IMPERIAL

Recruitment Guidance

Imperial Recruitment Guidance

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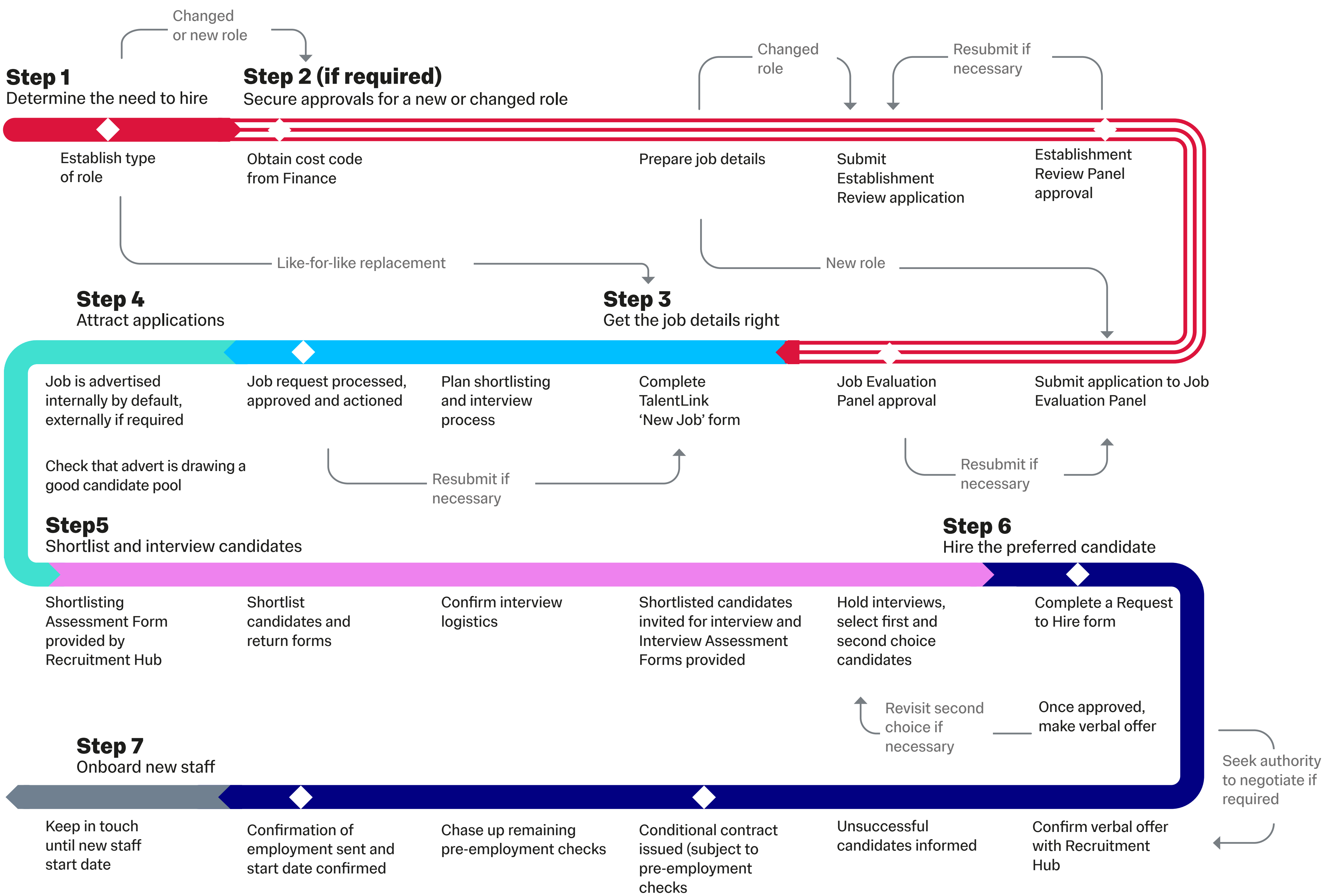

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Introduction

This document is intended to help you with Imperial's recruitment process. It is divided into seven steps, not all of which will be needed, depending on the role for which you are recruiting. We've included an overview of the process first, then details for each step with tips and checkboxes, plus links to additional guidance and templates. A timeline is also included to assist you.

Roles and responsibilities

The timeline clarifies the individual roles and responsibilities of the Hiring Manager (who leads the process) and the other departments who support throughout. Imperial's HR Recruitment and Progression pages will give you more detailed information on the recruitment process, should you require it.

Inclusivity

Inclusive recruitment is good recruitment – it means getting the best person for the job. **Please refer to Imperial's Inclusive Recruitment pages and the Imperial College's Recruitment and Selection Policy.**

Job family and grading

The job family and grading for your post needs to be established at the outset. Whilst this document supports all recruitment, Grades 5 and 6 require additional approval from your Strategic HR representative. Recruitment for Grade 7 and above (Professor, Associate Professor, and Professional Service staff roles) is managed by the Senior Appointments team (contact Maria Monteiro, Welcome Service and Senior Appointments Manager on m.monteiro@imperial.ac.uk).

A new or existing role?

For like-for-like replacements (the majority of hires), Step 3 helps you with the job description, person specification/criteria, and advert, and takes you directly to a TalentLink 'New Job' form.

