

Royal Northern College of Music
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Policy & Procedure
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RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

1. **Introduction**

The College recognises that people are the most important asset of any organisation and fundamental to its success. We recognise that to sustain our reputation for excellence we must focus on attracting, recruiting and retaining the best local, national and international employees.

2. **Aims**

The College aims to promote best practice in recruitment practice by:

- ensuring that recruitment processes conform to best practice and ensure that the College recruits the best candidate for the job;
- providing a transparent framework for recruitment which promotes fairness and equality of opportunity for all applicants; ensuring compliance with the College's [Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) and all relevant legislation;
- ensuring that line managers and other staff with recruitment responsibility are aware of the College's recruitment policy and procedure and the importance of adhering to best practice.

This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all categories of RNCM academic and professional services staff.

The engagement of Casual workers is to be undertaken by Line Managers with guidance available on the [intranet](#) and from Human Resources. Line Managers must ensure work does not take place before the right to work in the UK verification has been completed.

Diverse Workforce

Our aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and the diverse communities we serve, ensuring equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment. We actively oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination and are dedicated to ensuring equitable opportunities in all aspects of employment, from recruitment and hiring to training, development, and promotion.

The RNCM values diversity and actively embraces inclusive recruitment, encouraging applications from underrepresented groups and we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure full participation.

3. **Identifying a recruitment need**

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade. The following should be considered:

- Is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- Does the feedback received from the exit interview indicate a need for any change?
- Could the work be accommodated in other ways, for example, redistribution?

3.1 **Role analysis**

Where the duties of the job have changed the line manager should discuss the post with the Human Resources Department to establish the appropriate grade for the post, ideally before approval is sought.

All posts within the College covered by the nationally agreed pay spine will be assigned to specific grades based on an assessment of the job by means of the application of Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) scheme of job evaluation. The application of HERA will apply both to new posts and re-evaluation of existing posts where the duties of the role have changed. A completed role description ([template available on the intranet](#)) for any new posts must be submitted to human.resources@rncm.ac.uk in order to obtain a formal evaluation of the grade.

Please refer to the [Job Evaluation and Grading Policy](#) for full details.

4. Notification of a recruitment need

The Human Resources Department should be notified as soon as a recruitment need arises. The Department will provide guidance in relation to the recruitment procedure and any support required by the line manager.

4.1 Staff Requisition Form

See Appendix 1 for a flow chart of the staff requisition approval process.

A Staff Requisition Form (available on the [intranet](#)) must be completed by the line manager and forwarded to Human Resources, accompanied by a job description and person specification (current and blank template job descriptions and person specifications can be obtained from the Human Resources Department). The form is to be completed for permanent, fixed term, and temporary posts to be appointed through an agency.

Once Financials have been obtained from the Finance Department, completed form should be sent electronically to the Human Resources Department for it to be considered by the staffing sub-group of the Executive Committee. A member of the Human Resources Department will inform recruiting managers of the outcome.

Once approved, the Human Resources Department will then discuss the recruitment procedure including suitable methods of selection and agree appropriate time scales with the line manager.

Before any post is advertised or filled by way of a direct appointment, consideration must be given to any existing staff whose posts are vulnerable to redundancy.

4.2 Job Description and Person Specification

4.2.1 Job description

A job description is the key document in the recruitment process. It should clearly set out the main duties and responsibilities of the post and include the following:

- The job title (which must be gender neutral)
- The location of the job i.e. Department/School
- Grade/scale
- Salary/hourly rate of pay
- The post to whom the postholder is responsible
- Any posts reporting to the postholder
- List of main duties and responsibilities
- A summary of terms and conditions of employment.

An accurate job description allows applicants the opportunity to assess their suitability for the role and to decide whether to proceed with their application, thereby limiting the number of inappropriate applications. It will also define the expectations of both the successful candidate and the manager and serve as a framework for the working agreement, whilst providing indicators for targeted induction and training, assessment within the probationary period and ongoing performance review.

4.2.2 Person specification

The person specification details the skills, knowledge, experience and abilities that are required to do the job. It should be drawn up after the job description and used with it to construct the advertisement. Criteria should be divided into essential requirements necessary to undertake the job and desirable attributes, which the ideal candidate will have.

