

Directive

No. 04/06
Supersedes 01/04

(Refer Section 34 of the Public Service Act 1996)

1. Title

Recruitment and Selection

2. Purpose

To specify the requirements applying to the recruitment and selection of public service employees.

3. Legislative Provision

Public Service Act 1996 - Sections 24, 33, 34, 51, 67, 68, 73, 77, and 78.

4. Application

- (a) This Directive applies to –
- (i) public service officers, including senior executive and senior officers, unless otherwise stated;
 - (ii) temporary employees engaged under section 113 of the *Public Service Act 1996*, unless otherwise stated, and
 - (iii) general employees engaged under section 112 of the *Public Service Act 1996*, unless otherwise stated.
- (b) This Directive does not apply to the recruitment and selection of chief executive officers.
- (c) This Directive does not apply to the recruitment and selection of casual employees.

5. Effective date

30 June 2006

6. Definitions

For the purpose of this Directive the following definitions apply –

Agency

– a public service unit as defined in the *Public Service Act 1996*.

Appoint

– appoint an officer or employ a tenured general employee.

Basis for assessment of merit

- the description of the abilities, aptitude, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience and personal qualities against which applicants will be assessed.

Continuous applicant pool

- an applicant pool which is created by one or more agencies to recruit applicants on an ongoing basis to a class or type of role below the level of senior officer or equivalent.

Employee

- a public service officer or tenured general employee.

Entry-level

- roles in relation to the *Queensland Public Service Award – State 003* and those at classification levels 1 and 2 of the administrative, technical, professional and operational streams. For roles above these levels and for roles in other awards, entry-level is the base classification level or levels determined by the chief executive and approved by the Director-General of the department administering the *Industrial Relations Act 1999* and the Public Service Commissioner.

Identical role

- is a role which shares the same title, remuneration, classification level and role description as another role within an agency.

Identified position

- has the meaning given to it by the director on identified positions.

Limited applicant pool

- comprises applicants who are eligible to be considered for a vacancy which is being offered only to a specified group or groups of existing tenured or temporary staff in an agency or from within a number of agencies.

Merit

- is defined according to the provisions of section 78 of the *Public Service Act 1996*.

Recruiting vacancy

- a vacancy below the level of senior officer or equivalent which can be filled from the applicant pool for the same or an identical role.

Vacancy

- a role for which an incumbent is being sought.

7. Directive

7.1 Role evaluation

- (a) Where relevant to the award structure, role evaluation for the purpose of determining the work value and applicable classification level will be

undertaken according to a role evaluation methodology approved by the Public Service Commissioner.

- (b) Unless otherwise approved, the role evaluation methodology to be utilised is the Queensland Public Sector Job Evaluation Management System (JEMS).

7.2 Role description

- (a) A role description must provide applicants with sufficient information to inform them of the requirements of the role and the basis for assessment of merit.
- (b) Mandatory qualifications can be specified only when it is essential for the occupant of a role to hold such qualifications in order to comply with an industrial instrument or to satisfy legal, accreditation or registration requirements.
- (c) Applicants must be informed of mandatory qualifications, as well as any mandatory conditions and requirements, for employment in a role. Mandatory conditions and requirements can include, but are not limited to, mandatory attributes required for appointment to an identified position, certain classes of drivers' licence, statutory restrictions and the requirement for the appointee to undertake regular travel.
- (d) Applicants must be informed of any type of pre-employment checking that will be undertaken and any probationary period which may apply.

7.3 Vacancies required to be advertised

- (a) Subject to the provisions of section 7.4 vacancies for public service officer roles above entry level must be advertised in the *Gazette* and on the Queensland Government *Smart jobs and careers* website for no less than two calendar weeks exclusive of public holidays and the Christmas-New Year closure period.
- (b) The vacancy notification in the *Gazette* and the Queensland Government *Smart jobs and careers* website is to include:
- a vacancy identifier
 - the role title
 - the name of the employing agency or potential range of employing agencies
 - the centre/location or potential range of centres/locations at which a role is to be employed
 - the remuneration applicable
 - the applicable classification level
 - notification if the position is an identified position and the mandatory attribute required for employment
 - the closing date and time for receipt of applications unless vacancies are to be filled from an open applicant pool
 - how applicants are to lodge their application, and
 - the basis of employment of the vacancy: permanent, temporary or contract; full-time or part-time.

- (c) Continuous applicant pools for entry-level vacancies for public service officer roles must be advertised on the *Smart jobs and careers* website.

