

Reference Document	Fijian Civil Service - Open Merit Recruitment & Selection Guideline
Commencement Date	23 November 2017
Review Date	The review date is 12 months after the commencement date and every three years after that.

POLICY STATEMENT

1 Intent

The purpose of this policy is to understand open merit based recruitment and selection guideline, apply tools and techniques for selecting applicants, develop procedures for implementation of Open Merit Based Recruitment and selection; and ensure consistency in the recruitment and selection of staff across OAG.

2 Scope

This policy and procedure applies to panel members for staff recruitment process and in adherence for making selection after considering KESA (Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Abilities) as advertised for the specific position.

The Open Merit is a system of appointing employees based on their ability to do the job, assessed against objective selection criteria which do not discriminate against or give preference to any group or individual.

This guideline applies to all positions in OAG, including Government Wage Earners, temporary and project staff and to all appointments including promotions, secondments and acting on higher positions.

This policy aims to maintain the turnaround time of 20 working days for filling of vacant positions based on the timeline in this policy.

3 Principles

Recruitment is defined as the process of seeking applicants for positions. It includes the registration and processing of applications received for positions.

Selection is defined as the process of assessing applicants in order to determine the most meritorious candidate for appointment to the vacant position/s.

The application of open merit based recruitment and selection policies requires adherence to the following Principles:

- Open and transparent competition for all positions;
- Decision making based only on the requirements of the position;
- Transparency and Accountability in decision making;
- Fairness and equity in all staffing decisions, particularly with regard to activities which would impact on relative merit of recruitment and selection decisions.

4 Definitions and Acronyms

Policy Maker Auditor-General

Management Approval of Management Committee

5 Supporting Documents/References

Fijian Civil Service - Open Merit Recruitment & Selection Guideline

6 Keywords

KESA
Recruitment
Selection
Open Merit

7 Supporting Procedures and Guidelines

The guidelines to the policy are attached as Annexure I to this policy. This information will provide the background to the development of the policy should Officers need clarification.

RESPONSIBILITIES	
Implementation	The management are responsible for implementing the policy.
Compliance	Management, Human Resources and all Interview Panel Members are responsible for complying with the policy.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Corporate Services
Development and/or Review	Corporate Services
Interpretation and Advice	Corporate Services

ANNEXURE 1

1.0 Definitions

1. KESA's
 - a) **Knowledge-** Factual information to be true
 - b) **Experience-** knowledge or skills gained in a particular field, of a profession or job, gained over a period of time'
 - c) **Skills-** the learned ability to carry out predefined processes
 - d) **Abilities-** processing natural aptitude or acquired proficiency in an activity or occupation.
2. **Predictive Validity-** how well will an activity predict how a person will behave on the job.
3. **Reliability-** is the selection tool dependable or consistent. An unreliable Selection Tool set or results at one time and a different set of results at another.

2.0 Steps of Recruitment and Selection

1. Identify Vacancy
 - a) Senior Administrative Officer HR will identify a vacancy when there is need to be filled for smooth running of OAG operations.
2. Confirm the need for the position
 - a) DAG shall confirm the need for position and once approved by the Auditor-General the position is advertised.
3. Advertise the position
 - a) Existing contracts must be advertised 90 days before the expiry of the contract.
 - b) All vacant positions (both substantive and temporary) will be advertised for a minimum period of one week, through the means deemed appropriate with regard to the term of the position and the skills, knowledge and abilities required to perform the duties of the position.
 - c) Pool positions does not need to be re-advertised as the same applicants as merit list is valid for 6 months.
 - d) The advertisement will clearly state the closing date and time for applications, late applications are not to be accepted.
4. Select and approve the panel
 - a) The Corporate Services in consultation with DAG/Directors is responsible for recommending (in writing) the panel for each vacancy, the Auditor-General will approve the Selection Panel.
 - b) The Selection Panel is responsible for managing all selection activities for the designated vacancy.
 - c) Human Resource Officer is also responsible for acquiring an Independent Panel Member.
 - d) Human Resource Officer is responsible for ensuring that independent panel members have adequate knowledge of the position requirements and are able to fully contribute to the process.
5. Request for the Independent Panel Member
 - a) Request is made to either public or private sector.

