**Aylmer Lodge Cookley partnership**

**Recruitment Policy and Procedure**

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# Introduction

## Policy statement

The purpose of this document is to set out Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership’s position and procedures on recruitment and selection. It will ensure clear processes are in place to enable Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership to recruit and retain skilled people.

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership is committed to:

* Promoting Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership as a good place to work
* Ensuring that the recruitment procedure promotes a positive image of Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership
* Recruiting skilled people to enable Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership to achieve its aims in delivering services to patients and the public
* Promoting objective, fair recruitment practices throughout Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership
* Ensuring that selection decisions are based on objective criteria

## Status

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not form part of your contract of employment.

## Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on employers to consider any reasonable adjustments, as far as practical, to ensure that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged during the recruitment process and are treated fairly when considering working arrangements and the working environment.

# Scope

## Who it applies to

This document applies to all employees of Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership as well as partners and other individuals performing functions in relation to Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership, such as agency workers, locums/contractors, and others who may be involved in the recruitment and selection process.

## Why and how it applies to them

Everyone who works for Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership is an ambassador for Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership and may be involved, in some way, with the recruitment and selection process, even if that means speaking to applicants on the phone, welcoming them when they arrive for interview or just passing them in the corridor.

For those more closely involved in the process, it is important that they understand the advertising protocols and recruitment procedures. This document is to be used as both a reference tool and organisation manual for those involved in the recruitment and selection process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership’s;

* Equality and Diversity Policy
* Staff Immunisation Policy
* Employment of Ex-offenders Policy

# Processes for the recruitment and selection of staff

## Identifying a vacancy

It is usual for a vacancy to occur when an existing employee leaves a job or when a new job is created.

When a vacancy is identified it is essential to ask:

* Does the vacancy need to be filled?
* Has the job changed or is it otherwise necessary to update the job description to meet any future objectives?

Once a vacancy has been identified, authority to recruit will be confirmed by the Practice Manager.

## Job description and person specification

Once agreement to recruit has been authorised, it is essential to review the existing job description and person specification to make sure they are up to date.

A job description is an important part of the recruitment and selection process. It describes the main tasks and responsibilities of the job and will include the job title, role summary and main duties of the role. It ensures that managers are clear about the job content and applicants understand the duties and content of the role.

A person specification provides details of the essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience, personal qualities and knowledge required to fulfil the duties identified in the job description. It is a key part of the recruitment process and is used to compile the job advertisement, assist with short-listing and the interview questions. Both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification will be used to filter candidates at the short-listing stage.

When a vacancy is advertised, the application pack will include an up-to-date job description and person specification. These can be found within the respective [Interview Pack](https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp/forum/resources/categories/job-descriptions.69/) that relates to that role.

## Advertising

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership may utilise a variety of advertising methods and media to fill vacancies. All advertisements will be expressed in clear non-discriminatory language and be legally compliant.

The advertisement will give a brief summary of the job and should include its location, salary and essential qualifications and experience to encourage suitable applicants and allow unsuitable applicants to self-select out of the process.

As a minimum, all permanent vacancies will be advertised internally within Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership but may be advertised externally at the same time.

## Closing dates

All vacancies advertised in an external publication should run for a period of at least two weeks.

It is recognised that some jobs at Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership will attract a vast number of applicants. For those jobs, a disclaimer may be included on the advertisement and/or in the application pack which states:

*“Please note that should this vacancy attract sufficient interest it may be necessary to close the vacancy at an earlier date. We therefore suggest that you apply at an early stage to avoid disappointment.”*

## Applications

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership only accepts applications via CV and covering letter.

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership gathers and processes the personal data of job applicants as part of the recruitment process. The Privacy Notice is made available to all job applicants and sets out how their data is gathered and used.

## Short-listing

The purpose of the short-listing process is to identify applicants who meet the essential criteria for the job based on relevant information provided in their application.

When short-listing, a matrix may be used which contains the essential and desirable criteria that is assessed by means of the application form. The short-listing matrix will include objective, written reasons as to why unsuccessful applicants were not short-listed.

[Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership has signed up as a disability confident committed employer and adopts the values that this scheme incorporates. Disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria and select on their application form that they wish to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme will be invited to interview.]

Unless advised otherwise within the original advertisement, applicants who are unsuccessful after short-listing will receive written confirmation of this. Brief feedback on short-listing scores may be provided to individual candidates on request.

## Interviewing

Short-listed applicants will be invited to interview. The invitation will ask applicants to inform Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership if any adjustments should be made to support them in attending and/or participating in the interview.

The invitation will also remind the applicant of the documentation that they will be required to present at interview (see employment checks below).