For new roles or a 20%+ change to an existing role, there is an additional Step 2 in the recruitment process. A new role will need approvals from the Job Evaluation Panel, and an existing role with significant changes may require Establishment Review and Job Evaluation Panel approval before you can submit a 'New Job' form on TalentLink (with some exceptions).

You will be supported through all three recruitment pathways in this document.

Timescale

The expected lead time from starting the recruitment process to onboarding the successful candidate can be up to six months (assuming your chosen candidate has a three-month notice period), although there are several aspects of the process that influence this.
If necessary, we advise you to explore temporary cover or a secondment so that the recruitment process for the permanent position is not compromised. This is covered within the guidance.

Establishing the need to recruitment

The process should always start by reviewing the need to recruit (Step 1). Does the role need to be recruited for or have the team's needs changed?

Pitfalls to avoid common problems	Advice
Trying to recruit too quickly	The recruitment process can take up to six months (considering notice periods and potential visa applications), and if cover is needed, we advise organising a temporary or secondment placement in the meantime. A rushed recruitment process can lead to compromises in important legal and inclusivity requirements.
Not being aware of the legal responsibilities of recruitment	As Hiring Manager, you have specific responsibilities when it comes to recruitment, with support from others. This involves giving due time and attention to the job description, person specification and job advert/advertising channels, managing the shortlisting and interview process effectively, making a verbal offer to your preferred candidate and completing their Right to Work checks. Imperial has legal responsibility to do this fairly. This guidance will help you will all these responsibilities.
Errors in the online forms and paperwork	Delays in the process can be a result of mistakes or missing information on the forms. We suggest that you double check everything before submitting. Be very careful if you are using existing information or a template as this can easily lead to errors. Remember that old documents may have been superseded.
Failing to plan ahead	Select your ideal shortlisting and interview panel members ahead of time. Try to anticipate when shortlisting and interviews will need to be carried out so that you can block out time in diaries. Set aside your own time to shortlist candidates so that you can start as soon as the Recruitment Hub provides you with a Shortlisting Record Form. Interview rooms, refreshments and specific staff or candidate requirements may also need to be organised in advance.
Not asking for help	Email the Recruitment Hub's shared inbox (recruitmenthub@imperial.ac.uk) with any queries or for advice. Always include the job number and name in the subject header, if known.

Step 1: Determine the need to hire

1.1 Do you need to recruit?

When someone resigns it is easy to automatically launch into recruitment. However, it is worth taking a step back first, and checking that the role hasn't changed since the previous post holder was appointed, or that there isn't an opportunity to allocate job responsibilities differently amongst the existing team. Your HR partners can help with this.

Once you have confirmed the need to recruit you must secure the approval of your line manager, who can determine if more senior approval is needed.

1.2 Choosing the right recruitment pathway

The recruitment process differs depending on whether it is a like-for-like replacement, a changed role or a new position.

If a **like-for-like replacement**, you will already know the job family and grade, and the existing job description will be offered to you when you start a 'New Job' form on TalentLink.

If this is a **new position that does not affect existing roles or structures**, you will need to request a job family and grade from the relevant cost centre and make an application to the Job Evaluation Panel.

If this is an **existing role with changes**, the process will depend on the degree of change, so this will need to be established first. If there is any doubt about this, **or if it affects existing roles or team structures**, it will need to go to Establishment Review first, and then to the Job Evaluation Panel.

This document will walk you through all three recruitment pathways.

Tips

Take the time to review whether recruitment is genuinely needed

Make sure you are following the right recruitment pathway, depending on the type of recruitment you are doing

Checkboxes

- ☐ Need to recruit has been established
- ☐ This has been approved
- ☐ Appropriate recruitment pathway is clear

Hiring Manager

Recruitment Team/ Hub

Finance Manager

Approvals

Determine the need to hire

- Review your needs and confirm that recruitment is necessary
- Secure approval from your manager
- Determine whether this is a new role, a significantly changed role, or a like-for-like replacement, as this will influence the initial recruitment pathway

Step 2 (if required): Secure approvals for a new or changed role

NB. If you are recruiting a **like-for-like replacement**, Step 2 is not required and you can go straight to Step 3.

2.1 Securing approval to recruit for a new or changed job

If this is a replacement with a 20% +change to the job description or a new role there are additional approval processes. Both require you to first agree a proposed salary code from the relevant cost centre, notify your Departmental Administrator and prepare details of your proposed hire and the business context.

a) A **replacement with changes to the role** requires the following:

- a discussion with HR Strategic Support to establish whether it represents a change of 20%+ and therefore warrants submission for **Establishment Review**. This decision must be approved by your Head of Department
- if deemed necessary, an Establishment Review form will be need to be submitted via the HR portal
- once checked and forwarded to the Establishment Review Panel by the Recruitment Hub, a senior manager will be invited to present the case to panel
- if approved, the details of the changed role will need to be submitted to the weekly **Job Evaluation Panel** for sign off, with some exceptions (e.g. if it forms part of the recruitment for a new programme)
- if not approved, your HR partner will be able to help with a resubmission

b) A **new role** requires the following:

- submission of the job description, person specification and proposed advertising to the **Job Evaluation Panel** as evidence that the hire is needed and financially sound
- if the Job Evaluation Panel approves the hire, recruitment can be pursued by submitting a TalentLink 'New Job' form
- if not approved, the panel will explain what modifications are required and the application can then be resubmitted. Bear in mind that this will add to your recruitment lead time.

