

***RHODES UNIVERSITY
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION
POLICY AND PROCEDURES: ACADEMIC POSTS***

1. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy is applicable to all individuals applying for a vacant ACADEMIC post within the University. This includes internal as well as external applicants. This policy outlines the ethos of the recruitment and selection process as well as the procedures that are followed with each appointment.

2. RATIONALE

Rhodes University pays significant attention to the recruitment and selection of staff in order to ensure the fair treatment of all applicants and to secure the appointment of persons who will be able to contribute towards the long-term success of the University.

To this end, it ensures that:

2.1 all individuals responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff are aware of the significance of this responsibility and have the necessary skills to guarantee the integrity of the recruitment and selection process; and

2.2 the recruitment and selection procedure is evaluated on an-ongoing basis to ensure that the university's needs as well as the requirements of the relevant legislation are met.

3. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The procedures outlined below will conform with the requirements of the relevant legislation including the Constitution of South Africa, the Labour Relations Act and the Employment and Occupational Equity Act.

Such requirements include:

3.1 careful deliberation of the criteria used to discriminate between applicants;

3.2 transparency of the recruitment and selection process;

3.3 the fair and equitable handling of all applicants; and

3.4 equity measures.

Rather than viewing such requirements as restrictions, the University sees them to be the basis of effective and equitable recruitment and selection practices.

4. THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

4.1 Selection committees

The relevant selection committee is established with a view to minimising delays

in the recruitment and selection procedure. On occasion, this may be done before permission has been given to advertise and fill the post.

In determining the composition of academic selection committees, due consideration must be given to selecting individuals who will effectively contribute to making a sound selection decision.

This may include individuals who:

- know the discipline;
- know the particular dynamics and needs of the department concerned;
- are experts in the field and thus able to reflect on the particular professional and/or academic merit of the applicants;
- will enhance the gender and racial diversity of the selection committee; and
- whilst not familiar with the particular discipline, may offer an alternative or broader perspective.

All members of an academic selection committee are responsible for ensuring that a

fair, legal and sound selection process takes place and that the confidentiality of applicants is respected and ensured. The Chairperson of the Joint Selection and Selection Committees shall take responsibility for reminding committee members of the significant nature of these responsibilities.

4.1.1 Joint Selection Committee

A Joint Selection Committee will convene for the selection of Professors and Associate Professors.

The committee will normally consist of:

- the Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio)
- the Vice-Principal (ex-officio)
- the relevant Dean (ex-officio)

- the relevant Head of Department (See note (a) below)
- 2 members appointed by Council (See note (b) below)
- an External Advisor (See note (c) below)
- 2 Senate members appointed by Senate (See note (d) below)
- 1 member nominated by the relevant Faculty Board (See note (e) below)
- 1 or 2 members from the relevant department (See note (f) below)

4.1.2 Selection Committee

A Selection Committee will convene for the selection of senior lecturers, lecturers and junior lecturers.

The committee will normally consist of:

- the Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Principal (ex-officio) [for senior lecturers]
- Dean (ex-officio)
- the relevant Head of Department
- 2 members nominated by the relevant Faculty Board (See note (e) below)
- 1 or 2 members from the relevant Department (See note (f) below)

In the case of a Senior Lecturer being appointed, a decision may be taken to include an External Advisor on the selection committee because his/her particular expertise is needed.

NOTES to 4.1.1 and 4.1.2:

(a) The retiring incumbent of the post shall not be a member of the Joint Selection Committee for that post. The committee however, may at its discretion, interview the past incumbent in order to ascertain the demands and requirements of the post and department.

(b) The members appointed by Council need not be Council members, particularly where

Councillors may not have the particular expertise required.

(c) The Vice-Chancellor, after consultation with the Search Committee, the relevant

Dean and/or members of the department concerned, will normally appoint an External Advisor with expert knowledge of the relevant discipline, who shall be a full

member of the Committee.

(d) It is recommended that these appointed Senate members be knowledgeable in the relevant discipline or in a closely allied field. The elected Senate members shall not be on the committee as a Faculty or Departmental representative. These representatives will already have been elected when it is necessary to elect the Senate members.