The interview will normally be carried out by a minimum of two people and, whenever possible, one of the interview panel members should be the line manager for the vacant role.

The interview panel will appoint a chair or lead person who will be responsible for making a final decision when the panel is unable to make a unanimous decision. The panel should meet prior to the interview and plan the sequence of the interview questions and the structure of the interview.

All applicants will be assessed against the same criteria and standard questions will be asked to establish how well (or not) the applicants meet the criteria. Follow up questions and more in-depth discussion may be required to enable the interviewers to make a fair assessment. The need for such follow ups and discussion may vary between applicants. Questions may also serve to substantiate details from the application form and explore any gaps and anomalies.

Discriminatory questions, e.g., questions in relation to childcare arrangements, future plans for a family and trade union duties, will not be asked.

Pregnancy and/or disability are not reasons to reject a suitable applicant. Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership has a duty to make any reasonable adjustments that would enable a disabled applicant to take up a post. Rejecting a candidate based on information or perceptions regarding their age, race, religion or protected belief, gender, marital status or sexuality would likewise be unlawful unless a genuine occupational requirement for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 has been previously established and communicated.

The person chairing the interview will ensure that any essential information on the application form is checked with applicants. Checks will also be made to ensure that applicants have the professional or vocational qualifications that are essential for the role. This is best done at the end of the interview.

All applicants should be informed at the end of the interview when a decision is likely to be made and how this will be communicated to them.

Only once all short-listed applicants have been interviewed can a decision to appoint be made. A structured scoring system will be used to select the most suitable applicant. Each applicant should be scored against each selection criteria to which questions were asked during the interview. Each applicant should be scored against the same criteria.

Notes should be written up immediately after each interview. Subjective opinions or feelings about applicants will not form part of the decision-making process.

Following the interviews, unsuccessful applicants will be notified as soon as possible. Applicants will be offered the opportunity for feedback. Any feedback will be objective and handled sensitively.

## Other selection methods

Any test undertaken by an applicant (before or after short-listing) will be relevant to the person specification requirements and free of bias and will be used in conjunction with an interview.

Tests should only be used to demonstrate skills and abilities that cannot be better tested with interview questions.

Psychometric tests can be used to measure suitability, e.g., verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning or personality testing. Any such tests will be facilitated by a qualified practitioner or provider.

Other assessment methods that can be used for individual recruitment exercise include presentations or in-tray exercises. Providing they are carefully and objectively designed and assessed, selection methods that allow patient or colleague feedback on candidates could also be considered as part of the process.

Short-listed applicants who are to be tested at interview will be advised in the invitation to interview of the type of test(s) or other selection methods they will be asked to undertake, and the likely duration.

## Interview expenses

Interview expenses are not usually payable to candidates unless this is explicitly authorised in advance.

## Conditional offers of employment

Conditional offers of employment are offered after interview. The conditional offer makes it clear that the offer is subject to the relevant employment checks being satisfactory and met within a specified timescale.

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership will make it clear to successful applicants that any offer of employment is conditional pending the completion of post-offer checks, including a relevant health assessment.

## Post-offer checks

Types of post-offer checks:

* Employment references
* Health screening
* Professional registration/licence
* Qualifications
* Identity and right to work in the UK
* DBS disclosure
* Registration authority ID (for Smartcard)

**References and employment history**

Ordinarily, applicants are requested to supply the details of their two most recent employers to provide employment references. In some situations, the applicant may not be able to provide this for legitimate reasons, e.g., lack of recent employment, previous employer uncontactable or no longer in existence. In those cases, Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership must risk assess the situation from a safeguarding perspective and consider accepting one or more suitable character or academic references instead.

The following will apply:

* References should where possible cover a minimum period of five years’ previous employment/training
* All references will be in writing on an employer’s original letterhead or come from a verifiable email address
* All employment references must state the dates of employment and the position held
* Reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that referees and their organisations are genuine
* All employment references must be directed through a line manager or formal HR department or a clinical supervisor
* References may be cross-checked on the telephone if considered appropriate. A permanent record of this must be made and retained with the recruitment papers
* Reference responses will be cross-checked back to the original application to identify any discrepancies in employment details
* References will be requested from a university or other learning organisation when an applicant has been in full-time education
* References will be requested from abroad when the applicant has worked overseas
* Confirmation of previous self-employment will be requested via the production of accounts or official documentation, e.g., HMRC documentation. If appropriate, references from previous customers may also be considered.

**Post-offer health screening**

Offers of employment for substantive, temporary and voluntary staff are subject to receiving a satisfactory health declaration. Applicants are required to declare any health issues that may have an impact on their ability to carry out the duties of the role. Any reasonable adjustments that may be required will be considered.