For both Job Evaluation Panel and Establishment Review you will need to draft the job description, person specification/criteria and your advertising plans, along with the business/organisational context that supports your request. For guidance on the job description, person specification/criteria, advert and advertising channels, see Step 3.

2.2 Establishment Review

Establishment Review ensures consistency in how roles and structures are changed across Imperial, with transparency in their recruitment so they reflect our aspirations for equality, diversity, and inclusion. Assuming the changes have been deemed necessary for Establishment Review (with this decision approved by your Head of Department), an application will need to be made via the HR portal.

What type of role is this?

A new or changed role

Obtain cost code from finance

- This should be the cost centre that will pay for the member of staff's salary

1 week

A like-for-like replacement
– **go straight to Step 3**

For this you will need:

- Organisation chart before and after the change
- Previous job description, with tracked changes in the document to highlight any changes
- Explanation of how the duties and responsibilities for the role have changed
- Proposed level of the changed role
- Approval for budgetary impact and details on the resources to fund any required increase in the staffing budget
- Details if these changes impact on another role/team
- The business case and reason for the request e.g. a change in the external environment (new regulatory requirements, substantial changes in volumes) or an internal opportunity to improve efficiency and effectiveness (by redesigning processes), and the benefits associated with the change
- Planned processes and methodologies for new work
- CID number for the current post holder (if relevant)

The Establishment Review submission will initially be assessed by the Recruitment and Progression team before being passed to the Establishment Review Panel, which meets once each term. If proved to be sufficiently different from the existing role, it then will go forward to the Job Evaluation Panel; if rejected then you will need to speak to your HR partners. More detail, including Establishment Review Panel dates can be found here.

2.3 Job Evaluation Panel

The Job Evaluation Panel meets weekly to ensure we are advertising new roles at an appropriate level and to avoid legal risk around pay discrimination. The panel comprises Imperial staff trained in using the HAY job evaluation methodology.

A weekly review meeting takes place **every Tuesday morning**. You will need to email the relevant paperwork to je-panel@imperial.ac.uk by **12.00 on** the previous **Friday**. You will be notified of the Panel's decision **by 17.00 the following Friday.**

The following paperwork is required:

- Job description and person specification, with criteria
- Organisation chart
- Background or contextual information to justify the new role
- Draft advert and channels

Prepare the job details (see Step 3 for guidance)

- Job description
- Person specification
- Job advert and advertising channels

1 week (dependent on your workload)

Is it a new role or an established but significantly changed role?

New role: make a submission to the Job Evaluation Panel →

Changed role →

Submit Establishment Review application

- Send the relevant documents to the Establishment Review Panel for approval
- A senior manager will have to present the case to the panel

2-4 weeks (depending on whether amends are needed)

Requests will be considered at the following week's meeting, unless there are too many, in which case some will be bumped to the following week. **Panel decisions can therefore take 1-4 weeks from submission to decision**, depending on how busy the Panel is and whether amends are required. If you need assistance with developing or amending the job description and person specification following the panel's decision, contact your HR partner or the Recruitment Hub team.

If the role is approved and a grade assigned, but you feel a higher-grade role is necessary, you will need to go back to the Job Evaluation Panel and apply for a 'market supplement', providing industry benchmarking which shows that comparable roles in industry would be salaried at a higher level. This is usually in the form of job advertisements for similar roles elsewhere which are paid more.

Please note: Senior Academic (Reader and Professor level) and Levels 6 and 7 Professional Services or Learning & Teaching Job Family roles should be forwarded to the relevant HR Partner in the first instance for evaluation.

Tips

If this is a new post, or the change requires an increased salary grading, make sure you have made a good business case for this

Ensure you provide everything for Establishment Review or the Job Evaluation Panel as missing information will cause delays

Both of these processes add to the recruitment lead time so ensure you allow for this

Checkboxes

- [ ] Business case drafted for discussion with HR/manager
- [ ] Identified whether Establishment Review is required
- [ ] Submitted for Establishment Review (if required)
- [ ] Establishment Review Panel (if required) has approved
- [ ] Submitted to Job Evaluation Panel
- [ ] Job Evaluation Panel has approved

new role

resubmit if necessary

Establishment Review Panel approval

Continue to Job Evaluation Panel

Meet once per term

Submit Job Evaluation Panel application

- Send the relevant documents to the Job Evaluation Panel by Friday 12.00 noon for review the following Tuesday
- You will be notified by 5pm the following Friday

resubmit if necessary

Role and Job Grade approved by Job Evaluation Panel

1–4 weeks, dependent on Panel capacity or if amends are needed

Step 3: Get the job details right

3.1 Describing the job accurately

If this is a like-for-like replacement, TalentLink will automatically populate the job description field when you input the job code, but it is important that you review this to check if anything needs updating. It is in your interests to do this to ensure you recruit the best candidate for a long-term, permanent position.