(e) The relevant Faculty should ensure that the individuals elected by the Faculty are not already a part of this committee due their nomination as a Departmental representative. Furthermore, Faculty members elected to sit on the selection committee should not be a member of the Department concerned. In order to minimise delays in the selection process, it may be necessary for the Faculty to elect members to the committee before permission has been given to advertise. Should permission not be granted, the committee will fall away.

(f) The relevant Dean will nominate 1 or 2 individuals from the appropriate Department after due consultation with all members of that Department. Where there are divisions

in the Department due to differing academic paradigms, the Dean will ensure that the different viewpoints have expression on the committee. The 1 or 2 individuals nominated by the Dean will not include the Head of Department (as he or she is already on the committee) nor will it include any member of staff who is a candidate for the vacant position. The individuals chosen are not to be regarded as representatives of the Department but are nevertheless, encouraged to consider the viewpoints of other members of the Department. Furthermore, for reasons of confidentiality, the individuals are not mandated to report back to the department on each candidate's performance in the selection process. The individuals are however, at liberty to state what criteria were used to select candidates and what the selection process constituted. Where feasible, Departmental representatives should be chosen before Faculty and Senate representatives.

4.2 The Recruitment Process

The advertising of vacant posts will normally only be done after the necessary approval has been received. In order to draft the advert, the job criteria and further particulars need to be determined and given to the Personnel Division.

4.2.1 Determining Job Criteria

The Joint Selection Committee or the Selection Committee (hereafter, referred to as the selection committee) or Head of Department or a Review Committee is required to provide the Personnel Division with the competencies required of job incumbents for effective performance. The Personnel Division will be able to provide assistance to Heads of Departments and selection committees who are unfamiliar with this process.

This competency profile should indicate those criteria that will be used to select applicants for the job in question and should specify which criteria should be stated in the advertisement, those that will be used to short-list candidates as well as those criteria that will be used for the multiple selection techniques e.g. interviews, referees' reports, seminars and/or lectures.

In determining the necessary criteria, due consideration will be given to the following issues:

4.2.1.1 Unfair versus Fair Discrimination

Unfair discrimination takes place when criteria are used which are (a) not linked to the inherent requirements of the post in

question; or (b) arbitrary and not rational including criteria

such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation or religion, or unrealistic selection criteria.

Any criteria based on the inherent requirements of the particular post or that seek to achieve the advancement of groups designated for affirmative action (Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, women and the disabled) do not constitute unfair discrimination.

4.2.1.2 Equity Considerations

The University will always attempt to select candidates who will make the best contribution to the goals of the University with specific reference to the pursuit of excellence in teaching and research.

The University recognises that special steps have to be taken to provide equal opportunities for all. Within this context, a number of practices will be employed to better enable the University to satisfy legitimate equity considerations.

To ensure equity issues are given consideration within the recruitment and selection process, selection committees are required to:

4.2.1.2.1 actively search for individuals from designated groups and record in writing, the steps which were taken;

4.2.1.2.2 record in writing why persons from designated groups were not recommended for appointment;

4.2.1.2.3 be transparent about how equity considerations affected decisions taken in the recruitment and selection process.

Other equity considerations include:

4.2.1.2.4 providing substantial scholarships for Master and PhD studies for students from designated groups who show an interest in an academic career as well as seeking postdoctoral Fellowships for such students in excellent international institutions. In this way, we will "grow our own timber", ensuring that individuals from the designated groups will be able to compete on an equal footing in the recruitment and selection process;

4.2.1.2.5 seeking funds to provide supernumerary positions, research fellowships or cadetships for developing persons from the designated groups to become excellent future candidates for positions

at this or any other University. With such positions, individuals from the designated groups who have the potential to contribute to the goals of the University in the long term, will be chosen.

