



Policy Owner: People & Culture

Direction: Our Civic Leadership

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

North Sydney Council (“Council”) has adopted a Recruitment and Selection Guideline to ensure that it is adequately and appropriately staffed to meet the needs of the community it serves and to comply with legislative requirements.

Council's objective is to select the person who best meets all requirements for the position.

All selections will be made on the basis of merit in compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity (“EEO”) principles and with regard to Anti-Discrimination legislation and the Local Government Act.

2. SCOPE

This guideline applies to all employees, all applicants and any persons involved in the recruitment and selection process for Council.

3. DEFINITIONS

Evolved Positions are those positions that:

- have, over a period of time, either increased or decreased the duties to be performed; and
- have an incumbent in place while the changes are taking place.

Late applications are those applications which are received after 11.30 pm on the closing date if no other “closing time” is indicated in the advertisement.

Lateral transfer is a move into a position which is approximately equal to the employee's current position. This will generally be at the same Band and Level.

Merit Selection means that in each case the person who has the greatest merit is selected for the position, having regard to all the requirements of the position, the abilities, qualifications, experience and standard of work performance that the person must have which are relevant to the position and also taking account of EEO principles and Anti-Discrimination legislation.

Senior Staff positions are those positions which are nominated by Council and as defined under the Local Government Act. When recruiting for senior staff positions refer to the Office of Local Government – *Guidelines on the recruitment of senior council executives*.

Staff Selection refers to any selection for employment with Council, including transfers and promotions.

Temporary positions:

- are of not more than 12 months; or
- are of two or more periods that together are not more than 12 months in any period of 2 years; or
- as defined in the “Term Contracts” clause of the Local Government (State) Award, as varied from time to time.

4. PROVISIONS

All selection will be in accordance with EEO principles, Anti-Discrimination Legislation and the Local Government Act.

All management and other relevant parties must demonstrate impartiality and confidentiality about all applicants/potential applicants for internal and external vacancies.

4.1. Advertising

With the exception of the following, all position vacancies must be advertised:

- the re-appointment, under a new contract, of a staff member whose contract has expired;
- an appointment to a permanent position vacancy by way of demotion;
- an appointment to a permanent position vacancy by way of lateral transfer;
- the appointment of an employee if the term of employment is for:
 - not more than 12 months; or
 - two or more periods that together are not more than 12 months in any period of 2 years;
 - the appointment to positions, as a result of restructuring/ reorganisation, of a similar or lower salary range/benefits;
 - evolved positions.

Vacancies that are to be advertised must be advertised in a manner sufficient to enable suitably qualified persons to apply for the position. Following consultation with the line Manager, People & Culture will determine the most suitable media platform for advertising.

Vacancies will be advertised internally via electronic communications on our intranet/staff notice boards. Supervisors must print and display positions vacant in an appropriate manner (e.g. noticeboards, communications book) for those areas where employees have limited access to internal email.

4.2. Applications

Applications must be received by 11.30pm on the closing date unless another closing time has been stipulated in the advertisement.

Late applications may be considered if the selection panel has not commenced shortlisting. Any late applications after shortlisting may be considered if the position has not been filled after interviews have been conducted.

Where a vacancy is advertised internally only, only those currently employed with Council on a permanent, temporary or casual basis may apply.

Unsolicited applications will not be placed “on hold” pending future vacancies.

4.3. The Selection Panel

The Selection Panel should be balanced and impartial and consist generally of no more than three (3) , minimum two (2) members and is formed by the Convenor who is usually the hiring manager and who has undergone appropriate training in Interview and Selection skills and EEO.

Where the vacancy requires specialised knowledge and/or technical expertise, the selection panel must consist of someone who can effectively -assess the specialised knowledge and/or technical expertise.

Generally, peer level employees should not participate as members of the selection panel, unless they have specific professional knowledge or technical expertise which cannot be provided by other members of the panel, or where they are being coached or developed for a more senior position.

