

Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Research Staff from Non-Operating Funds Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This procedure outlines the University's processes for the recruitment, selection and appointment of research staff for a research project from Non-operating funds for a period of 12 months to 3 years.

(2) Research projects have unique criteria and conditions attached to funding sources and may require a recruitment, selection and appointment process that differs from that which applies to the appointment of a staff member supported by operating funds.

(3) For the appointment of a known and capable candidate for a period of less than 12 months a direct appointment can be made as outlined in the [Talent, Recruitment and Appointment Procedure](#).

Section 2 - Procedure

Finance and Funding

(4) The Chief Investigator will ensure compliance with the grant funding guidelines and conditions of the award. This includes verifying that staff are permitted to be employed using funds awarded from the grant.

(5) The Chief Investigator will ensure that there is sufficient funding to cover any proposed appointee's employment period, on-costs and any accrued annual leave.

(6) The Chief Investigator will receive endorsement from the Finance Business Partner prior to commencing any Direct appointment or Competitive recruitment to confirm there is sufficient funding for the proposed role.

Recruitment strategy

(7) Where a researcher is named in a grant application, that individual may be automatically appointed to a relevant position as outlined in the grant.

(8) Where the Chief Investigator has identified one or more potential candidates, Direct appointment will apply unless the Chief Investigator chooses to use Competitive recruitment.

(9) Situations in which potential candidates may be readily identified may occur in areas of research where existing staff or recent PhD graduates have demonstrated relevant skills and knowledge in the area.

(10) A candidate may also be readily identified if the research is so specialised that there would only be a small number of potential candidates either nationally or globally.

(11) Where no potential candidates have been identified, Competitive recruitment will be adopted.

Direct Appointment

(12) An Appointment Committee will be convened, comprising the following membership:

Table A

Role	Committee Membership
Academic Research Staff – Levels A, B and C or HEW Levels 1-9	- Chief Investigator (Chair) - Head of School or Pro Vice-Chancellor - An extra member or members may be appointed by the Chair where the Chair assesses that this is necessary or desirable Where the Head of School or Pro Vice-Chancellor are not available, the Acting Head of School or Deputy Head of College may be nominated by the Chair
Academic Research Staff – Level D or HEW 10	As above Appointment also requires additional approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (if the Pro Vice-Chancellor is not on the Appointment Committee)
Academic Research Staff- Level E or HEW 10+ loading	As above Appointment also requires additional approval from the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor

(13) The role of the Appointment Committee is to:-

- a. consider the information that has been provided for each candidate;
- b. determine, by applying the principles of the Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy, which, if any of the candidates meet the requirements; and
- c. rank them in suitability, if there is more than one suitable candidate.

(14) The Chief Investigator will obtain a curriculum vitae from all identified potential candidates.

(15) The Chief Investigator will complete a reference check from at least 2 appropriate referees, preferably 3 or more.

(16) The Chief Investigator will provide each member of the Appointment Committee with a copy of the curriculum vitae and reference check information.

(17) In accordance with the University's [Conflict of Interest policy](#), if an Appointment Committee member has a direct or personal interest in a recruitment process they must declare such interest to the Chief Investigator as soon as the candidate's identity becomes known to them. This will mean a declaration of any financial, family or other close personal relationships with any candidate for the position.

(18) The Chief Investigator, in consultation with the HRServices Recruitment Team, will determine if there is an actual conflict of interest, or if there could be a perceived conflict of interest. If it is determined that there is a conflict, the Appointment Committee member will be asked to stand down from the Appointment Committee. In the case of the Chief Investigator declaring a potential conflict, the Manager, Recruitment and Support Services will determine whether there is a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest.

(19) Appointment Committee members will observe confidentiality in regard to all aspects of appointment and will not disclose any details of candidates or discuss aspects of the appointment process with any person within or external to the University, other than a fellow Committee member or member of HRServices.

(20) The Appointment Committee is not required to meet in person.

(21) Appointment Committee members will independently assess the candidates prior to providing their feedback, whether in a meeting or otherwise.

(22) Appointment Committee members will determine whether an offer should be made.

Competitive Recruitment

(23) Where Competitive recruitment is chosen, the Chief Investigator will complete and forward to HRServices:

- a. [Candidate Request Form](#);
- b. Health and Hazard Assessment Questionnaire and
- c. Position Description.

(24) The HRServices Recruitment Team, in consultation with the Chief Investigator, will determine advertising strategies.

(25) A Selection Committee will be established to assess candidates.

(26) Membership of the Selection Committee should be gender inclusive (a minimum of a third of the Selection Committee must be female) or in particular circumstances as close to a third as possible.

(27) Membership of the Selection Committee should have appropriate Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representation where candidates have identified themselves as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

(28) Further requirements regarding the composition of the Selection Committee are specified in Table B.

(29) Where any of the specified members listed in Table B is not available, a substitute member at a similar level of seniority, and from either inside or outside the University, may be nominated by the Selection Committee Chair.

