

Recruitment Procedure

This policy applies when CAAT is recruiting paid staff (permanent or temporary).

Note: CAAT's permanent staff are full members of the CAAT Steering Committee, but for the purposes of this document references to the Steering Committee should be read as meaning non-staff Steering Committee members.

When the decision to recruit is made, a member of staff will be nominated as Appointment Administrator (this will normally be the Office Manager). It is their responsibility to ensure that the policy is followed at each and every stage.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND FREEDOM FROM BIAS

All members of any recruitment panel are expected to keep information about applicants and those interviewed confidential. No volunteer or current staff member should be put off from applying for a post for fear that it would become common knowledge if the application was not successful.

The recruitment panel must follow the equal opportunities guidelines and not show favouritism, bias or negativity towards anyone applying for the position. Favouritism, bias or negativity towards a candidate is unacceptable and will be dealt with through CAAT's disciplinary procedure. Where a candidate is known to a member of the panel, this needs to be declared. CAAT staff or Steering Committee members must not sit on the recruitment panel if a family member or spouse/partner applies for a post.

The recruitment panel, CAAT staff and Steering Committee members should not discuss any internal recruitment decisions with anyone who is applying for the position before the selection process is complete. However, it is fine for someone from CAAT to give a potential candidate information about the post and guidance on the procedure if asked for.

THE PROCEDURE

Stage 1 - Staffing review of the position

Staff should first conduct a brief review to determine that the post proposed for recruitment is necessary and relevant to CAAT's work.

Stage 2 - Recruitment panel

Once a decision has been made to recruit, a recruitment panel of three needs to be selected. This should include both Steering Committee and staff, and if considered appropriate by Steering Committee, other relevant or expert assistance. The sex, ethnicity and age balance of the panel should be considered.

In exceptional circumstances, the shortlisting team can differ from the interview panel (for example, a member of Steering Committee selected for the interview panel may have work or commitments that impair the amount of time they have free to both shortlist and interview), but each must have at least three members and include at least one member of Steering Committee and one member of staff.

All members of the recruitment panel must receive a copy of the recruitment policy prior to the start of the process. Where members of the recruitment panel have not previously been involved in a recruitment process under this policy, a briefing session should take place before the process begins so that all members are fully aware of the process and their responsibilities.

The aim of the recruitment panel is to appoint the best person for the job for CAAT and who fits with the organisation's guiding principles. The recruitment panel should schedule a shortlisting session and interview day(s) as soon as possible.

Stage 3 – Job description and Person specification

The panel will first write or revise the role's job description and person specification, which will be brought to workplan for approval. It is important that time and effort is put in to ensuring that the job description fully reflects the requirements of the post. If it does not, difficulties are likely to occur at later stages. Consideration should also be given at this point as to whether a job share is possible for the post and how many 'working from home' days a week, if any, would be acceptable.

If the role is permanent, the job description should include the following points:

Organisational Role:

With other staff, the post-holder will also:

- Share responsibility for campaign planning and organisational strategy;
- Share responsibility for collective policies, systems and skills-shares, where appropriate;
- Be responsible for supervising volunteers or people on paid placements undertaking relevant areas of work;
- Contribute to CAAT News (CAAT's quarterly magazine), the CAAT website and other external communications where necessary;
- Share the day-to-day running and administration of the CAAT office, which could include assisting with staff cover during holidays and other absences;
- Review and support other staff, including participating in regular staff review meetings, as part of the collective management of CAAT.

The person specification for the post should be drawn up by the recruitment panel once the job description has been agreed and should include amongst its list of criteria:

- a commitment to CAAT's aims and objectives,
 - an understanding of and demonstrable commitment to equal opportunities, and
 - a commitment to the collective running of CAAT,
- as essential requirements.

A post should have no more than 10 essential criteria and 12 overall, including desirable criteria. This is because it has been shown that individuals from under-represented groups are less likely to apply for a post with a long list of criteria on the job spec.

All criteria included in a person specification must be able to be tested or assessed. Any weighting and an indicative scoring guide for the person spec criteria should be decided at this point and should be used for both shortlisting and interviewing. A minimum and maximum score for specific 'essential' elements may also be set. The panel may decide to give a higher maximum score to certain item(s) on the person spec where a candidate showing well over the expected level of skill or experience would be particularly beneficial to this role.