Permanent positions	The Manager or Supervisor of the position, plus preferably two other delegates who can provide a balanced and impartial contribution to the panel.
Temporary positions (when a selection process is used)	The Manager of the position, plus one other delegate.
Casual positions	To be decided by the relevant Manager or Supervisor

Where a member of the selection panel has any knowledge of, or relationship with, an applicant outside of Council, then that panel member must disclose such information to People & Culture and the interview panel as soon as possible. (Please refer to Council’s Code of Conduct regarding conflicts of interest).

The relationship must be stated and signed as part of the recruitment file. If it is not possible to exclude the panel member from the selection process (i.e.in the case of the

manager to whom the position reports), then when the strengths and weaknesses of the applicant are being discussed that panel member should withhold comment until the other members have commented and ensure that no undue influence is exerted on the other members of the selection panel.

Ideally the selection panel members will remain the same for the entire recruitment process, however, where a member of the selection panel is unable to attend the interviews then, where possible, another person may be substituted on the panel to ensure that the interviews are conducted according to EEO principles. This person may contribute to the summary of the applicants that they have interviewed but the final decision rests with those members of the selection panel who have been present throughout the entire process.

4.4. Shortlisting applications

Applications will be objectively shortlisted on merit according to the needs of the position and organisation.

The shortlisting process can be undertaken by one member as delegated by the Panel Convenor, with outcomes subject to review by the full Selection Panel.

Council does not need to interview every applicant who satisfies the selection criteria. Clear justification for the reason/s for exclusion from interview are required to be noted in the shortlisting process and must relate to merit.

If an internal applicant is not shortlisted for interview, the panel convenor is to advise the employee in person or by email of the decision.

4.5. Interviews

Interviews will be conducted by the Selection Panel, or those who were involved in the shortlisting.

Interview questions must be the same for all applicants however, additional questions may be asked to check answers and background of candidates, e.g. for probing purposes and/or clarity.

Interview questions must relate to the criteria for the position and comply with EEO principles.

Questions on EEO principles, staff management, work health and safety, child safe and ethical conduct must be included in all interviews for management and supervisory positions. Financial Management shall also be included for positions with budgetary responsibilities.

Interview questions must be finalised with People & Culture.

Interviews must be scheduled to allow equal time for each applicant. If an applicant arrives late for the interview the panel may decide, depending upon circumstances, to do one of the following:

- conduct the interview using the time remaining from that which had already been allocated to the applicant;
- decline to conduct the interview if only minimal time remains from that which had already been allocated to the applicant and not reschedule the interview;
- reschedule the interview to another mutually convenient time without unduly delaying the interview process.

Applicants for casual and temporary positions must be interviewed. Interview notes must be uploaded with the interview summary and appointment recommendation via the online recruitment portal.

4.6. Employment Screening

Employment screenings are checks that may be undertaken by Council in assessing the preferred applicant's suitability for a particular position. They may be applied to external preferred applicants and existing staff who may be applying for other roles within Council.

Assessments may include, but not limited to:

- Reference Checks
- Pre-employment medical assessment
- Criminal history check
- Skills Test
- Right to work in Australia check
- Working with children check

Council implements employment screenings to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes do not result in the engagement of an applicant who:

- Has a criminal history that would prejudice safe and proper Council operations
- Does not have a right to work in Australia
- Does not have the qualifications, skills and/or experience they have claimed to have, and which are required for the role
- Has pre-existing injuries or medical conditions that may impact on the applicant's ability to meet the inherent requirement of the position
- May pose a risk to Council's commitment to maintaining a safe and efficient working environment for workers, public including children & young people.

Refer to the *Employment Screening Procedures*

4.7. Appointment

This section applies to all vacancies: permanent, temporary, contract and/or casual.

When the decision is being made to appoint a person to a position, only a person who has applied for the vacancy may be selected.

When the decision is being made to appoint a person to a position, the applicant who has the greatest merit against the selection criteria is to be selected. This includes taking into account other information gathered from any actions involved in the recruitment process, including performance at interview, reference checks, background checks, skills tests, pre-placement health assessments.

If, after shortlisting, conducting interviews and/or other checks, no applicant is deemed by the selection panel to be suitable for appointment, then one of the following may occur:

- the position may remain unfilled;
- the position may be re-advertised;
- late applicants may be considered for interview;
- it may be decided to return to the short listing to identify other suitable candidates.