The person specification should be detailed, related to the job and not be unnecessarily restrictive – for example, only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified.

Criteria must be identified in terms that allow for objective evaluation within the selection process.

5. **Recruitment Process**

5.1 **Recruitment campaign**

It is College policy that all vacancy advertisements must be processed through the Human Resources Department. Vacancies may be advertised on the College website, the College's social media platforms and via external advertising platforms. The choice of medium will be determined by its appropriateness in attracting the best candidate, taking into account cost in relation to the level of the role.

5.1.1 Dealing with enquiries

Potential applicants seeking further information either by telephone or directly from the person dealing with the vacancy enquiry should not be given the impression that s/he is either suitable or unsuitable for a particular post. Information given should be restricted to purely factual details relevant to the vacancy.

5.1.2 Convening a recruitment panel

The recruiting manager will normally take the role of Chair of the recruitment panel. When sitting on a recruitment panel for the first time, Chairs and members of interview panels will be provided with 'A Managers guide to fair recruitment and selection techniques'. Further training will be available from the Human Resources Department if required.

As part of the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity, panels will normally:

- Consist of a minimum of three people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post, a colleague who is familiar with the area of work and a third person, preferably from outside the department.
- Consider, if the appointment is to a department providing services to the rest of the College, inviting an end user of these services to join the panel.
- Reflect a gender balance wherever possible.

- Declare if they already know a candidate before shortlisting commences.
- Be willing and able to attend all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

5.1.3 Shortlisting

The Human Resources Department will prepare a short-listing pack for the members of the interview panel which will contain the following:

- Candidate application forms
- Shortlist record form
- Job description and person specification.

Short-listing should involve as many of the interviewers as possible. At least two members of the interview panel, including the immediate line manager, should undertake the task.

The shortlist record form must be completed using the criteria in the person specification. Objective reasons for selecting and declining candidates must be recorded. Although written reasons for rejecting candidates do not need to be lengthy, sufficient information must be kept for adequate feedback to be provided to applicants if requested.

Application forms of unsuccessful candidates must be deleted, application forms for those to be interviewed should be retained by the panel members until the interview process concludes.



5.1.4 Recruiting people with a disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person may be defined as having a disability if they have 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-day activities'.

The College is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people and to demonstrate our commitment we use the Disability Confident Scheme which is awarded by the Department of Work and Pensions. Part of this commitment is the Guaranteed Interview Scheme whereby a candidate who indicates on their application form that they have a disability will be guaranteed an interview, provided they meet the minimum criteria for the role.

The College is also committed to making reasonable adjustments to allow for the appointment and retention of people with a disability.

The Chair of the panel will be notified in confidence if a candidate has indicated that they have a disability. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that, if the essential criteria on the person specification are met by the candidate, that they are selected for interview.

5.1.5 Safer recruitment

The RNCM is committed to:

- safeguarding and protecting all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices.

- identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.
- responding to concerns about the suitability of applicants during the recruitment process.
- responding to concerns about the suitability of employees once they have begun their role.
- ensuring all new staff participate in an induction which includes child protection.

5.1.6 Interview

Recruitment panel members will be provided with a pack containing:

- Interview schedule
- Interview record form (Chair only)
- Interview sign-off form (Chair only)

All paperwork is to be submitted to the Human Resources Department after the interviews. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that this happens.

a) Interview questions

The questions to be explored by each panel member will normally be agreed in advance to avoid overlap or repetition and panels may find it helpful to discuss their expectations of full answers to the questions, prior to the interview.

The same areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates and assumptions should not be made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their employment history. All questions asked should be directly relevant to the job description and person specification.

The Human Resources Department can provide guidance in terms of interview questions.

Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate or group of candidates. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous.

Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g. questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job). It is, for example, legitimate to ask for confirmation of whether individuals can comply with the working patterns of the post, but not to ask details of their domestic or child care arrangements etc. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that such questions are not asked.

b) Interview notes

Interview panels act for the College in making selection decisions and are accountable for them. Interview notes must be taken to help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interviews. Such notes must relate to how applicants demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification and should feed in to the completion of the Interview Record Form by the Chair at the end of the interview.

In relation to disabled applicants, a record should be kept of any requests for adjustments and reasons for decisions made.

