



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

RECRUITMENT TOOLKIT

January 2019

3

**CANDIDATE
SELECTION**

A Guide to Shortlisting

3

Welcome

Welcome to the School's **Shortlisting Guidance**. This document builds on the School's *Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure (Professional Services Salaried Staff)* and provides further practical guidance to help hiring managers across the School conduct their shortlisting.

Contents

1. Longlist vs. Shortlist
2. Shortlisting
 - a. Points to consider
3. Shortlisting Matrix
 - a. Questions and helpful tips
 - b. The shortlisting matrix
 - c. Tier 2 sponsorship and shortlisting
4. What next?
 - a. Recording shortlisting decisions on the e-Recruitment system

Introduction

This process is often referred to as ‘longlisting’ and ‘shortlisting’ and is an essential part of selecting the best candidate for your role.

Both imply a process through which applications are assessed against a set of essential and desirable criteria, with a group of candidates who meet these being put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

With care and effort at this stage you will find the high-quality applicants you want for final selection. Scoring and assessment at the shortlisting stage should continue to hold importance right up to the final selection of the successful candidate.

1 Longlist vs. Shortlist

In a large group of candidates, a **longlist** can be used to score each candidate against each of the selection criteria to identify which candidates meet the criteria and to what extent. This process can be used to eliminate candidates from the process who do not meet selection criteria.

Your longlist of candidates would then be lessened into a **shortlist** after a first assessment.

As a recruiting manager, the first decision to make is whether your pool of applicants warrants an initial stage of assessment. If so, this would require making a longlist, which would then be narrowed down to a shortlist after a first assessment.

When coming to this decision you should consider the following:

- If there is a strong pool with a number of potentially suitable applicants, without a few standout applicants, then you may want to include a first assessment stage.
- If you decide to create a longlist and include a first assessment stage, be clear to candidates that you are inviting them for this purpose.

“Regardless of whether you conduct an initial longlist, or move straight to

a shortlist, you will assess candidate applications in the same way.”

2 Shortlisting

Regardless of whether you conduct an initial longlist, or move straight to a shortlist, you will assess candidate applications in the same way.

This stage in the recruitment and selection process is essential and the rest of the process relies on an application assessment that puts forward the best candidates.

2.1 Points to consider

Do consider the following when conducting your assessment:

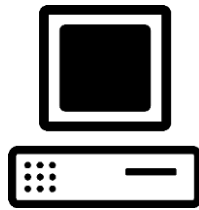
- Agree with your panel, the competencies being measured. These should be taken from the Person Specification and based on essential criteria (and maybe some desirable criteria) at this stage.
- Be consistent in your approach and do not introduce new criteria that do not feature in the Person Specification.
- Look for evidence that the applicant meets the criteria. Consider the examples that candidates provide to demonstrate that they meet the criteria and evaluate whether they meet your requirements.
- Only shortlist those who meet all the essential criteria. If there are a large number that are suitable, use the desirable criteria to help narrow down the number to a final shortlist.
- Where possible, ensure that all panel members input in to the final candidate list and that there is majority agreement on the decision.
- Ensure that candidate scores, and any comments relating to the shortlisting process, are captured on the School’s e-recruitment system. This is important in general, but necessary for UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) requirements if you are considering non-EEA applicants.

- Ensure that enough time is allocated for shortlisting at the start of the campaign. You may find that you have a large volume of applications and it is important to give time and fair consideration to all of them.

E-Recruitment

You can use e-Recruitment system to shortlist online.

Panel members can score each candidate's application. The scores are then captured on a Shortlisting Matrix.



3 Shortlisting Matrix

3.1 Questions and helpful tips

Why complete a shortlisting matrix?

The shortlisting matrix provides you, as the recruiting manager, with an easy way of recording your reasons for either shortlisting or not shortlisting an application.

A shortlisting matrix supports you in providing evidence that all candidates have been assessed fairly, and that your decision is based on evidence provided by the candidate and job-related reasons. Not only does a matrix save time during the shortlisting process, it also makes it easier to head off a potential challenge, should one occur.

Does each panel member have to complete their own grid?

It is recommended that all panel members consider the applications and come up with their own shortlist before discussing them with others. This helps to clarify each member's initial thoughts, before making a final decision together.

As a minimum, there needs to be one shortlisting matrix that is fully completed and agreed by the entire panel.

How do I complete the shortlisting matrix?

The shortlisting matrix can be downloaded from the e-recruitment system as an Excel spreadsheet. You will see the competency headings across the top of the grid and the candidate numbers / names, for all of those who applied, on the left side of the grid.