Stage 4 – Advertising

The panel will then decide how to recruit this post and when the interview dates will be. If the role requires a specialist skill (e.g. IT or fundraising) using a recruitment agency(ies) in the first instance is most advisable. They usually charge a 'no win no fee' of a percentage of salary. If it is a more general skilled role (e.g. campaigning or research) using online recruitment sites is usually best. In all instances CAAT should advertise in its usual networking circles and social media sites.

Once a budget has been agreed the Appointment Administrator should put together the recruitment pages on CAAT's website and advertise the role as agreed. The recruitment webpages should include:

- information about the role, including salary, pension, flexible working and annual leave
- an application pack to download that includes; job details, job description, person spec, CAAT structure and working hours.
- an equal opportunities form to download
- an application form to download, or details regarding submitting a CV and supporting statement
- information about how to apply, including deadline and interview dates where possible
- CAAT's positive action in recruitment statement
- any other relevant information, such as:
 - * about CAAT
 - * an introduction to the arms trade
 - * latest CAAT News
 - * CAAT's equal opportunities policy
 - * other staff posts at CAAT

Stage 5 - Application form

An application form is a preferable method for a candidate to apply for a post because it is considered fairer and easier to anonymise and score. However, if considered more appropriate the panel may decide to ask for a CV and supporting statement instead. If an application method is decided it must meet the following criteria:

- All personal details must be contained on the front page, which is later removed before shortlisting.

- The first page should also ask 'if you are shortlisted for interview, would you have any specific requirement relating to a disability?'
- All other details, including education, training, employment history, why you're applying for the post and how you meet each criteria on the person spec should sit in the body of the application form.

The section asking the candidate how they meet each criteria on the person spec should allow up to 200 words per criteria. It should be mentioned on the recruitment webpage and application form that CAAT shortlists candidates by scoring applications against the person specification. The webpage should also mention that CVs will not be considered, if this has been decided by the panel.

If the panel suspects that the quality or quantity of applications received are likely to be low by asking candidates to complete an application form then the advert should ask candidates to submit their CV and a supporting statement instead.

Stage 6 - Timetable

- There should be one month between the advertisements being placed and the deadline for applications.
- Shortlisting should take place up to one week after the application deadline, leaving enough time for the panel to read and score all the applications.
- Candidates should be given at least five working days notice of their interview date. If possible, when deciding on interview times, allow those travelling the furthest the first choice of interview times.

Stage 7 – Application forms returned and forwarded

Applicants should be asked to email their completed application form (or CV and supporting statement) and equal opportunities form, to the Appointment Administrator stating the job title in the subject line. If candidates include extra information, other than that which is asked for, this must not be passed on to the panel and used in the shortlisting process.

The Appointment Administrator will number and save the applications and the equal opportunities forms in separate folders. They will then remove the first page of each application form and forward to the panel. In the case of CVs and supporting statements, these will be anonymised where possible.

Stage 8 - Tasks

If it is considered that a task is necessary, this should be decided before the shortlisting process starts. Relevant details about the task should be included when inviting the candidate to interview.

Stage 9 – Scoring applications

In exceptional circumstances, one staff member and one Steering Committee member of the panel may make an initial assessment of applications to narrow down the field if there are an exceptionally large number of them. Ideally, each application should be read and by at least two members of the panel.

If practical, each member of the panel should score each application form in their own time against the person specification weighting as previously agreed. The 'essential' areas of the person specification should be scored first. If all of these areas are not met to a satisfactory degree, the application can be discounted. The 'desirable' areas of the person specification can then be scored.

The panel should then meet to decide which candidates they'd like to shortlist for interview.

Stage 10 - Shortlisting

At the shortlisting meeting the panel should first agree which applications meet all the essential criteria. Then each of these applications should be given a score taking into account the weighting of the criteria previously agreed. Those applications that group within a close band of overall score are considered equally qualified and the panel can then use positive action.

Positive Action

CAAT values diversity and is currently looking to recruit individuals from under-represented groups, in particular People of Colour. When scoring shows that a group of candidates are as qualified to do the role as each other then the selection is narrowed down by using positive action. This involves giving the application numbers of this group of candidates to the Appointment Administrator, who will let the panel know which of these candidates identify as a person of colour. (This information is gathered from the submitted equal opportunities forms). The panel will then try to offer an interview to all candidates who identify as a person of colour from this group of candidates who were considered equally qualified.