The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint and an Employment Tribunal would expect the College to have notes of every selection decision. The lack of such notes would seriously impede the College's ability to contest such a complaint. Reasons for selection/non-selection must therefore be clearly justified and recorded.

c) Information given at interview

It is important to remember that the information given verbally to an applicant at interview may form the basis of a contract of employment. It is therefore imperative that information provided regarding the terms and conditions of the post is accurate.

d) Selection tests

Consideration can be given to using job-related selection tests or asking candidates to give presentations as part of the selection process if appropriate, to measure their actual or potential ability to do or train for a particular job. The Human Resources Department can advise on, or assist with the design of appropriate methods to gather evidence to assess all relevant skills.

Appropriate assessment methods may include one or more of the following:

- Presentations or "teaching" simulations including masterclasses (e.g. for academic applicants);
- Practical assessments including performance (e.g. to assess technical capability);
- Work simulations such as role plays or "in-tray" exercises.

e) Decision making

The information obtained in the application, the interview and any selection tests will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made. The decision must be made:

- systematically and objectively, on the basis of evidence obtained throughout the selection process;
- without making assumptions or stereotyping;
- keeping all information in context; not focussing on one or two issues.

If the successful applicant has a disability and adjustments have been identified, advice must be sought after the interview from the Human Resources Department regarding what would be considered 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the disability.

Interview proceedings are confidential, and interviewers must not divulge to others the decision reached until the appointee has accepted the post.

f) Post-interview process

Record keeping

All documentation in respect of a vacancy including application forms, short-listing forms and interview records must be returned to, and will be retained by, Human Resources for six months after the selection process is complete in the event that a complaint is received.

Feedback for candidates

It is good practice to offer applicant feedback (if requested) after interviews. Feedback should be specific, related to the person specification and honest. Applicants should be advised of their strengths and weaknesses displayed at interview. The Human Resources Department can offer guidance on how to provide feedback.

5.2 Agencies and the Agency Worker Regulations

Human Resources will liaise with selected agencies with your requirements and can arrange for a selection of candidates to be seen. Agency workers on an assignment accrue “equal treatment” rights in certain areas as if they had been directly employed by the hirer (i.e. the College). Some rights such as access to facilities and amenities (such as catering facilities or car parking), and the right to be informed of job vacancies are applicable from day one of the assignment, whereas some rights such as basic working and employment conditions (pay, working time, annual leave etc.) become applicable after completing more than 12 weeks work.

For further advice, and to ensure the College meets its legal obligations it is essential that all appointments of agency workers are coordinated through discussions with the Human Resources Department.

5.3 Direct appointments

In exceptional circumstances, the line manager may seek approval to waive the requirement to advertise a post and to fill it by way of a direct appointment, including the transfer or promotion of a specific member of existing staff. Where it is felt that the circumstances may justify a direct appointment, a detailed explanation must be provided on the Staff Requisition Form. The request will be judged on a case by case basis.

6. Offers of employment

The Chair of the panel should complete the Interview Sign-off Form provided and return it to the Human Resources Department after they have contacted the successful candidate to offer the post (subject to satisfactory references being received, evidence of eligibility to work in the UK, and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check ,where appropriate).

The form will contain the details of the successful candidate, including the agreed salary and start date. The form, together with any application forms, shortlisting forms, interview record forms and interview notes must be returned by the Chair to the Human Resources Department for retention.

6.1 Starting salaries

The following guidelines are applicable to all appointments to jobs graded 1-10 on the College’s grading structure, including existing employees who are transferred or promoted to another position within the College.

The guiding principles of determining starting salaries are:

- To ensure consistency and equity across groups of employees employed in similar jobs.

- To ensure that appointments are normally made to the first incremental point of the relevant grade.
- To ensure that appointment to discretionary points is used in exceptional circumstances and only after authorisation by the Executive Committee Staffing Sub-Group.

6.2 New employees

New employees will normally be appointed to the grade minimum of the advertised salary scale unless and by exception, direct relevant experience would justify additional increments. This reflects the fact that individuals may have the basic skills and competences required for the job, but that it will take them time to gain the experience to perform the job at a fully competent level.