4.2.1.3 Criteria for candidates in professorial posts

Numerous attributes have been identified as desirable in

candidates for professorial posts. They are:

4.2.1.3.1 Scholarship including qualifications achieved (preferably a PhD), publication record, presentation at notable conferences in his/her discipline and other significant achievements in his/her field. Evidence of the individual's continuous participation in the intellectual life of his/her discipline as well as his/her reputation in the field, will also be looked at. In the case of the creative and performing arts and in the professional sphere, it may be more appropriate than in other cases to give weight to reputation and standing in the relevant profession or discipline;

4.2.1.3.2 Teaching ability including the demonstration of innovative and new teaching methodologies, knowledge and skills in academic development issues and the ability to teach students from diverse backgrounds;

4.2.1.3.3 Research ability including the capability to initiate major research initiatives, the development of young researchers as well as the national and international recognition of his/her past research endeavours;

4.2.1.3.4 Leadership qualities including the ability to strategically position his/her department in the current and future national and international milieu, the ability to manage the performance of departmental staff as well as to motivate staff to achieve excellence in their jobs;

4.2.1.3.5 Administrative interests and abilities sufficient to contribute to the smooth running of the department and the establishment of systems that allow for an effective service to students, the administration and persons external to the University;

4.2.1.3.6 Personality attributes and skills including assertiveness, conflict management, demonstrating an interest in the development of others, an openness to diversity in students and staff and openness to change; and

4.2.1.3.7 A record of constancy in previous posts.

It must be remembered that no one candidate will meet all of the above criteria. Rather the relative importance of these criteria should be considered by the relevant selection committee before the selection process proceeds. The relative importance of these criteria will be determined by the needs of the university and the department and will be contingent on the current staffing profile of skills and abilities.

4.2.1.4 Criteria for candidates for senior lecturer posts

Similar attributes to those listed in point 4.2.1.3 above will be sought in senior lecturer posts with greater emphasis being placed on the potential that the candidate evidences in terms of scholarship and leadership qualities.

4.2.1.5 Criteria for candidates for lecturer posts

The following attributes (or evidence of potential of these attributes) are sought:

4.2.1.5.1 Scholarship, in particular the highest level of qualification received (preferably a Masters). Publication record, presentation at notable conferences in his/her discipline and other significant achievements in his/her field are desirable;

4.2.1.5.2 Teaching ability, in particular effective communication and presentation skills;

4.2.1.5.3 Research ability, in particular the ability to

initiate and conduct his/her own research;

4.2.1.5.4 Administrative abilities, in particular being able to manage administrative duties associated with courses and dealing with students;

4.2.1.5.5 Personality attributes including an openness to learning about teaching in the University environment, to diversity in students and staff as well as openness to change.

4.2.1.5.6 Criteria for candidates for junior lecturer posts

Similar attributes to those listed in point 4.2.1.5 above will be

sought in junior lecturer posts with greater emphasis being placed on the potential that the candidate evidences in terms of scholarship, teaching and research ability.

4.2.2 Further Particulars

In addition to providing the competency profile, the Head of Department should provide the Personnel Division with the Further Particulars for the post. This will be given to all individuals interested in the post. The University believes this information is critical as it allows the applicants to understand the requirements of the job and university more fully. It may also discourage unsuitable individuals from applying.

The Further Particulars should include information about:

- the post and department (provided by Head of Department)
- the nature of the selection procedure (for example, that applicants may be required to conduct a lecture or seminar)
- the University and Grahamstown (for external applicants and provided by Personnel Division)

4.2.3 Drafting and Placement of the Advertisement

Once the above information has been received from the relevant Head of Department, the Personnel Division will draft the advert within 7 working days. The advert will include all the critical job information and criteria.

The closing date for applications is placed in all advertisements and interested parties will be given at least 21 days in which to submit their applications.

Normally all academic posts will be advertised both internally and externally at the same time. Internal advertising of vacant posts will occur by circulars being sent to all relevant departments, divisions and institutes as well as the advertisement being placed in the staff newspaper (RHODOS) and on the notice-board outside the Personnel Division. External advertising of vacant posts will attempt to reach as wide an audience as possible within budgetary constraints. Media with wide readership patterns will be used. Where appropriate, the internet, international and specialist publications will also be considered.