The **job description** is crucial in motivating high calibre candidates to apply for the role. This is best achieved by providing a positive but realistic summary of its purpose and key responsibilities. Include some context around the role, the rest of the team and your Department in general. Job description templates can be found on the Recruitment Hub's Sharepoint Site. Be sure to tailor your job description to the specific role and double-check any borrowed copy for errors.

3.2 Identifying the right person specification and criteria

The **person specification** is a list of 15-20 criteria in terms of education, experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities that a good candidate would be expected to have. These criteria are vital as, legally, they form the basis of the recruitment decisions with shortlisting and interview assessments documented as evidence. They become the core tool for selecting the right candidate and justifying this decision. **The hiring decision must be based on the criteria explicitly listed on the person specification**, so make sure you detail anything that will be a factor in deciding between candidates.

You will need both 'essential' and 'desirable' criteria. '**essential**' criteria must be the minimum applicants need to meet to be shortlisted – these will be dealbreakers and must be selective enough as a set to rule out unwanted candidates. '**Desirable**' criteria are the ones that will help you and other panel members identify the best candidate. It is not Imperial policy or legal best practice to shortlist based on a 'feeling' or 'instinct' as this risks subjecting the process to prejudice and unconscious bias. Remember that all recruitment decisions must be justifiable and withstand scrutiny. You and the rest of your supporting panel members will then choose 4-10 of these desirable criteria against which to systematically score the shortlisted candidates.

Make each criterion specific and consider how you will score it during shortlisting and interviews, ensuring inclusivity throughout the process.

Complete a TalentLink 'New Job' form

- Make sure you have everything ready in advance
- Craft the job description and person specification carefully
- Ensure your 'essential' and 'desirable' criteria are the best possible
- Sell the job in your advert and choose the most appropriate advertising channels

1 week

Plan your shortlisting and interview process

- Do this now to avoid delays later
- Choose the panel members who will support you
- Anticipate when shortlisting and interviews might take place to secure time in their diaries

1 week

Pitfalls with the job description	Advice
Too many specifications (more than eight)	You may inadvertently limit the number of applicants
Too few specifications (less than three)	You may struggle to shortlist a very large number of applicants
Too vague	Instead of ‘ good communication skills’, be more specific, for example ‘effective at communicating project progress and other updates, through selecting the most appropriate medium’
Discriminatory based on age	Do not be ageist by specifying an age, age range, or the number of years of experience required for a role. Do not use language such as ‘young’, ‘mature’, ‘dynamic’, or ‘energetic’
Discriminatory based on disability	Do not request attendance records or details of health issues. Where applicable and dependent on the role, fitness to work will be assessed by Occupational Health processes, subject to the requirements set out in the Equality Act. Any candidate that has a disability and meets all essential criteria must be invited to interview under the Disability Confident Scheme
Discriminatory based on gender or sexual orientation	Do not request details of personal circumstances

3.3 Ensuring inclusivity

It is vital that your job description and person specification are fully inclusive in terms of their requirements and the language you use.

3.4 Deciding how and where you will advertise the role

The TalentLink form will ask you for your job advert and the advertising channels you wish to use. You need to think carefully about this in order to attract the right candidates for the role. Key factors will be lead time, the type of role you are recruiting for, and the most effective way to attract high calibre candidates. There are four main advertising channels:

Advertising channels	Criteria for choosing
Internally within Imperial via Imperial College London Jobs site	All roles will automatically be posted internally on the Imperial's Jobs page for a minimum of two week. You will be asked in the TalentLink form if you do NOT want your recruitment advertised there. If you think that there will be a good pool of internal candidates and you need a fast turnaround on the recruitment, then advertising internally may be sufficient for your needs. The job can be actively promoted through staff emails, MS Teams posts, and shared at relevant internal meetings. However, most jobs are also advertised externally.
externally, within the wider academic community via jobs.ac.uk	This is the recommended platform which is specific to Higher Education and is a cost-effective job board for all roles. The only reason you might not advertise here is if you only want to recruit internally or believe that advertising on jobs.ac.uk would attract the wrong type of candidate or produce too many applications. Jobs.ac.uk costs £279 and needs to be paid by PO.
externally, beyond academia, on various sites	**Advertising** on other external sites can increase the diversity of the applicant pool and attract new talent. The Recruitment Hub team can advise on suitable advertising channels. For any channels other than jobs.ac.uk, you will need to raise a PO or GL journal ahead of time. **LinkedIn**: The Recruitment Hub already has a recruiter licence to post promoted job adverts on LinkedIn. This is generally only to be used for more senior and/or harder to recruit roles where there is a need to attract from a wider pool. LinkedIn adverts must be requested via the Recruitment Hub and if approved, you should maximise opportunities by sharing the advert on your own LinkedIn profile and/or asking colleagues with a higher profile on the platform to do the same.
externally, using a recruitment agency	It is very rare, but for some specialised/hard to recruit posts, an employment agency or executive search firm may be necessary. In this instance, please raise it with your Recruitment Hub contact. They can then recommend appropriate agencies and work with them to facilitate the recruitment.