6. Receive applications after closing
 - a) All application received are given to registry for recording.
7. Register Applications
 - a) All received application are stamped and recorded by Registry, including the ones received through emails.
 - b) Any applications received after the due date is rejected.
8. Acknowledge receipt of applications
 - a) All applications received by Registry will be acknowledged within 1 day of receipt of application.
9. Preparing the Application Matrix
 - a) This involves preparing the summary of all applications received.
 - b) Where multiple positions are available for appointment (including Pool positions), or where there is more than one suitable applicant for a single position, an order of merit list will be compiled and offers made based on that order of merit.
 - c) Corporate is responsible for the preparing of the long-list matrix while the panel is responsible for short-listing.
 - d) Where an order of merit is compiled, the order of merit will remain current for a period of 6 months,
 - e) Pool positions may have their order of merit approved to remain current for a period of up to 6 months;
 - f) The Human Resource prepares all the information for the interview selection File.
 1. Prepares Interview Agenda
 2. Matrix
 3. Advertisement
 4. Declaration of Interest
 5. Individual score sheet
 6. Overall panel summary & final recommendation.

Master file is kept- with all the received applications (shortlisted and non-short listed).
10. Sending the Application Matrix to the panel for short-listing
 - a) The Panel is responsible for shortlisting the candidates for advertised position.
11. Short-listing the Application
 - a) Shortlisting
 - i) Consider Skills and Abilities in the Job Description
 - ii) Focus on what you're given by the applicant, not what you know.
 - iii) Ideally, don't "mind read" information.
 - iv) Apply the same standards for all applicants
 - v) Try to be inclusive rather than exclusive
 - vi) Don't work to a set number, read, look at against the criteria and then look for a natural break in the applicants.

- b) Long listing
- i) Look at the Job description your panel has been given and look for information within the person specification and personal character
 - ii) Using the applications you have, identify the relevant information above for each applicant.
 - iii) Corporate is responsible for the preparing of the long-list matrix while the panel is responsible for short-listing.

12. Preparing the meeting papers for the panel

- a) The matrix summary together with Advertisement, Declaration of Interest form, individual score sheet
- b) Overall panel summary & final recommendation
- c) Providing written questions (to say in interview room)

<u>Do's</u>	<u>Don'ts</u>
-Ensure panel understand their role	- Interrupt other members
-Allocate questions appropriately	- write too many notes
-Ensure panel understand the scoring system	- rate the interviewee while they are present
-Act collectively as a team	- Talk too much (but Listen)
-Debrief each other at the end of an interview	

13. Interviewing the candidates, rating the candidates and make recommendations

- a) Welcome the candidate.
- b) Ensure all panel members are introduced- name and position.
- c) Affirm the position title and purpose.
- d) Explain the interview process- including the anticipated length of the interview.
- e) Inform the applicant that notes will be taken.
- f) Check if the applicant has any questions before beginning.
- g) The Corporate Services may provide advice to the panel on the most appropriate selection techniques for individual positions.
- h) The Selection panel will document their questions/activities and will confirm their model answers and scoring methodology, prior to commencing the selection activity.
- i) Only the criteria listed in the approved job description may be considered when determining the most meritorious applicant for a position.

Behavioral based interviewing

- Questions designed from Job description
 - Based on concept of past behavior
- The focus for panel is: STAR Response
 - Situation
 - Task
 - Action
 - Result

14. Reference Check

- a) Referee check forms.
- b) Referee checks will be conducted for at least the top recommended applicants.
- c) Referee checks will confirm/deny claims made by the applicant during the selection process;
- d) Referee checks must be conducted with work related referees who can comment on the applicant's work performance;
- e) Referee checks are not scored and do not contribute to the overall merit of the applicant;
- f) The referee check may be written or verbal.
- g) Following confirmation of referee reports, the selection report with final referee comments will be submitted to the Auditor-General.
- h) If an order of merit is held for the position, a referee check must be conducted prior to offering the position to any other applicant on the order of merit.