4.2.4 Dates of selection

Once the composition of the selection committee is finalised, the Personnel Division will circulate the dates of the short-listing meeting, lecture/seminar and selection interviews. This will allow the Personnel Division to answer queries from applicants as to when the selection procedure will be held.

4.2.5 Unsolicited Curricula Vitae

Due to legal and administrative considerations, the University does not accept any unsolicited Curricula Vitae. In these instances, the CV is returned with a covering letter. Any staff receiving Curriculum Vitae are asked to forward these to the Personnel Division as soon as possible.

4.2.6 The Search Committee

Where necessary, a search committee may be constituted to enhance the recruitment process.

4.2.6.1 When a chair is to be advertised, the appropriate Dean should be requested by the Vice-Chancellor to appoint a Search Committee, consisting of two or three senior academics from cognate disciplines or the relevant department to actively scan the field for suitable candidates. The appropriate Dean is the chairperson of this committee;

4.2.6.2 The search for suitable candidates will include actively looking for individuals from the designated groups;

4.2.6.3 Such candidates should be encouraged by the Dean to submit an application without committing the University in any way;

4.2.6.4 Should it be necessary to travel to other centres, these costs will be covered by the Administrative Travel Fund; and

4.2.6.5 This recruitment strategy will only be conducted in conjunction with the internal and external advertising of a post. At no time will this be the sole recruitment strategy pursued.

4.2.7 Initial Processing of Applications

The Personnel Division handles all queries relating to the vacant post, sends out application forms and further particulars to relevant individuals and collects all returned application forms.

Applicants for academic posts are required to submit an application form and a

Curriculum Vitae under designated headings. Where Curriculum Vitae are submitted for a particular post but without an accompanying application form, the document will be returned to them with a request to complete the attached application form and to submit both documents together.

All documentation for each applicant is kept under confidential file in the Personnel Division. Owing to postal difficulties and delays, late applications are considered up until the selection committee begins to review the applications and short-list candidates.

4.3 The Selection Process

4.3.1 Short-listing of applicants

Suitable candidates are short-listed for an interview on the basis of their applications and curriculum vitae.

After the closing date for the particular post, the Personnel Division will inform members of the selection committee that the documentation is available for perusal in the Division. For reasons of confidentiality and efficiency, please note that no copying of the documentation or removal of the documentation will be allowed. Members of the selection committee will be given 5 working days to view the documentation prior to the short-listing meeting.

In the short-listing of applicants, the selection committee is responsible for:

4.3.1.1 confirming the selection criteria to be used to short-list candidates based on the competency profile provided by the Head of Department;

4.3.1.2 evaluating each candidate relative to these criteria;

4.3.1.3 documenting these decisions;

4.3.1.4 recording in writing why any persons from designated groups were not short-listed;

4.3.1.5 deciding on which candidates will be interviewed (the notation of A-to be interviewed, B-have potential but not to be

interviewed at this stage and C-unsuccessful, will be used);

4.3.1.6 confirming what criteria will be used to evaluate the seminar or lecture given by each of the short-listed applicants (should this selection tool be used);

4.3.1.7 confirming what criteria will be used to evaluate the supporting materials given by each of the short-listed applicants (in the case of professorial and senior lecturer posts);

4.3.1.8 deciding on what interview questions will be asked to address the competencies identified.

The Personnel Division can provide assistance in this regard.

Due to the time (in getting referees' reports, producing documentation and interviewing) and money (administrative costs and bringing applicants to Grahamstown) invested in the selection process, the selection committee is encouraged to short list no more than 4 people.

The Personnel Division will contact all short-listed applicants and request that they attend an interview. The University pays all reasonable costs associated with attending the interview

to out-of-town candidates. Applicants who are not short-listed for an interview will be notified as soon as possible thereof.

4.3.2 Requesting referees' reports

Referees' reports will be gathered following the short-listing of applicants by the selection committee. Referee's reports will be requested only for those applicants given an 'A' rating. Referees will be asked to provide a written report that addresses specific competencies relevant to the post in question. They will be given three weeks in which to reply.

The Personnel Division is responsible for requesting the referees' reports and ensuring their timely arrival before the meeting of the selection committee.

