Recruiting: Shortlisting and Selection

The University of Warwick has been running its own internship programmes since 2012. We combine our own learning with CIPD and AGR advice to produce good practice that we know leads to productive, motivated interns.

You may wish to use the following information to support the shortlisting and selection of your intern/s.

Shortlisting should be based on:

- why the candidate wants the role
- whether the candidate meets the Person Specification

• Carried out objectively by two people, who only compare notes after they have assessed all the candidates
• Treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010

Selection

There are a number of ways to inform your selection decisions, which can be combined to demonstrate different facets of the person specification. These might include, for example:

- Interviews – competency-based questions to draw out examples of when they have used specific skills, motivational questions about why they have applied, questions that facilitate a discussion about their strengths (enabling you to spot potential and any development needs), or questions that give everyone a chance to see how well the applicant understands the sector or market (see further information below regarding the structure for an interview).
- Role-play – so that they can demonstrate how they interact with colleagues and stakeholders, e.g. a “telephone call” or “meeting” set-up,
- Online or in-person tests e.g. a relevant task that would be part of the role/project, or writing an article, blog or other piece of written work
- Group activities – so that you can see how someone behaves as part of a team dynamic
- Presentations – can they present a convincing argument? Can they describe complex things in a simple and engaging way? Can they take technical information and talk about it in an engaging way?
- Portfolios – some roles may benefit from the applicant bringing examples of previous work

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Remember to decide how you are going to assess their ability to meet the person specification, via the task – there needs to be a clear link so that they understand what you are looking for.

**Interviews**

Interviews should ideally be undertaken by two or more people, in order to be a fair, objective assessment of whether the graduate meets the person specification and could effectively carry out the role. Interviews are about the graduate getting to know you as well, so consider it a two-way process and offer further information where possible:

- Set the scene and put them at ease
- Try to take a coaching and supportive (rather than testing) approach
- Take into account limited work experience, and give opportunity to draw on education, extra-curricular and personal experiences as a valid source of relevant skills and attributes
- Ask questions that highlight potential and commitment, rather than prior experience only
- Can take place by Skype, telephone or in person

Typical questions might include:

- why is the candidate interested in the industry, organisation and role
- questions about suitability for the role
- technical questions relating to the role
- questions about previous relevant experiences (noting points above)
- hypothetical questions
- candidate’s awareness of their own strengths (rather than just competencies)
- ask for examples of employability skills, e.g. communication, team working, problem solving
- motivational questions that allow the candidate to demonstrate their personality