7.4 Vacancies not required to be advertised

Vacancies for public service officer roles are not required to be notified in the *Gazette* and the Queensland Government *Smart jobs and careers* website where they are –

- (i) designated to be in a Ministerial office
- (ii) subject to an industrial determination by which the salary, duties and designation of the job are modified
- (iii) at entry level other than the circumstances set out in section 13(c)
- (iv) to be filled in compliance with a progressional scheme or other scheme contained in an award, certified agreement or determination made under section 149 of the *Industrial Relations Act 1999*
- (v) to be filled under a progressional scheme or other scheme subject to an agreement between the relevant industrial organisation of employees and the chief executive and approved by the Public Service Commissioner
- (vi) to be filled temporarily for a period not exceeding 12 months
- (vii) to be filled by transfer or secondment at or below level, including the application of priority placement provisions specified in a current directive
- (viii) to be filled by the promotion of a registered redeployee where the promotion is to a classification level that is not higher than the redeployee's substantive classification level immediately before their redeployment
- (ix) to the office of a chief executive under Part 5, Division 2 of the *Public Service Act 1996*
- (x) a vacancy which has been previously advertised and an appointment made but has subsequently become vacant within a period of three months from the date of appointment
- (xi) to be filled in accordance with sections 7.12 to 7.14 of this Directive.

7.5 Recurring vacancies

- (a) Applications for roles below senior officer level may be used to appoint an employee to an identical role provided that –
 - (i) the job advertisement includes a note that applications may remain current for a specified period up to 12 months after the closing date for receipt of applications for the original vacancy, and

- (ii) the appointment occurs within the period specified in paragraph (i).
- (b) Where an identical role could vary from the advertised role in terms of centre/location or employment basis (full time or part time) the advertised role description must include a note to this effect.
- (c) A permanent role may not be filled from a vacancy which is advertised as temporary.
- (d) Applications received during the period specified in section 7.5(a), but after the initial closing date, may be considered.

7.6 Continuous applicant pools

- (a) A continuous applicant pool must provide an opportunity for new or updated applications to be submitted on an ongoing basis. An agency or agencies filling a vacancy through a continuous applicant pool must ensure that advertising requirements under section 7.3 of this Directive are met each week the pool remains open.
- (b) Where a continuous applicant pool is shared between more than one employing agency, applicants must be able to specify for which agency or agencies they wish to be considered.
- (c) Applicants must be informed of how appointment will be notified and whether they can expect individual notification that they have been unsuccessful in obtaining a given role.
- (d) Applicants who are considered unsuitable because they do not meet mandatory qualifications or requirements are to be notified of the reason that their applications will not be further considered.
- (e) Each selection for an appealable position must document the date on which applications were distributed to the panel following approval being given to fill a vacancy. Applicants who are otherwise eligible to appeal may do so if their application is received prior to the date of distribution of applications to the panel.
- (f) The way that selection is conducted beyond initial application may vary from vacancy to vacancy.
- (g) Agencies must inform applicants of the time for which their applications will remain current.
- (h) Agencies must provide applicants with two weeks notice of the end of a continuous applicant pool and provide information of any alternative application arrangements.
- (i) Vacancies can continue to be filled from a continuous applicant pool for up to six months after notification that the pool will be discontinued.

- (j) A standing offer arrangement is not a continuous applicant pool.

7.7 Assessment of applicants

- (a) Assessment processes must be –
 - (i) appropriate to the basis for assessment set out in the role description
 - (ii) sufficient to assess the merits of applicants
 - (iii) fair and free from bias
 - (iv) consistent with the principles of employment equity and anti-discrimination, and
 - (v) able to be reviewed.
- (b) Where the applicant is a deployee the suitability assessment provisions specified in a current directive relating to deployment apply.
- (c) Applications received after the closing date of the vacancy may be considered.

7.8 Referee checking

- (a) Referee checking relating to an applicant's work behaviour and performance may be undertaken at the discretion of the panel and at any time in the assessment process.
- (b) Where referee checking is undertaken, at least one referee must, unless there are extenuating circumstances, have a thorough knowledge of the applicant's conduct and performance within the previous two years.
- (c) A referee who is a Queensland Public Service employee or an employee in an agency covered by the Directive must disclose all information known to them that is relevant to the applicant's ability to undertake the responsibilities and duties of the advertised vacancy and to the work behaviour of the applicant. Information which is relevant to the basis for assessment or potentially indicative of the applicant's future performance or work behaviour must be provided even if not directly requested by the panel.
- (d) Where adverse comments made by a referee have the potential to affect the selection outcome, the applicant must be given an opportunity to respond. Any such response must be documented and taken into consideration by the panel when evaluating the relative merits of the applicant.
- (e) A referee must be advised of the panel's duty to disclose adverse comments to applicants in the circumstances outlined in 7.8(c).
- (f) A panel may, with the agreement of an applicant, access additional referees to those originally nominated.

7.9 Pre-employment checks

- (a) Pre-employment checks of preferred applicants may include checking of criminal history, identity or previous discipline history.
- (b) Criminal history checking must be undertaken only in accordance with legislation applying to the employees of an agency and, where relevant, directives issued by the Public Service Commissioner.

