

Recruitment and Staff Selection Policy

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Introduction

In order to meet its obligations to stakeholders, the Newcastle University Students' Association (NUSA) employs staff on an on-going basis and casual staff as and when the need arises. NUSA aims to recruit and select the best possible candidates in a timely and cost effective manner.

Background

This policy provides a framework and structure for NUSA staff engaged in the recruitment and selection process to ensure selection of the best candidate for the position and to maintain transparency and consistency across the organization. The policy aims to provide flexible and tailored approaches to the recruitment of staff that can address the specific requirements of NUSA.

Policy Application

This policy applies to the hiring of all new staff in the Association.

Definitions

In the context of this document:

Continuing employment means all employment that is not contingent, fixed-term or casual employment, and for which there is no set date for the employment to cease.

Contingent employment means employment provided from identifiable funding external to NUSA (not being the operating grant) for the life of a specific task or project or for the duration of the funding. Such employment has no fixed end date and the contract is not terminable by the NUSA, other than during a probationary period, or for unsatisfactory performance, or for serious misconduct; or by the occurrence of the contingency.

Fixed term employment means employment for a specified term, for which the instrument of engagement will specify the starting and finishing dates and for which during the term of employment the contract is not terminable by the NUSA, other than during a probationary period, or for unsatisfactory performance, or for serious misconduct; or where the work is no longer required to be undertaken, in which case the fixed term staff member is entitled to payment equivalent to either 6 months' salary or the balance of the contract, whichever is the lesser.

Casual employment means employment by the hour and paid on an hourly basis that includes a loading in lieu of benefits. Casual employment may be on an hourly or sessional basis.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement or EBA means the current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement in place between NUSA and the National Tertiary Education Union

Principles

In any recruitment, selection and appointment process NUSA expects management to respect the following principles which need to be evident in any process adopted.

Merit: All applicants will be appointed to positions based on their skill, knowledge, competencies, qualifications, previous experience and understanding of the position requirements.

Fairness: Fairness is demonstrated through inclusiveness and equity. All applicants have a right to expect fair treatment through clear expectations and a consistent approach.

Transparency: NUSA recognises the importance of transparency in relation to the recruitment process. This needs to be balanced with respect to confidentiality and privacy of applicants and selection committee members.

Responsiveness: Responsiveness is the capacity to adapt NUSA practice to meet individual circumstances, taking into account the principles of merit, equity and diversity, fairness and transparency. It is important to acknowledge that timely decision making can be critical in securing the best possible applicant.

Operational and Strategic Need: All recruitment and selection decision-making should be aligned with the NUSA's strategic and operational priorities.

Staffing Committee

1. There shall be a Staffing Committee established to deal with matters involving the: employment of staff within NUSA, including but not limited to:
 - a) grievance, disciplinary and sexual harassment procedures;
 - b) any matter referred to it in NUSA's EBA;
 - c) other matters that may be delegated by the NUSA Council or are: necessary to be carried out expeditiously and discreetly in relation to the employment of staff and the day to day running of the NUSA office.
 - d) any matter referred to it by an NTEU member

2. The Staffing Committee shall comprise of:
 - a) The NUSA President, or nominee, as chair;

- b) One other nominee of the NUSA Council, who is an elected student representative;
 - c) Two NTEU representatives elected by NTEU members employed by NUSA.
3. Both the NUSA Council and the NTEU members employed by NUSA shall each nominate one alternative member to the Committee.
 4. This clause will not prevent the Administrator from exercising his/her discretion.
 5. Appeals against decisions of Staffing Committee are to be made to the NUSA Executive.
 6. The Staffing Committee will be convened following the request by any two (2) members of the Committee, the vote of the NUSA Council or the resolution of the workplace NTEU members.
 7. Minutes of any staffing committee convened must be tabled at the next immediate NUSAC meeting.
 8. At the Committee's discretion observers may attend Staffing Committee meetings but will have no voting rights.

The NUSA Executive

1. On matters relating to employment and staffing
 - a. Continually monitor NUSA's staffing and provide relevant recommendations to NUSAC
 - b. Review personnel, selection and recruitment policies and procedures, providing policy recommendations to NUSAC and;
 - c. Provide clear strategic directions and plans relating to recruitment and retention of employees for Management to implement.
 - d. Act in accordance with NUSA's EBA
 - e. Review this policy a minimum of every 3 years to ensure that it is consistent with the NUSA constitution, legislative requirements and the policies of the University of Newcastle.

