection and Interviewing, Jane Clarke’s original booklet has been updated by Peigin Doyle. The booklet looks at the process of recruiting new staff from the exercise of shortlisting applications to making a final decision. Staff are one of the most valuable resources an organisation has and employing staff requires a significant investment of money, time and energy. The booklet emphasises the importance of thorough and rigorous preparation by selection panels. It looks at how to work toward the elimination of bias in selection, ensuring a fair process for all applicants and the most effective outcome for an organisation.