3.5 Creating the advert

You must use Imperial's Advert Template, which sets out the format for the our jobs platform along with hints and recommendations for each section of the advert. The template will give you guidance on:

- the **job title** (which is a clear and an accurate reflection of the job, so that it has search engine optimisation and thus maximises the reach of the advert)
- the **summary**, where you are actively selling the role, outlining the duties and responsibilities, and listing the essential criteria against which applicants will be shortlisted and then interviewed. This is your opportunity to engage with your ideal candidates and encourage those who do not meet the requirements to self-select out of the process. Consider including hyperlinks to relevant news stories or videos about what has been happening in your team
- **tips** for ensuring you are clear, concise, informative, and inclusive (e.g. gender neutral), providing all the necessary information, and making the advert personal. It is useful to include at least a rough idea of when interviews will take place

The Imperial's Inclusive Recruitment webpages provide more guidance on how to make your advert as inclusive as possible.

3.6 Plan your shortlisting and interview processes

You are advised to identify two other panel members to support you in your recruitment. They can help you shortlist applicants, interview those that meet your criteria and identify the best candidate, although the final decision is yours. Diaries fill up quickly, so you are advised to speak to them and establish when you are likely to be shortlisting and interviewing in advance, so you can block out their time. If you wait to do this, it may create delays. Use the timeline in this guidance to help you.

Consider who is best placed to help you assess your candidates. Your panel should always include the relevant line manager, but you may also want to include other potential colleagues. It is important to create a panel that is as diverse as possible in terms of seniority, job family, gender, and ethnicity.

The interview slots on offer, and the experience (including the room, refreshments and the welcome they receive) will all give candidates an impression of what working in your Department like, so it is worth thinking about these aspects in advance. For example, a mix of different days and time slots offers candidates more flexibility, specific needs might require some advance planning, and remember that their experience of your Department starts with the response to their application and includes their arrival for interview (consider meeting them at reception).

You won't need all of this information for the TalentLink form, but planning it ahead of time will help to ensure that the recruitment process is as smooth and efficient as possible.

3.7 Submit a 'New Job' form on TalentLink

All recruitment must be requested via Imperial recruitment system, TalentLink, along with your job description, personal specification and advert. The College's Online Request to Recruit guidance will walk you through this. If this is a like-for-like replacement with an existing job code, TalentLink will automatically populate the form with the existing job description. If you are starting with this, it is in your long-term interests to ensure it remains accurate and cannot be improved.

To start, choose 'New Job' at the top of the dashboard. You will need:

- The **information on the job**: role name, grade, work location, how it will be funded, what pre-employment checks will be required, along with the CID of the last post holder (for existing roles);
- A decision on **where the job will be advertised** and how long for (the minimum recommended is 14 days, but ideally we recommend longer);
- **Contract information** – e.g., permanent or fixed term. For fixed term contracts, it is important you have finance approval for the duration of the contract. Please note that for any fixed term contracts of 24 months or longer, you will need to pay redundancy when they leave;
- **Account code** – you will need to know the account and cost centre code the salary will be charged against. This should have been approved already;
- Your **recruitment panel members**;
- The **job description, person specification, job advert, and any other supporting documents that justify the role** – this should be attached to the 'Career Site Attachments' section at the bottom of the form. Check that your file type is supported.

Mistakes or omissions in this form are a major cause of delays, so make sure you have everything you need before you start, and double check the form before you submit it.

Once the form is submitted, the Recruitment Hub will receive a notification, review your new job form, and request the relevant approvals from your department and finance managers. In some instances, additional approvals may be required.

Tips

Make sure you identify your panel members and plan ahead for shortlisting and interviews

Check that your 'essential' and 'desirable' criteria are robust enough to help you and others choose the best candidate

Don't just run with TalentLink's autofill if it's an existing role – take the time to check and improve

Checkboxes

- ☐ Job description drafted or checked properly if an auto-fill in TalentLink
- ☐ Robust and effective person specification/criteria
- ☐ Clear advert and advertising channels
- ☐ TalentLink 'new job' form complete and submitted
- ☐ Talent link form approved and actioned

Submit your 'New Job' form on TalentLink

- Double check the form before you submit
- Once received, the Recruitment Hub will check and approve it
- They will place the advert automatically on Imperial job board unless you have specified otherwise
- If external advertising is required, this will add to the lead time
- Consider adverrtising for more than the min 14 days, to increase your candidate pool

resubmit if neceesary

Job request processed, approved and actioned by Recruitment Hub

1–2 weeks

Step 4: Attract applications

4.1 Advertising the role internally

It is only at the point where approval has been granted on TalentLink that you have agreement of the role, salary, advert and advertising channel.

The Recruitment Hub is responsible for placing job advertisements. Once approved, they will automatically place your advert on Imperial's jobs page for a minimum of two weeks.

4.2 Advertising the role externally

For external channels which have costs attached:

- You will need to email details of the media or websites you wish to use to the Recruitment Hub, who will obtain quotes
- The Recruitment Hub will then forward costs and options for your approval
- You or your department administrator will then need to raise a Purchase Order (PO) using the iProcurement system. Please note: all recruitment advertising is VAT exempt, so for Intended Use, select "3 - charitable advertising".
- You will need to email the relevant GL journal or PO number to the Recruitment Hub and confirm your approval of all the details (advert, package, timeframe, publication date and cost?)
- The Recruitment Hub will then arrange for your advertisement to be placed accordingly

4.3 Applications

Applications will be logged on TalentLink by the Recruitment Hub as they are received.