The NUSA Administrator

With respect to this policy the NUSA administrator shall:

1. Ensure that any recruitment is linked to operational and strategic needs of NUSA.
2. Ensure that appropriate succession planning for key employees are implemented.

3. Ensure that the processes are transparent, fair, equitable and responsive while demonstrating respect for privacy of applicants, employees and members of the selection committee.
4. Perform the additional duties outlined in this policy

Establishing Vacancy

1. If the Administrator or Executive should determine that a vacancy has occurred or become available. The following should occur in each vacancy type:
 - a) Where a permanent position has been vacated by a staff-member, the Administrator should discuss with the NUSA Executive to ensure the position is still appropriate for the organisation's needs before advertising the vacancy.
 - b) Where a fixed-term contract has expired, or will expire within three months, the Administrator should discuss with the NUSA Executive on appropriate action.
 - c) For a position to be made permanent, a proposal should be taken to NUSA Executive.
 - d) Casual vacancies are to be determined by the executive where the appropriate funding is allocated in the annual budget.
 - e) If required, the NUSA Executive should seek support from the University of Newcastle for additional funding if required.
 - f) A position description will then be drawn up by the administrator and, where applicable, be submitted to the Executive for recommendation to NUSAC.
2. Any decision the executive comes to regarding recruitment or determining vacant positions must be ratified by NUSAC before it can take effect.

Advertising a Vacancy

1. The appropriate method of advertising should be adopted by the Executive with consideration to the type of position vacancy and budget restraints. Where:
 - a) The position is suitable to current students; advertise internally through appropriate communication formats accessible to students at the University.
 - b) The position requires a specific qualification or is suitable to University of Newcastle staff; advertise through accessible University of Newcastle communication formats.
 - c) The position is suitable to the widest possible field audience; advertise through all of the above sources and external media.
2. Where the type of position is unclear, NUSA Executive and Administrator should be consulted as to the appropriate type of advertising.
3. Where a casual vacancy is of a short term nature, for a position that requires less than 7.35 hours (one full-time working day) per week, NUSAC may by resolution, on recommendation from the administrator or executive, appoint the position without adhering to the requirements in 1. This does not apply where a casual will be appointed for greater than 8 weeks.

Coordination of Advertising

1. To ensure consistency throughout the organisation and to eliminate potential confusion, NUSAC must be advised of all vacancies (except those to be filled under section 1.9) prior to any advertising.
2. The administrator with the assistance of the Public Officer, will maintain a register of all advertised positions, including the following information:
 - a) Date the vacancy opened
 - b) Initial advertising date, which may vary across media
 - c) Closing date for applications;
 - d) Period for short-listing candidates
 - e) Period for interviewing short-listed candidates
 - f) Commencement or re-advertising date

Limitation on Hiring of Former Office-bearers

This policy recognises that in some instances former NUSAC members may apply for a full time or long term contract staff position. It is not the intent of the NUSA to limit the capacity of former NUSAC members to apply for a staff position within NUSA, but this policy does attempt to limit concerns of bias or conflict of interest through relationships with current NUSA members. Consequently, a former NUSAC member may not be appointed to a vacant position within twelve months of the end of their term in office, except where a motion passed by a 75% majority of voting members in attendance at a NUSAC meeting authorizes the appointment.

Selection Panel

1. Within two weeks of a new position being created or an existing position falling vacant, the position shall be advertised and the selection process shall be initiated.
2. A selection committee shall be established for the purpose of interviewing applicants for the vacant position and shall comprise of:
 - a) the NUSA President or nominee;
 - b) a person with relevant knowledge or experience of the position; and
 - c) one independent person
3. At least one person on the panel must identify as a woman and at least one person must identify as a man.
4. Any potential member of a selection panel who personally knows a candidate to be interviewed must declare their conflict of interest in line with the Conflict of Interest Policy, and their suitability as a panel member will be considered accordingly.
5. Any candidate applying for a position must prior to the interview commencing make it clear to the selection panel of any relationship they have with any member of staff or office bearer who currently or has previously worked for the NUSA. The Selection committee shall inform the candidate of this requirement.
6. Selection panels should attempt to reach consensus on the best applicant wherever possible.

Selection Practices

An appropriate selection practice should follow the Best practice guidelines for recruitment and selection authored by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Training

On the job training will be offered where possible or required by the appropriate line manager and will be for the benefit of NUSA.