15. Preparing the selection report for AG

- a) Allow enough time to rate each candidate.
- b) Identify resources needed.
- c) Ratings are applied to candidate responses e.g. (1 to 5).
- d) Weightings are applied as 60% for performance assessment and 40% for interview scores.
- e) In case of external applicants, an assessment of rating (percentage) will be based on reference check form and would be used to assess performance of the applicant.

Selection Tools

1. *Assessment Centers* e.g. attending a job-related test to predict behavior.
2. *Ability Test/Job samples* e.g. job test, computer literacy test, job sample (engineers).
3. *Structured Behavioral Interview* (ask open-ended questions).
4. *In-tray Exercise* (e.g., set of data is given, ask participants to organize).
5. *Bio Data* (e.g. for selection report purpose).
6. *Reference* (e.g. referee check).
7. *Educational Qualification* (e.g. education up to the position level or similar qualification- attained through short courses).

After Interview

1. Each panel member rates the interviewee separately
2. Ensure your rating is defensible – use specific examples
3. Compare notes with other panel members (debrief)
4. Aggregate the total
5. Panel agreement and prepare overall summary sheet
6. Order of Merit (subject to reference check)
7. Panel members compile all paperwork used during the process.
8. Sign and date each rating form

16. Preparing the offers and contracts
 - a) Once recommended candidate is approved by AG, Human Resource prepares the offer letter and contract.
17. Unsuccessful applicants notified
 - a) The unsuccessful applicants are notified at the close of the interview and selection process.

3.0 Selection of Panel Members

- a) The Selection panel shall comprise of a minimum of three members, with the following attributes, skills / knowledge:
- b) Minimum of 3 members (1 member nominated as chair)
- c) At least one member to have technical knowledge of the position, preferably the Director or Supervisor responsible for the position;
- d) Panel members will all be at or above the level of the position;
- e) Panel members will have successfully completed an approved OMRS training. This is applicable for panel members only from civil service
- f) Gender Balance- at least one male and at least one female
- g) Conflict of interest must be declared.
- h) For all positions including Director level or above , there will be one suitably qualified person from outside the organization;
- i) For the same post, in addition to the member from outside the OAG, there will be one suitably qualified independent panel member from outside the Civil Service.
- j) No additional payment is to be made where duty time has been granted for Public Sector employees

4.0 Corporate Services may provide a Panel Briefing:

- a) Position Details
- b) Safeguard against bias/discrimination
- c) Confidentiality
- d) Interview preparation
- e) Interview Documentation
 - i) Corporate information
 - ii) Position Purpose
 - iii) Key Duties
 - iv) Key Performance Indicators
 - v) Person Specification
 - vi) KESA or Key Selection Criteria
 - vii) Personal Character and Eligibility.

5.0 Ground of Unlawful Discrimination under Employment Relations Amendment Act

Culture	Primary Language
Ethnic or Social Origin	Economic, Health or Social Status
Color	Disability
Place of Origin	Age
Sex	Religion
Gender	Conscience
Sexual Orientation	Marital Status
Gender identity and Expression	Pregnancy
Opinion or Beliefs	

6.0 Procedure Review Process- PRP (Appeals)

- Applicable only to appointment for substantive vacancies advertised after January 2017.
- Appeal can be based on PROCESS only and not on a particular individual.
- The only considerations whether the process was followed and whether the process is consistent.

Steps for Lodging PRP

1. Lodge to OAG HR Committee within 5 working days of notification
2. Fill PRP request form or a written letter
3. OAG HR Committee reviews eligibility for the request and advice within 5 working days of receipt.
4. The Committee will consider any eligible PRP and make recommendation within 10 working days.