Tips

Monitor applications as they come in and certainly at the end of the first week. This allows you to see if you need to modify your advertising strategy to either increase or reduce the number of applications

Checkboxes

- [ ] Advert has run for at least 14 days
- [ ] There is a manageable number of applications – enough to provide a reasonable pool but not so many that shortlisting and interviewing will be too challenging

Internal advert automatically placed by Recruitment Hub, unless specified otherwise

External advert (if required) negotiated by Recruitment Hub

1 week

External advert approved (if required)

- You will be asked to approve any external advertising
- A PO or GL will be required

1–2 weeks

Job advert is placed by Recruitment Hub and attracts applications

Minimum 2 weeks

Check that advert is drawing a good candidate pool

- Revisit advertising if necessary

Step 5: Shortlist and interview

5.1 Shortlisting methodology

Following the vacancy closing date, the Recruitment Hub will email you a **Shortlisting Record Form** with instructions. Their email contains a lot of important information on best practice and legal compliance, so please take note.

The Shortlisting Record Form will ask you to list and then score each application against the 'essential' criteria in your person specification. We always recommend inviting two panel members to support you in the shortlisting and interview process and you must tell the Recruitment Hub who has been involved.

As part of the Disability Confident Recruitment Scheme, you will need to interview anyone who declares a disability and who also meets all the essential criteria. If you have any questions, please speak to the Recruitment Hub.

5.2 Review and score applications

Log onto TalentLink to view all candidate applications with your Shortlisting Record Form, using this guide.

Shortlisting can take around 10-15 minutes per applicant; this can add up if you receive a high volume of applications. It is an important part of the process, both to select the right candidate and to justify decisions later, so you may need to find appropriate administrative support if your workload is high. In rare cases where you have an unreasonable number of applications to shortlist, speak to the Recruitment Hub about the potential to do a pre-screening based on a smaller number of selection criteria.

Completed forms from all shortlisting panel members must be sent via email to the Recruitment Hub Coordinator, with the job name and number in the email subject. Any candidate can request information on your decision-making and this form would serve as evidence at a discrimination employment tribunal, so it is vital it is completed and returned.

5.3 Plan your interviews

Once the shortlisting process is complete, your candidates will be invited for interview by the Recruitment Hub, based on the interview information you provide (see below).

Consider the candidates' potential needs and offer a range of dates and times. Hopefully you have already considered the location of the interview, refreshments, and ways to ensure a positive interview experience. This is an opportunity to reflect Imperial, and your aim should be for all candidates to leave having felt they were treated well and had as much opportunity as any other candidate to 'sell' themselves.

For all aspects of the interview, it is important to consider accessibility with any specific needs (declared on their application) addressed. It may be useful to reassure candidates that Imperial is a Disability Confident employer and that making an accessibility request will not detriment their application. Candidates with a disability (under the Equality Act 2010) may be entitled to reasonable adjustments to ensure they have

Shortlisting Assessment Form provided by Recruitment Hub

Shortlist candidates and return forms

- Review and score all applications, along with your other panel members
- Agree the shortlisted candidates
- Inform the Recruitment Hub of your choices
- Return Shortlist Assessment forms

2 weeks

Confirm interview logistics

- Inform the Recruitment Hub of your choice of interview slots
- Provide any other details that candidates may need to know prior to interview

1 week

equity of opportunity e.g. assessment of material beforehand, extra time for someone with dyslexia, adjustments, or adaption of screen-based activities for someone with a visual impairment etc.

After the interview candidates can ask for more information about any decisions that were made. The response is important, from both a brand and a legal perspective.

5.4 Structure the interview

Consider how long the interview needs to be to ensure you gain a good picture of every candidate's suitability for the role. You may also wish to organise an informal chat between the candidates and a team member, to help candidates ask any remaining questions and gain a picture of what it is like to work at Imperial. You need to photocopy proof of every applicant's right to work; doing this with the applicant could be an opportunity for them to meet another member of the team, or to see where they would work if successful in their application.

Depending on the role, a question-based interview may not be sufficient to effectively select the best candidate for the role. The best selection method will differ depending on the role, but might include:

- Psychometric testing
- In-tray assessments
- Stakeholder meetings
- Presentations
- Work-based scenarios
- Mock-lectures

Consider what questions and tasks will truly help you identify the best candidate and structure the interview accordingly. Keep it consistent for all candidates. If you have shortlisted too many candidates to interview them all fully, you may wish to have a short telephone screening interview to whittle the list down. Talk to your Recruitment Hub contact about the best way to do this.

5.5 Inform the Recruitment Hub about your interview process

Email the Recruitment Hub with details about your interview process by filling out the interview scheduling form you will be sent at the shortlisting stage. Also consider outlining which 4–6 desirable criteria from the advert you will be assessing as this helps to reduce anxiety and ensure you get a better quality of answers on the day.

The Recruitment Hub will then use this information to invite the shortlisted candidates to interview. They will provide the candidates with your email address for any questions or queries.

If you would like the interview invitations sent out faster than the standard Recruitment Hub turn-around time of 4 working days, then you may send out the invitations yourself using the 'invitation to interview' template, editing it accordingly, but please inform the Recruitment Hub that you are doing this yourself.