Referee's reports will be available to committee members prior to the interviewing of candidates.

4.3.3 Evaluation of a Lecture or Seminar

All candidates will normally be required to conduct a seminar or give a lecture

on a topic of their choice or a topic determined by the relevant selection committee. The Chairperson will arrange for the committee to be represented in the seminar audience. The Personnel Division will be responsible for the logistics including informing the candidates and members of the selection committee. The audience for this lecture or seminar may include students. Where **all** applicants are internal candidates, this selection method may be deemed unnecessary.

Where the short-listed applicants are required to give a lecture or seminar, this will precede the interview.

The selection committee is responsible for:

4.3.3.1 confirming what criteria will be used to evaluate the lecture or seminar given;

4.3.3.2 evaluating each candidate relative to these criteria; and

4.3.3.3 documenting these decisions.

4.3.4 Evaluation of Supporting Materials

Applicants for professorial and senior lecturer posts will be asked to submit

with their application, copies of relevant supporting materials. These materials may include for example, reviews and a portfolio of work produced or the applicant's best publications (between three and five will be requested). The purpose of requesting such material is to assist the selection committee in determining an applicant's possible future contribution to the University. Any supporting materials provided by the applicants will be evaluated by the External Advisor as well as be available to all the members of the selection committee.

In preparation for the interviews, the Personnel Division will ensure that all the relevant documentation is sent to all committee members prior to the interview. In the case where certain supporting materials cannot be copied, it may be necessary for members of the selection committee to visit the Personnel Division to view these materials.

The selection committee is responsible for:

- 4.3.4.1 reading or looking at the supporting materials prior to the interview;
- 4.3.4.2 evaluating the material of each candidate along the identified criteria; and
- 4.3.4.3 documenting these evaluations.

4.3.5 Conducting the Interviews

The selection committee is responsible for:

- 4.3.5.1 confirming the questions to be asked of each interviewee and who will ask what questions (note that the questions will have been determined at the short-listing meeting);
- 4.3.5.2 evaluating each candidate relative to these criteria; and
- 4.3.5.3 documenting these evaluations.

4.3.6 Use of other selection techniques

Should the Selection Committee decide to use other selection techniques, it must ensure that:

- 4.3.6.1 the selection technique used is relevant to the job in question;
- 4.3.6.2 the criteria to be measured using these techniques are evident to the committee members;
- 4.3.6.3 each candidate is evaluated using these selection techniques and along the same criteria; and

4.3. 6.4 all this information is documented.

4.3.7 The Selection Decision

The selection decision usually takes place immediately after all the interviews have been conducted. Alternatively, another meeting can be called for this purpose.

The decision on whom to appoint involves:

4.3.7.1 looking at and discussing all the evidence collected (from seminar/lecture, interview, referees' reports and supporting materials) for each criteria for each candidate;

4.3.7.2 documenting the decisions taken;

4.3.7.3 recording in writing in cases where any persons from designated groups were not recommended for appointment; and

4.3.7.4 making the final decision on whom to recommend for appointment and where appropriate, recommending a proxime accessit.

This decision is forwarded to the Personnel Director.

If no suitable applications are received for a post, the Joint Selection Committee should give serious consideration to postponing its recommendation until the Search Committee has had a further opportunity to scan the field for suitable candidates.

4.3.8 The Voting Procedure

4.3.8.1 Joint Selection Committee

No recommendation for appointment shall be made unless supported by at least two-thirds of the members of the Joint Selection Committee present, nor shall any such recommendation be made unless supported by a minimum of six votes or at least half of the members of the committee whichever is the lesser.

Save that in the event of there being more than one eminently

suitable candidate and (a) there being a simple majority but not a two-thirds majority, for one of the candidates, or (b) the Joint Selection Committee being deadlocked by an equal number of votes, the committee will reconvene within 5 working days to reconsider the decision taken and to vote again. In the event, that the committee remains deadlocked, the Chairperson will exercise his/her casting vote and make a recommendation to Senate where a simple majority of its members will determine the final decision.

