



**uniting
church**
in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Talent Selection Policy

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1. Overview/Background

People are at the heart of what we do and finding the right people to work for us is really important.

We want skilled and motivated people so that we can do the best work for the communities we serve. The best people doesn't necessarily mean those with the highest academic qualifications; it means hiring those people with the right combination of skills and qualifications for the job as well as alignment with our values.

This policy sets out the basis on which we describe and approve roles, and also outlines the process for finding the best people for the job.

We recognise the power that a diverse workforce can bring and our talent selection practices are aligned with our principles of inclusion, diversity and equity.

To ensure the best pool of candidates, sometimes we will advertise roles internally, while at other times, we'll look externally, or we may do a combination of both.

2. Purpose of Policy

This policy has been developed to provide guidance and assistance to all Managers and Directors who are involved in the recruitment and selection of employees at the Synod of NSW and the ACT ('Synod').

3. Applicability (scope)

The Synod's Talent Selection Policy applies to all employees and prospective employees of the Synod including temporary and casual staff and contractors.

All vacancies will be advertised and candidates will be competitively sourced, unless a specific exemption is granted.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Hiring manager is responsible for:

- ▶ Fully assessing the need for the role and analysing the requirements of the role. This should be done even when recruiting for a previously occupied role as needs can change.
- ▶ Where a role is either unbudgeted or a newly created role, developing a business case for the role outlining the key success outcomes of the role.
- ▶ Completing the recruitment approval request form and submitting it to People and Culture.
- ▶ Working with the People and Culture team to:
 - ▶ Either revise an existing job description or draft a new one;
 - ▶ Determine the best advertising sources (including consideration of internal advertising);
 - ▶ Develop an appropriate job ad;
 - ▶ Shortlist candidates and select for interview, seeking a diverse panel of candidates where possible; and
 - ▶ Participate in selection interviews and objectively assess each candidate;
 - ▶ Onboard and train new employees.
- ▶ To ensure objectivity (and the perception of objectivity), proactively declaring to People

and Culture any current or prior relationships with candidates or potential candidates and standing down from the selection process for the relevant role.

4.2 People and Culture are responsible for:

- ▶ Understanding the requirements of the role and working with the Hiring Manager in the development of the role description, and the benchmarking of the role.
- ▶ Checking that the role is budgeted for or, if not, that a robust business case in support of the role can be made.
- ▶ Working with the Hiring Manager to determine the best sourcing strategies, including consideration of internal advertising.
- ▶ Working with the Hiring Manager to develop an appropriate job ad.
- ▶ Advertising the role and monitoring and shortlisting candidates having regard to pre-identified role criteria.
- ▶ Developing talent selection practices including the establishment of any interview panels and inclusion of any job-related or psychometric testing.
- ▶ Communicating with all candidates in a timely way and in a manner that reflects the Synod's values.
- ▶ Liaising with the Hiring Manager in the selection of the candidate.
- ▶ Making a verbal offer to the candidate, outlining key terms and conditions of employment.
- ▶ Preparing, having approved, and sending a letter of offer to the candidate.
- ▶ Notifying IT of the potential need for new equipment.
- ▶ Once candidate acceptance has been received, confirming with the hiring manager.

5. Principles

5.1 Approval to recruit

Approval to recruit for the role must be obtained prior to commencing either internal or external advertising. This will involve fleshing out the role requirements to understand whether there is a genuine requirement to fill the vacancy and, if so, to inform the development of the job description.

5.2 Inherent requirements of the role

In developing the job description, People and Culture will work with the hiring manager to determine and articulate the inherent (essential) requirements of the role and to determine:

- ▶ Qualifications or certifications required.
- ▶ Employment screening checks (e.g. criminal records, working with children etc).
- ▶ Licencing or registration requirements (where absolutely necessary to deliver role outcomes).
- ▶ Right to work in Australia (unless the role is eligible for visa sponsorship and the Synod is willing to do this).

Inherent requirements are not a restatement of the skills or experience needed nor should they be written to suit an already identified preferred candidate.