Shortlisted candidates invited for interview by Recruitment Hub

Recruitment Hub will provide interview schedule and Interview Assessment Forms

1 week

Interviews

- Plan your questions
- Ensure a level playing field for all candidates
- Consider the impression they will have of Imperial, whether successful or not
- Photocopy Right to Work documents

2 weeks

Hold interviews and select candidate

- Discuss the interviewees with your panel members
- Agree a first and second choice candidate
- You have the final say

5.6 Inform the Recruitment Hub on interview declines or no shows

If anyone contacts you directly to inform you that they will not be attending an interview, or they do not show up on the day, please inform the Recruitment Hub so that they can update their records. This avoids potential errors of communication later in the process as most candidates will reply directly to the Hub.

5.7 Conduct the interviews and collect appropriate documents from candidates

Based on the interview structure you have already developed, agree on the questions/tasks with your Interview Panel and prepare the Interview Assessment Forms in advance. Think about prompting or follow-up questions too. As far as possible, stick to the agreed questions agreed to make the interview process as equitable as possible to all candidates.

Panel members should complete an Interview Assessment Form for each candidate, being aware that these can be requested by anyone attending the interview and used as evidence in a tribunal. You should all write as much detail as you can to evidence the basis of your decision against each criterion. This is an important record of what was said at the interview and the decisions/judgements that were made. Send the forms to the Recruitment Hub after the interviews have taken place.

At the interview, take scanned copies of the candidates' Right to Work documents and use the guidance and checklist which can be found on the Right to Work checks page of the website. If this is done at interview stage (with administrative support if necessary) it avoids delays later. You may also wish to take scanned copies of Degree Certificates, if relevant, although this is generally only needed for specific academic roles.

5.8 Process any interview expenses on behalf of the candidates

As a policy, Imperial does not pay interview expenses. If, for a particular reason, you feel this is necessary, you will need to request receipts and then put the claim through your Department's expenses system. The cost code for this should be the most relevant hiring team/department/project.

5.9 Agree the preferred candidate

After the last interview, discuss the candidates and how they scored with the your panel members. You should aim to reach a decision together on your first and second choice candidates – as panel chair you have the final say. Remember that your decision needs to be justifiable and stand up to scrutiny.

Tips

Be thorough with the shortlisting and interview processes. Make sure all paperwork is returned to the Recruitment Hub promptly.

Be realistic about the time involved.

Use your panel members to help you structure the interview process – be creative and make sure it will help you select the best candidate

Establish at interview stage if there are likely to be issues with pre-employment checks

Checkboxes

- [ ] Applicants shortlisted, paperwork completed and returned to Recruitment Hub
- [ ] Interviews arranged
- [ ] Interviews completed, paperwork completed and returned to Recruitment Hub
- [ ] 1st and 2nd candidates agreed
- [ ] Recruitment Hub informed

Step 6: Hire the preferred candidate

6.1 Complete a 'Request to Hire' form

Once the preferred candidate is chosen, a 'Request to Hire' email should be sent to the Recruitment Hub with the job title and number in the header, and the following documents attached:

- Request to Hire Form: It is important that all relevant sections of this form are completed. If you are unsure of what to put in any of the sections, it is best to check with the Recruitment Hub to avoid delays later
- Right to Work Checklist, alongside photocopies of the Right to Work documentation collected at the interview stage
- Interview Assessment forms/notes for this candidate, if not already provided
- Under the standard process, the Recruitment Hub will then inform all unsuccessful candidates. If you would prefer to inform unsuccessful candidates yourself, state this clearly on the Request to Hire Form.

6.2 Liaise with the Recruitment Hub to agree the details of the offer

The Recruitment Hub will be able to provide guidance on what the offer should include. This is mainly the starting salary, guidance for which can be found on the Recruitment pages of Imperial website.

If anything else is being offered in addition (e.g. dedicated office space), consider whether it should be included in the formal offer, as this will become legally binding (generally, the formal offer should be limited to the salary). Include the expected working arrangements in line with the current Work Location Framework and make the successful candidate aware of Imperial's Total Renumeration Package.

6.3 Justify any salary above the minimum spine point

It is rare for the salary offered to be **above the minimum spine point for that job grade**. If this is the case you will need to email the Recruitment Hub with the job code, salary point you wish to offer, and your justification for the increase.

In very exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to **exceed the maximum spine point** for the level at which the job was advertised. Please email your local finance team, the Recruitment Hub, and your HR partners with the job role.

You must be very clear about what salary you are authorised to offer, which by default is the minimum spine point. It can only be a higher figure if this has been pre-agreed, although there is scope to have this discussion later.

6.4 Make the verbal offer

You will need to call the preferred candidate with a verbal offer of employment, and give them time to respond (minimum 48 hours, ideally one week). Ensure that you have read the information on starting salary and that you are clear on what you are authorised to offer.