In the event that a recruiting manager wishes to appoint above the grade minimum, they should discuss this with HR and secure appropriate approval. Any starting salary offered above the grade minimum must be supported by objective justification provided by the recruiting manager on the Interview Sign Off-Form

Consider the following when deciding on a starting salary:

- Previous relevant experience: the successful candidate may have previous relevant experience in the role to which they have been appointed. While length of experience may be an indicator of future performance, this should not be the sole factor which justifies a salary offer above the grade minimum.
- Current salaries of existing employees with similar responsibilities and duties: consider the salary profile of existing employees.
- Current salary of successful candidate: in all cases this should be verified as part of the reference request with the candidate's current employer.

6.3 Internal moves or promotions

When an existing employee is appointed to a new position at the same grade as their current position they will be appointed on the same incremental point as they are currently on and retain their current incremental date.

When an existing employee is appointed to a new position at a higher grade than their current position they will normally be appointed on the first incremental point of the new grade.

These principles apply to appointments that are made through open recruitment, restructurings, secondments, re-gradings and promotions.

7 Pre-employment checks

7.1 References

References will be requested by the Human Resources Department. Two attempts will usually be made to obtain information from a given referee before an alternative reference is sought after discussion with the relevant Head of School/Department.

Full details can be found in the [Employment References Policy](#).

7.2 Criminal convictions and Disclosure and Barring Service Applications

The College will not discriminate unfairly against applicants who have a criminal record and will not necessarily bar an applicant from employment due to an unspent conviction; the nature of the conviction and its relevance to the post will be considered.

7.3 Working with children or adults at risk

A Disclosure and Barring Service application will be required if the position involves working with children or adults at risk, or in other positions of trust or sensitive areas which are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

If you are recruiting for a new role, or you are unsure whether a role is eligible for a check please contact the Human Resources Department.

Full details can be found in the [Disclosure and Barring Policy](#).

7.4 Checking eligibility to work

The Asylum and Immigration Act makes it a criminal offence to employ anyone who does not have permission to be in, or work in, the UK. To avoid making assumptions about such permission, it is the College's responsibility to ensure all appointees are eligible to work in the UK.

Work must not commence until evidence of the right to work in the UK has been verified.

7.4.1 Points-based immigration system

Under the points-based immigration system, with the exception of Irish citizens and those that already hold a Visa, anyone coming to the UK for work must meet a specific set of requirements for which they will score points. Visas are then awarded to those who gain enough points.

This system provides flexible arrangements for UK employers to recruit skilled workers from around the world through a number of different immigration routes.

The College holds a sponsor licence which means we can hire eligible employees from outside the UK where the role meets the eligibility requirements for sponsorship, including minimum salary thresholds.

It is essential that line managers contact the Human Resources Department for further guidance before making an offer of employment.

8 Relocation expenses

The College will consider making a contribution towards relocation expenses in cases where an individual moves to the Greater Manchester area to take up post, subject to the following conditions:

- The individual currently lives in an area that is not considered to be within reasonable commuting distance of the College, and intends to move to an area that is;
- The expenses are normally incurred during the first 12 months of service;
- The advertisement for the post was on a national or international basis;
- The claim does not exceed the maximum relocation allowance determined at the time;

- Copy invoices are produced for each element of the claim and fall within the guidelines detailed below;
- The post is Grade 8a or above.

Provided all of the above conditions are met, employees will be eligible to claim for:

- Furniture removal expenses, including storage (two separate quotations should be obtained and submitted);
- Additional costs incurred as a result of taking up temporary accommodation during an interim period;
- The costs of travelling back to the original home base - up to a maximum of one journey per month for the first 6 months of service;
- The cost of legal and/or estate agent fees that are directly connected with the purchase and/or sale of residential property (two separate quotations should be obtained and submitted).

To make a claim, an individual should submit all relevant invoices to the Human Resources Department who will verify the claim and arrange for payment.

If an employee, who has received assistance with relocation under these procedures, leaves voluntarily within the first 24 months of service then he/she will be required to repay any amount that has been claimed in full.

The Principal has the discretion to increase the amount of removal expenses to be paid and/or extend these provisions to include staff who do not meet all of the conditions above.