7.10 Post selection feedback

- (a) All applicants are to be advised that they may request feedback.
- (b) Feedback is to be provided to any applicant who seeks it.
- (c) Applicants who request feedback should receive timely, factual and constructive feedback sufficient to explain why they were not successful.
- (d) Shortlisted applicants who request feedback must receive feedback from a member of the panel.

7.11 Documentation and confidentiality

- (a) Documentation of a selection decision must clearly explain the decision-making process with reference to the basis for assessment contained in the role description.
- (b) Selection documents must be maintained in strict confidence and security for the periods specified under the Queensland State Archives *General Retention and Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records* in the case of roles at senior officer level and below and indefinitely in the case of senior executive officers.

7.12 Direct appointment to roles at a higher level

- (a) This section does not apply to senior officer or senior executive roles.
- (b) Subject to the provisions of this section a chief executive may, without advertising, appoint an employee to role at a higher classification level where -
 - (i) the occupant has been seconded to, or temporarily employed in, the role, or
 - (ii) the role has been reclassified.
- (c) The employee -
 - (i) must have undertaken the role in question for a total of not less than two of the preceding three years, and
 - (ii) must be assessed as meeting the agreed performance objectives of the role.

- (d) In relation to direct appointment following secondment to, or temporary employment in, a role at a higher classification level, the temporary role must have been advertised and the employee appointed on merit.
- (e) In relation to direct appointment to roles which have been reclassified -
 - (i) the employee must be the substantive occupant, and
 - (ii) reclassification must not be higher than one classification level above the employee's substantive classification level, and
 - (iii) an employee who has been appointed to a higher classification level in accordance with section 7.12(b)(ii), or a similar provision in an earlier directive relating to recruitment and selection, is not eligible for further appointment under the provisions of that section in the event that the role in question is again evaluated at a higher classification level.

7.13 Appointment of a temporary employee to tenured status level

- (a) A chief executive may convert a temporary employee or temporary general employee to tenured status at level in the following circumstances:
 - (i) the temporary employee or temporary general employee was selected for the role in accordance with the provisions of this directive or any directive that applied at the time the appointment was made, and
 - (ii) engagement in the role has been for a continuous period of two years service, and
 - (iii) the temporary employee or temporary general employee has been assessed as satisfactory, meeting the agreed performance objectives of the role, and
 - (iv) the suitability of surplus employees, employees seeking alternative placement due to medical reasons and registered employees has been considered in accordance with provisions contained in directives relating to priority placement.
- (b) Chief executives are to keep a record of the number, type and classification level of appointments that are made in accordance with this section each financial year. For audit and reporting purposes, these records are to be retained for at least twelve months from the date of approval.

7.14 Limited applicant pools

- (a) A limited applicant pool applies where exemption from the advertising provisions of section 7.3(a) is required to minimise potential displacement of existing permanent public service employees or to minimise, as far as possible, any disruption to the workforce that may result from organisational restructuring.

- (b) All proposals for limited applicant pools must be agreed to by the chief executive and the relevant industrial organisation of employees and have the approval of the Public Service Commissioner. This requirement does not apply to other schemes contained in an award, certified agreement or determination made under section 149 of the *Industrial Relations Act 1999* as provided for under section 7.4(iv) of this Directive.
- (d) Registered deployees, surplus departmental employees and staff seeking alternative placement due to a medical condition do not need to be included in a limited applicant pool if there is the potential to displace permanent employees.
- (e) Limited applicant pools may include temporary employees only where –
 - (i) there is no potential to displace tenured employees, and
 - (ii) an opportunity has first been given for surplus departmental employees, employees requiring alternative placement due to a medical condition and registered deployees to be considered in accordance with the provisions of relevant directives relating to priority placement.
- (e) Applications received after the closing date of a limited applicant pool may be considered.

7.15 Gazette notification

- (a) If an appointment is made to a vacancy which has been advertised in the *Gazette*, notification of the appointment must be published in the *Gazette*.
- (b) Notification of appointments made to recurring vacancies must be published in the *Gazette* where the original vacancy was notified in the *Gazette*.
- (c) Notice of the direct appointment of an employee made in accordance with section 7.12 is to be published in the *Gazette*.

7.16 Exemption

The Public Service Commissioner may exempt specific jobs or categories of jobs or agencies from specific parts of this Directive.

7.17 Transition

- (a) Selection processes for positions advertised according to Directive 01/04 – *Recruitment and Selection* are to be finalised in accordance with the provisions of that directive.
- (b) The provisions of sections 7.3 and 7.4 of this Directive may, for a period of six months from the commencement date of the Directive, be applied to any position treated as entry-level under Directive 01/04 – *Recruitment and Selection*.

George O'Farrell
Public Service Commissioner

30 June 2006