Complete a 'Request to Hire' form and update TalentLink record

- Notify the Recruitment Hub of your chosen candidate, via a 'Request to Hire' form and accompanying documents
- This includes a completed Right To Work checklist, with evidence
- Ensure all Interview Assessment forms have been returned
- Update TalentLink

1-2 weeks

The Recruitment Hub authorise you to make a verbal offer, and inform the unsuccessful candidates

2 weeks

During this conversation, it is important to confirm:

- That the offer is subject to successful completion of satisfactory pre-employment checks
- The candidate's Right to Work in the UK
- The salary being offered – this should be at the minimum spine point of the job grade advertised. If the candidate asks for a higher starting salary, make it clear that you cannot agree to that over the phone as you will need to get approval from HR and finance
- Potential start-date
- Whether the candidate has any questions
- Next steps

The verbal offer is another opportunity to sell Imperial as a great place for the next step in their career. Key points you may want to emphasise are:

- generous pension schemes (if they opt in) and other benefits such as loans to help with transport, education or renting
- extra leave days for College closure around Easter and Christmas
- status as a world-leading university in a great capital city

Follow up this verbal conversation with an email to confirm what was discussed in writing. You will need to notify the Recruitment Hub who will send out a formal offer, conditional on pre-employment checks being satisfied.

6.5 The conditional offer

The conditional contract is issued by the Recruitment Hub, once you have notified them of the verbally accepted offer via email. This email should have the job title and number in the email header.

The Recruitment Hub will then enter all the information into TalentLink and, pending a quick financial sign off, they will then issue the conditional contract, conditional on any references and successful pre-employment checks being satisfied.

If your preferred candidate declines the offer, you need to inform the Recruitment Hub of this and any reasons they gave so that they can update their records. You will then need to repeat the relevant steps with your second-choice candidate.

Tips

Prepare before you make the call offering the post to your preferred candidate. Make sure you know what salary you are authorised to offer

Don't over promise

Give yourself time and a quiet space to make the call

Allow the Recruitment and HR teams, and your department manager to support you if negotiations are required

Checkboxes

- [ ] 'Request to Hire' form completed and submitted to the Recruitment Hub
- [ ] Approval to make the verbal offer
- [ ] Verbal offer accepted and Recruitment Hub notified
- [ ] If not accepted, negotiation regarding 1st choice candidate
- [ ] If not accepted, verbal offer made to 2nd choice candidate

Make a verbal offer

- Prepare carefully for the phone call
- Ensure you are clear on the salary you are authorised to offer
- If negotiation is required, seek advice and authority
- Give your candidate a minimum of 48 hours, ideally one week, to respond to the offer

1 week (+1-2 weeks if negotiation required)

Seek authority to negotiate if required

Approach second choice candidate if necessary

Confirm your verbal offer with the Recruitment Hub

- Email the Recruitment Hub with details of the conversation, and your candidate's response

The Recruitment Hub will send out a conditional contract, which is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks

2 weeks

Step 7: Onboarding

7.1 Pre-employment checks

The role may will require ATAS or DBS checks (if you are unsure, speak to the Recruitment Hub).

The main pre-employment check you will need to oversee is the Right to Work, guidance for which can be found on the Right to Work webpages, alongside a list of acceptable documentation. If they are a UK or Irish national, have pre-settled status, or hold indefinite leave to remain, you must complete the Right to Work Checklist and send it to the Recruitment Hub before any work can begin.

Failure to carry out a Right to Work check may result in a civil penalty and, whilst the HR and Recruitment departments support hiring managers in this role, it is the hiring manager who remains personally liable.

If the successful applicant requires a visa, the Recruitment Hub will notify the HR Compliance team who then take over the process and work directly with the candidate throughout the visa process.

Please remind your candidate that they need to keep the compliance team (hrcompliance@imperial.ac.uk) directly updated on the progress of their visa or their contract will not be updated. If you have any questions on a particular candidate's visa application, please contact the Compliance Team, not the Recruitment Hub.

7.2 Keep in contact with the new member of staff

It is important to keep in touch whilst the contract is going through, to provide updates and assurance. Provide relevant additional information and give your new member of staff opportunities to ask any remaining questions. If staff are relocating in order to join Imperial, refer them to the our Relocation Guidance web pages.

7.3 Start thinking about their induction

To get your new recruit off to a head start, plan ahead and start making notes about the most effective induction process. See more guidance on a successful onboarding and induction on the website including a helpful checklist.

Tips

Finalise any simple pre-employment checks as quickly as you can

Use HR to support you if pre-employment checks are more complex

Do keep in touch with your new recruit and offer them opportunities to engage with the team – but bear in mind they may have existing work commitments and be led by them

Checkboxes

- [ ] Pre-employment checks complete
- [ ] Start date agreed
- [ ] Confirmation of conditions met sent by the Recruitment Hub
- [ ] Offers made to meet the team, or just timely email contact to keep in touch

Chase up remaining pre-employment checks

- Your new starter cannot start work until there is evidence they have the right to work in the UK
- HR and the Recruitment Hub will assist
- Where visas are required, the Recruitment Hub will support you

2-10 weeks

Once pre-employment checks are all satisfied, the Recruitment Hub will issue a formal contract, create a new staff record, and agree a start date with you

1 week

Keep in touch

- Pre-employment checks may be delayed, or your candidate may have a three-month notice period
- Keep in touch to answer questions and reassure
- Start thinking about an effective induction programme

Contact us:

W: imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-and-promotions/recruitment

E: recruitmenthub@imperial.ac.uk