Please do not format the shortlisting grid in any way, for example by adding/removing columns or changing the order of the candidates, as this will cause an error when trying to upload the completed matrix back on to the e-recruitment system afterwards.

Can I shortlist as I go along?

Yes, and we would recommend that you do consider applications as you receive them. The E-recruitment system gives you access to the submitted applications before the closing date so that you can review them and record your initial comments.

You must however wait until the post closes before submitting your final shortlisting decisions online, as you will not be able to change them once you have submitted them.

I have received an application from a previous applicant for the same job. Do I have to consider them again?

Yes. It is good practice to consider all applications equally for a role, regardless of whether they have applied previously.

With anonymised applications in professional services staff recruitment, it may be difficult to see whether a candidate has applied previously, however if this appears to be the case you must still consider their application fairly and assess it against the essential criteria.

A candidate has not followed the instructions on how to apply; how should I treat their application?

This may occur, for example, in the event that a candidate fails to complete a supporting statement to evidence how they meet the criteria for the role. If the candidate has not followed the instructions you do not have to consider their application. Please make a note of this against their candidate number on the shortlisting grid so that there is a record of what happened.

Do I have to give feedback to unsuccessful applicants?

You are not required to give feedback to those who were not shortlisted, although this is encouraged for internal candidates.

At the interview stage, it is good practice to give verbal feedback on request. Feedback should always be based on the criteria for the job. You should try to give some positive feedback on the areas that they performed well in and your reasons for not offering them the role should be based on the criteria in the person specification.

Feedback must be:

- **Factual** – Refer to the evidence that the candidate provided during the selection process rather than any assumptions or biases you may have.
- **Fair** – Make your decision in accordance with the requirements of the job and explain how the applicant did not demonstrate what you were looking for.
- **Professional** – Think about how you would like to receive feedback. Treat the person with respect and ensure that they get a positive experience of the School, even if they are unsuccessful for the role.

If you would like to discuss giving feedback to any of your candidates, please contact your [HR Adviser](#).

What happens if I am unable to shortlist any candidates?

If you are unable to shortlist any candidates you should review why this is the case and ask the following questions:

- Is the job description clear, accurate and a realistic representation of the role I am looking to recruit?
- Have I been clear in the advert and person specification what I am looking for in a candidate and the skills and experience required?
- Considering the skills and experience required to carry out the role, have I advertised on appropriate and relevant platforms?

Your **HR Adviser** will be able to help you review the recruitment paperwork and discuss what options you have next.



PLEASE NOTE

A candidate can make a subject access request under the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** to see any notes written about them during the selection process.

Please ensure that any comments and feedback captured on the shortlisting grid can be justified in accordance with the requirements of the role.

demonstrate that they met the essential criteria under a number of competency headings – and you will see these set out in columns I – N on the Excel sheet.

Each cell is formatted to accept either a '1.00' or '0.00'. '1.00' denotes that the candidate fully meets the criteria under this heading, and '0.00' denotes that the candidate does not meet the criteria.

Sometimes, candidates meet *some* of the criteria but not all the essential criteria. Unfortunately, even if they seem to be a strong candidate, they cannot be shortlisted unless they meet **all of the essential criteria**.

3.3 A note about Tier 2 sponsorship when shortlisting

Do bear in mind that, if you wish to sponsor the successful candidate under Tier 2 (normally academic, teaching or research roles), the shortlisting and interview notes are a key part of the paperwork that needs to be provided to support why you need to sponsor the candidate.

You will need to ensure that your shortlisting matrix is fully completed and refers to the key criteria stated in the person specification to show that you have completed the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) before we can proceed with the visa application. In addition, if you have specified any qualifications as being essential for the role, you will need to show that the candidate you have chosen has those qualifications.

For more information about Tier 2 sponsorship please see the Manager's guide to Tier 2 and the Resident Labour Market Test on the [HR website](#).

3.2 The Shortlisting Matrix

An example of a completed shortlisting grid for a Student Adviser role can be found in this section of the toolkit. For this role, applicants were asked to

4 What next

4.1 Recording shortlisting decisions on the e-Recruitment system

The reasons for not shortlisting candidates must be recorded on the eRecruitment system for statutory monitoring and legal purposes. This must be done using the eRecruitment system for all candidates. If there is no computer access at the shortlisting meeting this can be done at a later opportunity by the Chair of the recruitment panel.

Candidates who have been selected for interview can be invited through the eRecruitment system. The invitation to interview template should be edited to suit the specific requirements of the post then attached to the email generated within eRecruitment.

LSE Human Resources
London School of Economics and
Political Science Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE

Email: humanresources@lse.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7955 6659

lse.ac.uk/careers