The recommended outcome of procedural review can be:

1. Appointment stand, process was in accordance with the guideline
2. Appeal upheld- OAG HR Committee to review

7.0 Procedural Review Provisions for Pool Positions

- Pool Selection
- Applicants will be advised within 5 days of approval of the order of merit for the pool
- PRP must be lodged within 5 days of notification of the outcome of the suitability of their application
- 1 position = 1 appeal e.g., if 3 appeals are received for same position, it would be evaluated only once.
- Must be based on a claim that the order of merit was not followed.
- Unsuccessful appeals are not notified to organization.

8.0 Pre-Employment Medical

Before appointment to the position, successful candidates must complete and provide a satisfactory medical reports. The Human Resources shall arrange for the identified candidate to attend a Pre-employment Medical Examination at a registered medical practitioner, and this will be reimbursed to the staff upon appointment.

9.0 Acting appointment (max of 6 months):

- a) Does not require an interview, merit based appointment
- b) Nomination to come from Directors who will consider staff performance as the basis for nomination
- c) Staff can only act in the position for 6 months i.e. Auditor level & above. Position to be filled within 30 days from the time the position becomes vacant. This means, staff can be appointed to act within 30 days.
- d) Acting appointments for less than 30 days may be approved by Auditor-General based on recommendations from Director/Deputy Auditor-General where the absence by substantive post holder has not been planned and filling of position through acting appointment is necessary to meet legislative timelines of OAG.

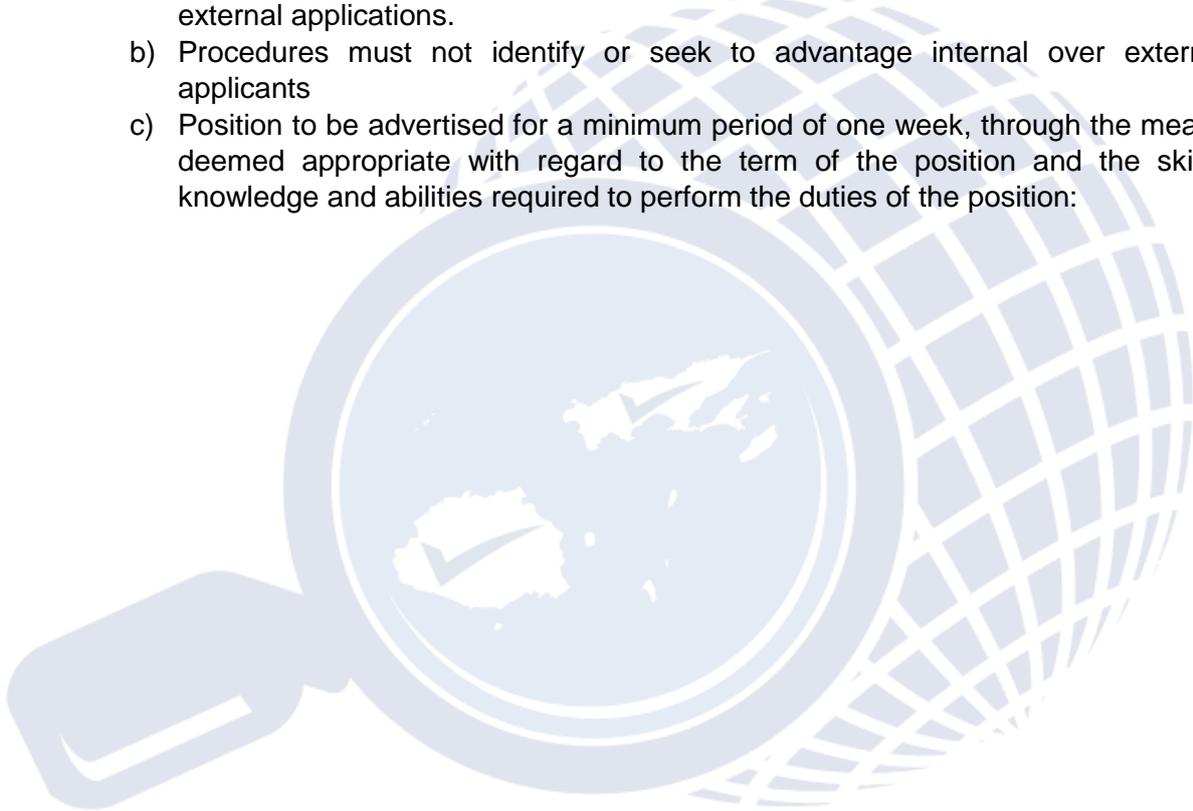
NB: Regularization of acting appointments - this practice is in direct opposition of the merit principle and is not to be permitted. It means, through acting appointments, staff may not be directly absorbed into permanent establishment.