The panel should now agree the interview questions.

Stage 11 - Inviting candidates to be interviewed

All shortlisted candidates are invited to interview with at least five working days notice. The number of candidates interviewed can differ due to the quantity of strong applications, although the panel should try to interview at least five and no more than six in one day.

The candidates can be contacted by telephone or email, but information must include details of the time and address of the interview, any task, information about those sitting on the interview panel, question whether they have any special requirements relating to a disability and confirm that travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Stage 12 - The Interview (questions and usually a task)

The task and questions set will reflect the job description and person specification, and what criteria each question and the task is testing should be agreed before the first interview. How each question is structured is very important. They should be worded so that information needed to validate whether the candidates meet the criteria can be drawn out. Each criteria on the person specification must be addressed during the task and/or interview. Questions should address a combination of the candidates skills, attitude and knowledge. The process must not favour people with internal knowledge of CAAT, or discriminate for or against candidates who are already known to the recruitment panel.

The purpose of a task is to determine whether the candidate can do the job or not and is usually carried out before the interview and coordinated by the Appointment Administrator. It should be clear which item(s) on the person spec the task is testing and should compliment the interview scoring. When the task is completed a copy of it, if that is possible, should be given to the panel while the candidate is reviewing the interview questions. All candidates will be given a list of the interview questions 10 minutes before their interview, unless the post requires the candidate to be able to react to on-the-spot questioning as part of the role. At the start of the interview it is considered helpful if the candidate is asked some guiding questions about the task.

All interviews will be conducted with the following principles:

- All candidates should be given the same task.
- Each candidate should be asked the same questions, though supplementary questions may be necessary if:
 - a) an area on the written application form needs further clarification (for example work experience or a qualification that is unique to their application). Any such additional questions should be agreed by the panel in advance of the interview.
 - b) a candidate has interpreted the question differently to how the panel intended, but in their answer gave an indication that they would have evidence for what CAAT was looking for if the panel asked for more detail.
 - c) an area of the panel's question has not been answered. In this case more detail on that area of the question can be asked for.

Supplementary questions must not introduce additional criteria or subject matter to the interview, nor include personal convictions. At no point should the panel 'guide' the candidate or ask questions that could place the candidate in a preferential position over others. Each candidate must be given as equal and valuable an interview as the rest of the candidates. Each candidate must be allowed to ask their own questions at the end of the interview.

Before ending the interview the panel should give each candidate an estimated time as to when they should hear a decision. This should be at least a week in case the panel's first choice decides not to take the job after giving it a few days consideration and the job needs to be offered to the panel's second choice.

Each interviewer should write comments and mark each candidate against the answers they give in interview and any task that is set, using the person specification weighting previously agreed by the panel. If two candidates score very closely on a particular person specification criteria during the interview process then their initial application should be considered to help ascertain which candidate is more suitable.

If major concerns are raised on either the application form, task or interview then the panel can decide not to recruit based on this concern, regardless of all other scoring. If minor concerns are raised during interview then the candidates application form or task can be used as evidence to overcome this concern so they are not inappropriately disadvantaged.

Stage 13 - Making a decision

If more than one candidate comes out of the interview process with a similar top weighting then they are considered equally qualified to do the job and the panel can use positive action to make their final decision.

If the interview panel is unable to make a final decision, they may decide to re-interview the relevant candidates. If the interview panel feels it is likely that they may again fail to make a clear decision, it should instigate a new interview panel. In this instance, none of the original interview panel should be on the new panel. If no candidate meets essential elements of the person specification, the recruitment panel may decide to re-advertise the post.

Once the interview panel has agreed to offer the post to a candidate, it should also decide whether it could offer the post to another candidate in case the first choice does not accept the post or does not meet the reference or UK work eligibility requirements. Unsuccessful candidates should be given the opportunity to request feedback should they want it.

Stage 14 - Appointment

Once there is agreement by the interview panel on the appointment, the post should be offered to the successful candidate subject to satisfactory references and proof of eligibility to work in the UK. The Office Manager will collect references and make sure the successful candidate has signed a contract prior to starting work for CAAT.

Stage 15 - Documentation

Application forms, together with scoring sheets will be kept for one year after the end of the interview process in the office safe.