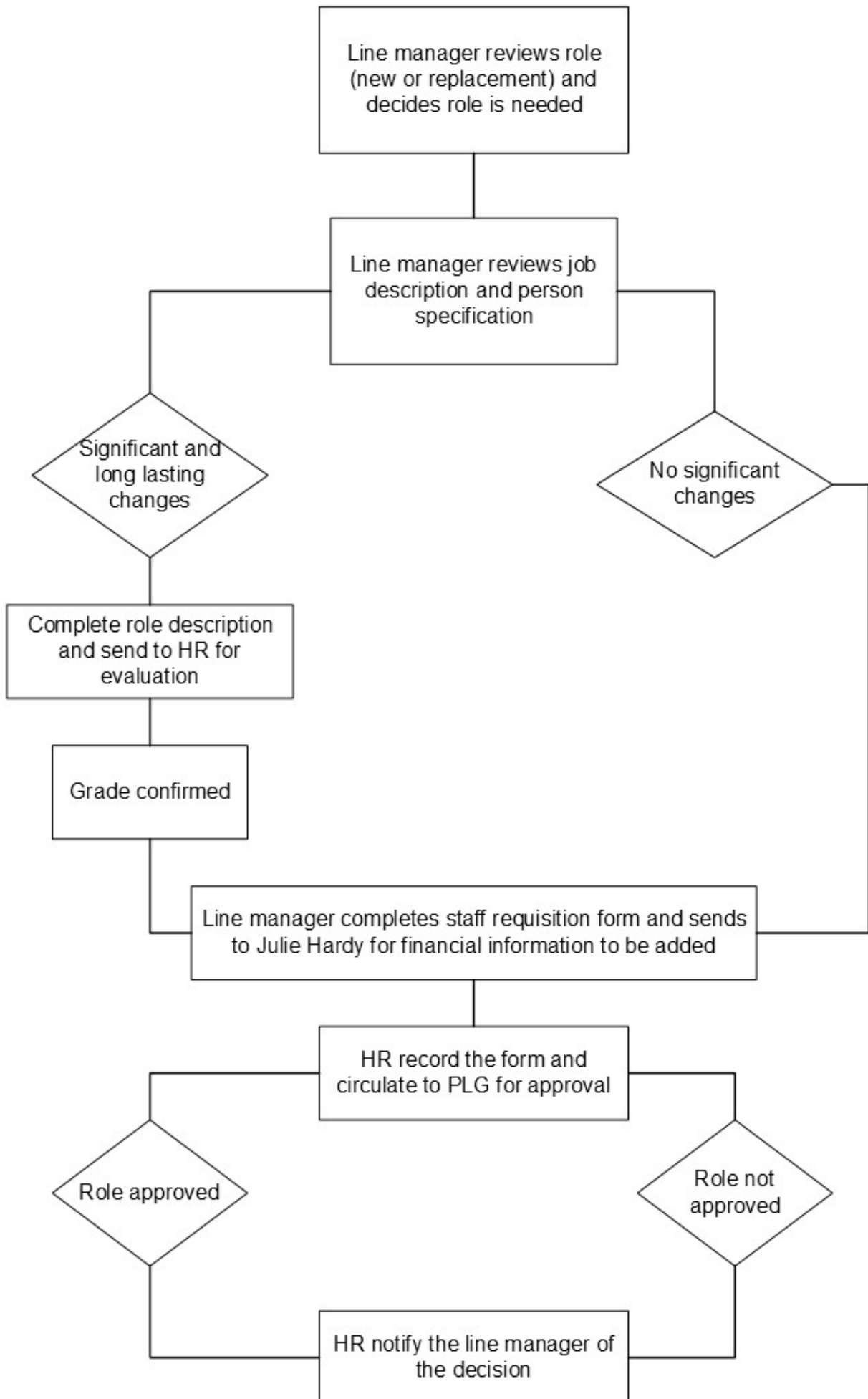
Any false claim that is made under these procedures will be considered to be fraudulent and if proven, would be taken to be a very serious offence that may warrant disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the individual that is responsible.

Related Policies

- [DBS Policy](#)
- [Belonging, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Exit Questionnaire Policy](#)
- [Induction Policy](#)
- Probation Policy ([Academic](#)) and ([Professional Services](#))
- [Data Protection Policy](#)

Related guidelines

- UKVI – Eligibility to work and checking documentation
- UKVI – The UK's points-based immigration system
- The College's Recruitment and Selection Briefing



ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC

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Approvals

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