10.0 Pool Positions

- a) Does not need re-advertisement
- b) Use the same applicants
- c) Merit list is valid for 6months
- d) Selection for these positions will be done using the order of merit established for the "Pool", where there are many vacancies all with the same duties and skill requirement.

11.0 Vacant Position

- a) All procedures will provide equal opportunity, for all groups including internal / external applications.
- b) Procedures must not identify or seek to advantage internal over external applicants
- c) Position to be advertised for a minimum period of one week, through the means deemed appropriate with regard to the term of the position and the skills, knowledge and abilities required to perform the duties of the position:



Annexure II: Recruitment & Selection Plan

Activities	Person Responsible	Due Date
Identify Vacancy	Senior Administrative officer - HR	-
Confirm the need for the position	DAG	-
Advertise the position	Corporate	2 weeks
Set and approve the panel	AG/DAG	The same day the position is advertised
Request for the Independent Panel Member	Corporate	The same day the position is advertised
Receive applications after closing	Corporate	-
Register Applications	Corporate – Registry	1 day after closing date
Acknowledge receipt of applications	Corporate	1 day of receipt of application
Preparing the Application Matrix	Corporate	2 days after closing date
Sending the Application Matrix to the panel for short-listing	Corporate	2 days after closing date
short-listing the Application	Panel	3 days after closing
Preparing the meeting papers for the panel	Corporate	3 days after closing
Interviewing the candidates, rating the candidates and make recommendations	Panel	3 days after short-listing
Reference Check	Corporate	1 day after interview
Preparing the selection report for AG	Panel/Corporate	2 days after interview
Preparing the offers and contracts	Corporate	-
Unsuccessful applicants notified	Corporate	-

Annexure III:



REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Section A: Candidate Details	
Title: <i>(Mr., Ms., Mrs.)</i>	Surname:
First Name:	Middle/Other Names:
Current Employer:	Department:
Position Held:	Current Salary:
Referee Name:	Designation:

Section B: Evaluation of Candidates	
<i>5: Totally Satisfied 4: Satisfied 3: Somewhat Satisfied 2: Somewhat Dissatisfied 1: Totally Dissatisfied</i>	
1. How would you rate candidate's relationship with coworkers, subordinates & supervisors?	
2. How would you rate the quality and quantity of output generated by the candidate?	
3. Does the candidate have positive work attitude?	
4. How satisfied were you in the following area: <i>(please provide individual area rating)</i>	
• Time Management	
• Customer Service	
• Meeting Deadlines	
• Achieving targets/goals	
5. How would you rate candidate work ethics in the following area: <i>(please provide individual rating)</i>	
• Reliability	
• Honesty & Integrity	
6. How would you rate the overall candidate performance?	

Declaration by Referee

I certify that the information on this form is correct and complete. I acknowledge that the provision of incorrect information may result in legal action.

Referee Signature: Date:

7 Review

This policy will be reviewed 12 months after implementation and every 3 years after that.

8 Monitoring

Any abuse of the policy will result in disciplinary action and that OAG also encourages staff to disclose any breaches of conduct or conditions covered by OAG policies.

9 Who to Contact About this Policy

Any queries is directed to Corporate Services.

10 Revision/Change Log

Version 1.0	
Policy endorsed by:	Executive Management Committee
Policy approved by:	Auditor-General
Policy effective from:	23 November 2017
Policy to be reviewed by:	23 November 2018
Manager responsible for policy:	Manager Corporate Services