



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-00072

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: SELECTION PROCEDURE - HEALTH & SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answers to your questions are as follows.

I have been advised by Human Resources department that Internal Selection & Promotion have not run a selection process for Health & Safety and that no external competitions have been run regarding recruitment of permanent staff for Health and Safety. We are therefore unable to respond to your questions regarding these type of competitions. If internal selection were to run a process, I have been advised they would liaise with the Head of Unit and would jointly agree a suitable assessment process which may be take the format of a written test, an interview, a papersift or a combination of these.

The answers to your questions have been supplied with regard to the external selection of temporary staff to the Health and Safety department.

Question 1

Please advise what specific design and marking process is followed by PSNI, when a written examination is used for a selection process in the Health and Safety Dept of the organisation?

Answer

The acquisition of temporary workers is an entirely devolved responsibility for the stakeholder in conjunction with the respective local HR. In this case, the role required a degree of understanding of Health and Safety policy and practice. In order that the Chief Health and Safety Adviser could protect the interests of the candidates, and uphold the openness and transparency of the process, he decided to apply the written exercise referred to.

Question 2

How should candidates be notified regarding the process to be followed in a selection procedure?

Question 3

What timeframe should be used for notification of candidates re the process to be followed during a selection procedure?

Answer

Whilst it is practice for temporary assignments to be selected by informal interview, there is no obligation on the organisation to select by this means. The short written exercise related specifically to the role, but could equally have been asked in an interview format. This was a small test, not a full scale written examination, and no objections were raised by candidates before, during, or immediately after the exercise. The Chief Health and Safety Adviser for the organisation is primarily responsible for work undertaken in this area of business. As the key stakeholder, in line with current practice, he has the right to make decisions on the acquisition of temporary workers. Throughout the course of this action, Mr Orchin was advised and guided by the Head of HR for the department.

Question 4

When PSNI hold a selection process what guidance exists for the panel members? Please provide this.

Question 5

How many staff should sit on a selection interview process within PSNI in the interest of best practice and employment guidelines?

Answer

The sole purpose of temporary assignments is to allow the PSNI to maintain operational capability through the use of short-term cover, and the PSNI reserves the right to acquire such assignees at short notice, through the service provider. Temporary workers are not employees of the organisation, and therefore not bound by policies and practice relating to selection for permanent roles. The very nature of temporary worker requirement is such that the provision must be timely and adequate for the role, however it is key to remember that the role is of a temporary nature.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this email.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing FOI@psni.pnn.police.uk

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.psni.police.uk/>

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.