

## Recruitment Policy for Staff at Gatehouse Chambers

### **Policy Statement**

This Policy applies to the recruitment to all staff roles at Gatehouse Chambers, including both internal and external candidates.

The members and staff at Gatehouse Chambers are committed to equal opportunities at work and in our recruitment practices. We believe that our people are our greatest asset and we want to attract and retain the very best talent. Gatehouse Chambers is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly encourage applications from people who are underrepresented in the legal profession <https://gatehouselaw.co.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/> in line with our core [values](#), which is underpinned by our [Gatehouse Chambers Charter](#).

### **Advertising**

Available staff roles will be advertised widely on our website, social media and within a range of job sites (including but not exclusive to industry specific sites), and including those which may facilitate access to the chambers environment from those underrepresented at the Bar. We will seek to attract enquiries and applications from the widest and/or most diverse group of candidates.

The advert will set out what the post is, a brief overview of the responsibilities, what the requirements of the role are and an outline of the salary.

A job description will be made available which provides the necessary detail to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post.

Adverts will be posted internally to the staff team by email.

In some cases, and in order to retain and promote our own talent from within, posts will only be advertised internally.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to recruit through an external agency, usually when an initial round of recruitment has been unsuccessful or if the role is deemed to need specialist skills or qualifications that we are unlikely to find internally (for example, accountant or IT specialist).

### **Application**

The first stage is the written application: the job advert will explain how candidates can submit an application, which may be by filling in an application form or through an online portal. It is important to answer the questions fully, and to give examples when encouraged to do so.



Applications must be submitted by the deadline. Late applications will not be considered. As a general rule CVs will not be considered, save in exceptional circumstances.

All completed applications will be anonymised (name, address) and all information about reasonable adjustments removed by the HR team before they are passed to the sifting panel. Candidates are very much encouraged to fill out the diversity monitoring form when they apply, but again this information is separated and removed before applications are considered by the sifting panel. We are only interested in the data of applicants across the board in each selection exercise, and not in those of individual candidates.

## Sifting

Applications will be considered by at least two people (this is the sifting panel) on a scoring matrix and against the published criteria for the role, which will be made available as part of the recruitment pack.

Those candidates who evidence answers to all the questions, including good examples, and against the competencies listed for the job should achieve a high score. Those candidates who do not answer the questions fully and who don't give examples, are likely to receive a low score. Those with the highest aggregate scores will be shortlisted for interview.

Consideration will be given to the diversity of the sifting panels and interview panels at all stages.

## Interviews

The second stage of the process is to be invited for interview: candidates who are shortlisted will be invited to a first-round interview. There will usually be a second-round interview for a fewer number of the strongest candidates who performed best in the first round. However, this stage may be skipped in exceptional circumstances, for example if the pool of candidates is very small and a unanimous decision is reached on a clear front-runner after the first-round interview.

For both interviews, candidates will be told in advance who will be on the panel and whether the interview will involve a task or require specific preparation (e.g. a presentation).

Interview panels will usually be made up of at least two individuals, who may be staff (and sometimes also including barristers) from Gatehouse Chambers and will be chosen by the HR Manager as appropriate. In some roles the interviews may also have the assistance of a specialist external consultant as part of the interview panel.

The same basic questions will be asked of all candidates, and based on the competencies for the role (which candidates see as part of the application pack). The panel may ask some follow-up questions depending on the answers given. Scores will be given against each question. Candidates will also be given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the interview.

## **Offer**

The second interview panel will consider and assess carefully the performance of each of the candidates interviewed and review their interview scores. They will also consider any other factors that may have come out of the interview, and the candidates' suitability for the role. The interview panel will then agree which candidate is the front runner and who should be offered the role.

Usually, the offer will be made by telephone in the first instance, however, it may be made by email if the candidate is uncontactable by phone. The successful candidate will be formally offered the position in writing, subject to references and criminal record checks being arranged at our expense. These checks are undertaken because of the sensitive nature of some of our work.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible after the selection process comes to an end. All personal data of unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed, in line with our GDPR policy, within 3 months of the end of the recruitment process.

## **Reasonable adjustments**

At every stage of our recruitment process, candidates with disabilities, including persons with 'invisible' disabilities, will be offered reasonable adjustments, and we welcome applications from neurodiverse and disabled candidates.

## **And finally.... being your fabulous self!**

We work in a professional services environment and with that comes a need to give a good impression to our clients and colleagues. However, we know that you will be more confident if you can be your fabulous self, as long as you are smart (for example, braids, cornrows and other hair accessories are absolutely welcomed). This is relevant for the recruitment and interview process, and also if we are lucky enough to welcome you as a colleague.