Should an applicant state that they do have a health issue that may impact their ability to conduct the duties of the role, and only after a conditional offer of employment has been made, Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership may request that the applicant undertake an occupational health assessment.

When carrying out a work health assessment, Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership will consider the requirements of the Equality Act, in particular Section 60 of the Act, which describes the specific circumstances under which employers can legally ask questions about any health or disability prior to making an offer of appointment. This applies regardless as to whether the offer is conditional or unconditional.

Assessments should take place after an offer of appointment, regardless of

whether this is conditional or unconditional, but prior to the commencement of employment/placement or training, except for those individuals on work experience.

It is unlawful for employers to ask applicants to complete a post-offer health

questionnaire or to ask health-related questions as part of their application or interview process for any reason other than the exceptional circumstances outlined within the Equality Act.

All health assessments must be carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with

equalities legislation and good occupational health practice.

To ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership is required to ensure that all staff receive the necessary immunisations pertinent to their role.

Refer to the Staff Immunisation Policy as this sets out this process in more detail.

**Professional registration/licence**

When an advertised role requires professional registration with a licensing or regulatory body in the UK or another country, all applicants should have provided their registration details. Short-listed applicants must provide documentary evidence of their registration at the interview stage.

**Qualifications**

Short-listed applicants are required to provide original documentary evidence of the necessary qualifications, as stated in the person specification, at the interview stage. All qualifications will be checked using original certificates and/or checked back with the registering or awarding body. Relevant training certificates may be requested for the last five years.

**Checking identity and right to work in the UK**

All applicants are asked to bring to the interview evidence to confirm their identity and right to work in the UK. Details of what is acceptable evidence will be provided in the invitation to interview letter.

**DBS checks and criminal convictions**

Clinical roles or those that otherwise involve contact with patients will usually require a DBS check before the successful candidate starts in the position. For full information about DBS checks and which positions they apply to, refer to the DBS Policy.

Clinical vacancies that require an NMC or GMC registration and ‘regulated’ roles as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) are automatically exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore, all applicants applying for such vacancies are required to disclose any convictions that are not ‘protected’, i.e., filtered out, as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013).

All applicants will be assessed in relation to the criteria identified in the person specification for the post. Being in possession of a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent an applicant from employment, this will depend on the circumstances and background to the offence in relation to the relevance of the role. It is, however, important to note that some offences, e.g., involving violence or sexual abuse, will preclude an applicant from having access to patients.

When a criminal record check/disclosure certificate contains criminal convictions and/or reveals other information, the overall responsibility for decisions relating to the recruitment of clinical staff lies with the Senior Partner and for non-clinical staff, the Practice Manager. Applicants with a criminal conviction should be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Practice Manager as part of this process. A person’s criminal record should be considered in the light of all the relevant circumstances and judged on a case-by-case basis.

Staff involved in the recruitment process, i.e., short-listing and/or interviewing, should follow the principles set out in the DBS Policy.

**Registration authority checks**

These checks are required for the creation of a Smartcard which is used to access NHS systems. The checks are consistent with those required for the right to work process. The Smartcard contains a photographic ID. A Smartcard will be produced for the first day of employment.

## Unconditional offers of employment

Unconditional offers of employment are offered once all employment checks have been completed and are returned as satisfactory. The successful candidate will be asked to confirm acceptance of the unconditional offer. Employees and workers are entitled to a written statement of employment particulars, often referred to as the contract of employment, from day one of their employment.

## Internal transfers/promotions

Employees of Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership may occasionally wish to change their usual place of work or apply for a new role or promotion.

Selection will normally be a competitive process except in cases of organisational change, disability, ill health or maternity or where there is only one candidate.

Account will be taken of individual circumstances, for example, in relation to requests for, or existing, flexible working arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity for all employees.

## Confidentiality and data protection

At all times, managers and employees involved in any aspect of this procedure will comply with the requirements of Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership’s confidentiality policy and the principles of good record keeping.

**Returning, storing and destroying recruitment documentation/storing records**

All recruitment documentation including short-listing and interview notes are to be fully recorded and retained for a period of at least six months after which time the documentation will be confidentially destroyed.

**Subject access requests**

Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership gathers and processes the personal data of job applicants as part of the recruitment process. Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership is committed to being open and transparent about how that data is gathered and used and to meeting the data protection obligations that are set out in the [Privacy Notice – Candidates applying for work](https://practiceindex.co.uk/gp/forum/resources/privacy-notice-candidates-applying-for-work.1792/) which is made available to all job applicants.

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals have the right to a copy of any information held about them. The individual (or data subject) requesting the release of information about themselves must complete a Subject Access Request form and Aylmer Lodge Cookley Partnership will comply with the necessary procedures in accordance with the Data Protection Act.