In accordance with S354 of the Local Government Act 1993, a person who has held civic office in relation to a council must not be appointed to any paid position on the staff of the council within six months after ceasing to hold office. Any such appointment is void.

4.8. Temporary appointment

If a position, including a Senior Staff position, is vacant or the holder of a position is suspended from duty, sick or absent, the General Manager (or delegate) may appoint a person to the position temporarily.

A person who is appointed to a temporary position, may only occupy the position for twelve months before the position must be advertised.

At the Director's discretion, a temporary vacancy may be filled by one of the following methods:

- Assigning "higher duties" to an employee;
- Appointing an employee directly (without advertising), or rotating the higher duties between different employees;
- Calling for expressions of interest to undertake the work;
- Advertising the vacancy - either internally or externally;
- Dividing the work between different employees.

4.9. Feedback to applicants

The panel convenor is to advise internal applicants in person or by email of the decision as to why they were unsuccessful in being appointed to the position.

All inquiries from external applicants regarding their application/ performance at interview must be referred to the selection panel convenor, or People & Culture who will determine appropriate feedback.

It is an expectation that the Hiring Manager or a member of the panel provides feedback to internal interviewees either in person or via email.

4.10. Job offers

Verbal job offers must be followed by a Letter of Offer/Appointment signed by one of the following:

- Manager People & Culture or;
- People & Culture employees, as delegated.

Permanent, temporary and contract positions

Verbal job offers will be made by one of the following after all clearances (including, but not limited to, pre-placement health assessment, reference checks, Child Protection checks and/or other background checks) have been received:

- General Manager;
- People & Culture employee, as delegated.

People & Culture may delegate this action to the Director/Manager of the vacant position.

It must be noted within offers of employment that if there is a change of status in regard to a background /clearance check; then Council must be immediately notified.

Casual positions

Verbal job offers may be made by the Manager of the advertised position after all clearances (including, but not limited to Pre-placement health assessment, Reference checks, Child Protection checks and/or other background checks) have been received.

Probation

An assessment of the employees' performance will be conducted by the supervisor/manager at the three- month or six-month point of engagement. At the successful completion of the identified probation period, the Supervisor/Manager will verbally advise the employee of their status.

Transferring Long Service Leave from another Council to NSC

The Local Government (State) Award, as varied from time to time, caps the amount of accrued long service leave that an employee is entitled to transfer from one council to another to a maximum of 6.5 weeks of accrual. The 6.5-week cap can be increased by agreement between the former employer and NSC.

5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

Selection Panel Members are responsible for complying with Council's Guideline and procedures for staff recruitment and selection.

People & Culture is responsible for:

- offering support and advice to members of selection panels on Council's Recruitment and Selection Guideline and Procedures and may participate on selection panels as deemed necessary;
- organising training on Recruitment and Selection techniques, EEO and the relevant policies and procedures and/or determining competence in these areas of a potential Selection Panel member.
- making the job offer, including writing the Letter of Appointment and arranging the date of commencement for permanent, temporary and term contract positions.
- writing the Letter of Offer/Appointment for casual positions.

Managers are responsible for:

- making the Job Offer and arranging the date of commencement for casual appointments;
- conducting the reference check/s;
- ensuring applicants are referred to People & Culture to conduct a pre-placement health assessment or completion of the Pre-placement Health Assessment Questionnaire;
- providing the required documentation to the People & Culture to enable them to write the letter of offer/appointment.

6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION

- Code of Conduct
- EEO, Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

- Employment Screening Procedure
- Child Protection Employment Screening Procedure
- Workplace Adjustments Policy
- OLG - Guidelines on the recruitment of senior council executives

7. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Author / Approved by	Reason for Change / Adopted.	Review Date
1	27/2/2002	Council	New Document / MANEX	
2	4/9/2017	Manager Human Resources	Document Review / MANEX	
3	1/10/2020	Manager Human Resources	Review – minor changes	Every 2 years, or as required
3.1	7/10/2020	MANEX	Added in Employment Screening Clause	
4	23/9/2023	Manager People & Culture	Reviewed – minor changes; alignment to current practices	