4.3.8.2 The Selection Committee

A recommendation will be made by the Selection Committee provided that a simple majority agrees on who should be

appointed to the vacant post. In the event that the Selection Committee is deadlocked by an equal number of votes, the committee will reconvene within 5 working days to reconsider the decision taken and to vote again. In the event that the committee remains deadlocked, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

4.3.9 Relevant authority to approve recommendation

Certain procedures must be followed when approving recommendations for the following posts:

4.3.9.1 Post: Professor or associate professor

Where the Joint Selection Committee's decision is unanimous,

the appointment of the individual/s may be dealt with by means of a Principal's Circular. In the event that an objection should be received, the recommendation is referred to Senate for a final decision.

4.3.9.2 Post: Senior Lecturer or equivalent levels

Where the Selection Committee's decision is unanimous, the Vice-Chancellor is empowered to act on behalf of Senate in approving the appointment.

4.3.9.3 Post: Lecturer, junior lecturer or equivalent levels

The Vice-Chancellor is empowered to act on behalf of Senate in approving appointments at this level.

The Vice-Chancellor is empowered to use his/her discretion in the use of the procedures set out in point 4.3.9.1 above.

4.3.10 Personnel Officer to provide report to Director of Personnel

A member of the Personnel Division will evaluate the recruitment and selection process to ensure that it is meeting university and legal requirements. In this regard, selection committee members will also be asked to provide their opinion of the process. This information will be forwarded to the Director of Personnel or his/her nominated representative for the purposes of evaluation.

Where there is evidence of any problem/s, the Director of Personnel or his/her nominated representative will conduct an investigation. All recommended appointments will be kept on hold until the matter has been dealt with.

4.3.11 Offer is made to candidate/s recommended by committee

Based on the advice of the Vice -Chancellor and the relevant Dean regarding the salary package, the Director of Personnel shall make an offer of appointment to the candidate/s recommended by the Selection Committee. The selection committee does not determine the salary package to be offered.

4.3.12 Medical report

Successful applicants will be required to undergo a medical examination which will be directly linked to bona fide occupational requirements of the post.

Confirmation of the offer of employment will be subject to the receipt and acceptance of a favourable medical report. The Personnel Division will request that the successful applicant/s undergo the relevant medical examination with a doctor of their choice. A document outlining the information required from their doctor will accompany the letter of offer sent to the successful applicant/s. The applicant will be requested to pass this on to his/her doctor.

The successful applicant will be responsible for ensuring that the completed medical report is returned to the Personnel Division with his/her letter of acceptance of the post. Should the successful applicant decide to not take up the offer of employment, a medical examination will not be necessary.

4.3.13 Reference checks

Reference checks to verify the information provided by the successful applicant will not be conducted unless there is sufficient cause to doubt the accuracy of the information provided.

4.3.14 Record keeping

Consistent with its commitment to transparency and the right of the applicant to written feedback, the University will document the criteria used within each selection process and the decisions taken about each candidate relative to these criteria. Furthermore, the University will be open about how equity considerations impact on decisions in the recruitment and selection process.

The Personnel Division is responsible for keeping a copy of any letters informing candidates of the outcome of their application.

In addition, all documentation relating to the individuals' applications, the selection criteria, the selection procedure including interview questions used, the evaluations of individual

candidates and the decisions taken will be kept for 12 months. Thereafter, such documentation will be destroyed.

5. SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The Personnel Division recognises the role that it needs to play within the recruitment and selection process.

This role includes:

5.1 handling all the administrative and university work associated with the procedure;

5.2 providing Heads of Department and selection committees with assistance in executing their recruitment and selection responsibilities effectively. In this regard, hands-on assistance is offered, training courses and archival/support material will be available as will documentation to inform members of selection committees of the process;

5.3 evaluating the recruitment and selection process; and

5.4 ensuring that the process keeps up to date with legal and university requirements as well as technological advances.

6. TRAINING

The need for training is recognised. All Chairpersons of selection committees will be obliged to undergo training on the recruitment and selection requirements of the labour legislation. These Chairpersons will include the Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Principal, Deans and Deputy Deans.

In addition, any union representatives involved in recruitment and selection of academic staff will also need to be trained.