5.3 Advertising vacancies

Our workforce is dynamic and we understand that a role vacancy can place added pressure to the team(s) affected. While speed of recruitment is important, we will never compromise quality for speed – that is we will take the time necessary to find, select and hire the right candidate(s) for our roles. To this end, and to help reach a diverse pool of candidates, as a general rule all roles will be advertised externally and, at the Synod's discretion, internally.

5.4 Advertising forums

The Synod is committed to attracting a diverse pool of candidates and, to this end, the People and Culture team will work with the hiring manager to determine the most appropriate job boards, social media, professional networking sites, industry or community journals or bulletins, etc.

5.5 Use of Recruitment Agencies

The Synod may elect to engage Recruitment or Search Agencies to support our recruiting efforts. This will depend on a variety of factors including the seniority of the role, the urgency to fill the vacancy and the cost associated with seeking external support.

5.6 Internal applicants

Generally speaking, existing employees must have been in their existing role for a period of 12 months or more, however, the People and Culture team reserve the right to waive this. The 12 month rule does not apply to those employed on a casual or fixed-term basis. As contractors are usually engaged for a specific job or project, they may be required to complete that job or project before being deemed eligible to apply for vacancies within the Synod.

Existing employees, volunteers or contractors who are interested in a vacancy are able to initiate a confidential discussion with either People and Culture or the hiring manager to learn more about the role before making a decision as to whether to apply.

Where an internal candidate decides to apply for a role:

- ▶ They are required to speak with their existing manager before proceeding to interview.
- ▶ To ensure a level playing field, they will be subject to the same selection process as external candidates.

If not selected, internal candidates:

- ▶ Will be given feedback as to why with the intention of informing their career development plan.
- ▶ Will not be disadvantaged by their decision to apply.

6. Candidate Selection

6.1 Interview panel

Except in the case of interviews for a short-term or temporary assignment, an interview panel will be established with a minimum of two members ideally of different gender, backgrounds or perspectives.

Interview panel members must ensure there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest between their personal interests and their responsibilities as a panel member. Interview panelists should also decline to interview friends or acquaintances where pre-conceived notions may have been formed subconsciously or consciously.

Interviews will be structured and use a combination of behavioural and technical questions related to the inherent requirements of the role, and the competencies required for successful fulfilment of the role responsibilities. Depending on the seniority and nature of the role, interview questions may also focus on 'how to' questions as well as a candidate's vision for success in the role.

Interview panel members must only ask questions directly related to the role and avoid asking any questions which are inappropriate or which could imply or amount to discrimination. For example, questions about age, carer status, marital status, sexual orientation etc are not relevant to whether a person can fulfil job requirements.

6.2 Number of interviews

Because our recruitment and selection processes need to be tailored to the role, there is no set number of interviews. Instead, this will be determined as part of the recruitment strategy for each role.

6.3 Assessing candidates

After interview, each panel member will assess candidates against the role criteria and either a decision will be made as to the best candidate for the role or, in some cases, the panel may decide to embark on a wider search.

Selection assessments will be based after a consideration of all relevant information and criteria.

6.4 Reference checks and Background checks

The Synod will only conduct reference and background checks on candidates that we are seriously considering for the role.

Reference checks must be completed before an offer of employment is made. Reference checks will be conducted by People & Culture or the Recruiter.

Background checks (including police checks) can sometimes take a little longer to complete. A conditional offer of employment may be made pending the results of these checks. However, the candidate is not to commence employment with the Synod until all background check results have been received.

Before making any conditional offers, hiring managers are asked to seek the advice of the People and Culture team.

7. Communicating with candidates

All candidates deserve the courtesy of a polite and timely response. Candidates not selected for interview will be provided with a response thanking them for their application and letting them know they've not been shortlisted for interview.

Candidates interviewed and not selected deserve the courtesy of a telephone call followed by a written response.

8. Related documents

- ▶ Background check policy
- ▶ Code of Conduct and associated policies
- ▶ Probation period policy
- ▶ Reference check form

Federal, state and territory anti-discrimination laws apply to all recruiting practices. Anyone involved in any recruitment process who is unsure about what is and isn't appropriate are asked to seek guidance from the People and Culture team.

9. Terms and Conditions

This Policy does not form part of any contract of employment or contract of engagement and may be amended, replaced or revoked at any time by the Synod at its discretion