Table B

Role	Selection Committee Membership
HEW 1- 10+ loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Chief Investigator (Chair) or nominee- 2 additional members (including one external to the research centre or school) Appointment at HEW 10 requires additional approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Appointment at HEW 10+ loading requires additional approval from the Vice-Chancellor
Academic Research Staff – Levels A, B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Chief Investigator (Chair)- Head of School- An additional academic staff member or external party representative nominated by the Chair Where the Head of School is not available, the Acting Head of School or the Pro Vice-Chancellor may be nominated by the Chair
Academic Research Staff Level D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) (Chair)- Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College- Head of the relevant School- Chief Investigator- An external scholar distinguished in their discipline, appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Role	Selection Committee Membership
Academic Research Staff Level E	<p>Vice-Chancellor (Chair). The Vice-Chancellor may, in their absence, nominate the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) as Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College - Head of the relevant School - Chief Investigator - An external scholar distinguished in the relevant discipline, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor

(30) The Competitive recruitment process will then be followed as outlined in the Recruitment, Appointment and Selection of Academic, Teaching and Professional Staff Procedure.

Approvals

(31) After the Appointment Committee (Direct appointments) or the Selection Committee (Competitive recruitment) has made its selection decision, the Chief Investigator will seek approval from the appropriate authority (where relevant) or otherwise approve the appointment. Table C is a summary of the University's Delegations of Authority Schedules and relevant University policies.

Table C

Role	Delegated Authority to Approve Appointment
Professional staff HEW 1-9	Chief Investigator
Academic Research Staff Levels A, B and C	Chief Investigator
Professional staff HEW 10	Pro Vice-Chancellor
Professional Staff HEW 10+ loading	Vice-Chancellor (in consultation with relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Investigator)
Academic Research Staff Level D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (i.e. Chair of Selection Committee) (Competitive recruitment) or - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Direct appointment)
Academic Research Staff Level E	Vice-Chancellor (in consultation with relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Investigator)

Making the Appointment

(32) Once approval has been obtained, the Chief Investigator will contact the successful candidate and advise them that an offer will be made and that details of the offer will be sent to them in writing.

(33) As a general rule, all initial offers of employment should be made at step 1 of the relevant HEW / Academic level.

(34) A higher level step may be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor where the candidate has significant additional experience for the role and the need to be competitive in the market justifies a higher step.

(35) For Direct appointment, the Chief Investigator will complete an [Appointment Job Details Form](#) and forward to HRServices with the required documentation, approvals and candidate forms, qualifications and identification.

(36) For Competitive recruitment, HRServices will contact the preferred candidate directly to request the required forms, qualifications and identification.

(37) On receipt of the relevant forms, HRServices will:-

- a. send a letter of appointment to the successful candidate;
- b. confirm work entitlements once the successful candidate has returned the relevant documentation (It is an offence under the [Migration Act 1958 \(Cth\)](#) to knowingly or recklessly allow an illegal worker to work).

(38) A new staff member (whether continuing, fixed-term, sessional, casual or contingent) must have a letter of appointment signed by both an authorised representative of the University and the staff member prior to commencing employment with the University.

(39) The Chief Investigator will ensure the letter of appointment is in place and will delay the start date of the employee should the signed letter not be in place.

Record Keeping

(40) Records relating to the filling of vacancies must be retained for a minimum of 2 years after the recruitment process is finalised and then destroyed, as per the retention and disposal authority issued by State Records under the [State Records Act 1998 \(NSW\)](#). This includes:

- a. applications to fill a vacancy;
- b. advertisements and details of position, duty statements, and selection criteria;
- c. Selection Committee records and reports;
- d. applications received;
- e. associated checks and approvals (Note: does not include criminal records checks and working with children checks);
- f. reference checks;
- g. eligibility lists; and
- h. notification to unsuccessful applicants.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	18th October 2022
Review Date	31st December 2022
Approval Authority	Chief People and Culture Officer
Approval Date	18th October 2022
Expiry Date	12th April 2023
Responsible Executive	Martin Sainsbury Chief People and Culture Officer martin.sainsbury@newcastle.edu.au
Enquiries Contact	Recruitment 4033 9999

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Graduate" - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Academic staff" - An academic employee holding a substantive academic position of 0.5 full-time equivalent or above where the contract length is twelve months or longer.

"Applicant" - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Award" - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Competitive recruitment" - A process which requires that the role be advertised and/or various search strategies used to attract an appropriate pool of candidates. This may be an internal process.

"Candidate" - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

"Direct appointment" - An appointment which is created without going through the Competitive Recruitment Process. Research staff appointed to these roles will be appointed on merit.

"PhD" - Is a Doctor of Philosophy degree, referred to as a Doctoral Degree (Research) by the Australian Qualifications Framework.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"School" - An organisational unit forming part of a College or Division, responsible for offering a particular course.

"Selection Committee" - A committee convened to assess candidates under consideration through competitive recruitment.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.