PD 143 Completion of Job Descriptions and Person Specifications.

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Registered Owner: Head of People Services and Organisational Development

Author: Jasvir Ginda

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Linked Documents:
- PD 127 Job Evaluation Scheme
- PS 137 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- PG 037 Recruitment and Selection Managers Guide
- PS 173 Recruitment and Selection Policy
- PD 381 Police Staff Recruitment & Selection Procedure

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Post: Deputy Chief Constable

Authorised (Head of Dept/FEG)
Signed: .......................................................... Date: June 2020
Name: Claire Salter
Post: Head of People Services and Organisational Development
SECTION 1  TITLE
Procedure on completion of Job Descriptions and person
specifications

SECTION 2  VERSION CONTROL

<table>
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1.1 Introduction

This guide has two principal aims:-

The first aim is that the guide is a support to line managers in the preparation, review and completion of accurate, non-discriminatory job descriptions and person specifications.

The second aim is that the document will encourage the use of a standard format for both Job Descriptions and Person Specifications across the Force. This will ensure consistency of approach especially in terms of Job Evaluation and Selection processes.

If after reading this guidance you have further questions regarding the writing of Job Descriptions and Person Specifications then please contact your Divisional Commander/Head of Department in the first instance.

2.0 Job Descriptions

2.1 What is a job description?

A Job Description is a clear statement of duties, setting out the basic details of the job, defining reporting relationships, the overall objective of the job, the main accountabilities and other special requirements or features, which in turn provides an objective, analysed, justifiable basis for a Person Specification.

2.2 What is a job description used for?

- As a tool in recruitment
- As a tool in selection
- As a basis of employment contracts
- As a means of job evaluation for Hay Grading purposes
- As a means by which the employer’s expectations, priorities and values are communicated to new members of staff.

2.3 What should the job description contain?

The Job Description should be presented using the standard Nottinghamshire Police template at Appendix A. Appendix B shows you an example of this form in use. (This example is a fictional Clerical Assistant job and is not meant to represent any specific job currently in Force).

Every job description in Force should have the following requirement as a principal accountability:

‘To participate in the Force PDR process and take responsibility for identifying your own professional and career development needs.’

For appraisers there should be the additional requirement:

‘To undertake regular appraisals of your staff in accordance with the Force PDR process and take responsibility for helping to address their professional and career development needs.’
2.4 Guidance notes on how to write the job description:

**Job purpose**

This should be an accurate, concise and generic statement of why the job exists. It should summarise the overall role of the job from the organisation's point of view, and one sentence should normally be adequate for this. It supplements the job title, which can sometimes give a misleading impression of the job.

**Principal accountabilities**

These are statements of the continuing end results required of a job. They should identify what the post holder does and why, NOT how.

They should be written in the form:

What........is done........................to what...........with what outcome. e.g.

Formulate and gain acceptance for annual budgets to secure the resources necessary to achieve agreed work programmes.

Produce detailed designs and drawings, which meet the specifications of the project brief.

Below is a list of action verbs that may be useful in the writing of Principal Accountabilities.

<table>
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<th>Management</th>
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<th>Specific</th>
<th>General</th>
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<td>Identify</td>
<td>Forecast</td>
<td>Issue</td>
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<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Obtain</td>
<td>Manage</td>
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<td>Direct</td>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>Justify</td>
<td>Operate</td>
<td>Supervise</td>
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<td>Establish</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>Propose</td>
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<td>Plan</td>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Recommen</td>
<td>Submit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Supply</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Principal accountabilities should be:

- Precise and realistic.
- Relate to the outputs that the jobholder will be expected to achieve or produce, and that each should therefore state what the jobholder can be held responsible for.
- Where a job task is performed under supervision, this should be clearly stated.
- Where there are deadlines to work to, these too should be included, or at least their existence recognised, in the job description.

For most jobs there should be between six and ten principal accountabilities.

Do not be tempted to exceed this number as making the job description too long dilutes the magnitude and importance of the job, which usually results in undermining its influence.

**Dimensions**

This section will identify in a quantitative way the significant areas upon which the job **impacts** either directly or indirectly. These can be written under the following four headings:

**Financial:**
Will indicate in terms of annual sums of money relevant magnitudes such as responsibility for budget, operating costs, income, project costs, and salary costs for subordinates. Latest budget figures will be used.

**Staff:**
Numbers reporting to the post directly, indicating where appropriate a functional breakdown.

**Sphere of activity:**
Does this post operate on a local, regional, national and/or international basis?

**Other:**
Will indicate any other magnitudes, which help to clarify the job e.g. number of operating sites, customers, suppliers, requisite qualifications and/or experience.

Do not include skills, qualifications etc. in this section as any behaviours and experience required will be covered in the Person Specification.

**Organisational/Departmental Chart**

An organisational chart shows how this post fits within the department/organisation and highlights immediate reportees.
Accountability/Signature

A signature gives the writer of the job description accountability and ownership.

Date:

Will enable anyone using/looking at the document to know when the job description was last up-dated.

People Services maintains a database of all Job Descriptions and Person Specifications in existence. Having a central location for all job descriptions ensures consistency and unnecessary repetition. Up-to-date job descriptions are available from your People Services Advisor.

3.1 Person Specifications

3.1 What is a Person Specification?

A person specification lists attributes that are required of someone aspiring to fill the post.

3.2 What is a person specification used for?

It lists the criteria that the organisation proposes to use in shortlisting and selecting an individual. The person specification is therefore vital and lays the foundation for the success or failure of a selection process as a whole.

A badly written person specification will make selection difficult, to the point of impossibility, unless one resorts to subjective judgements.

3.3 What should the person specification contain?

The Person Specification should be presented using the standard Nottinghamshire Police template at Appendix C. Appendix D shows you an example of this form in use. (This example is a fictional Clerical Assistant job and is not meant to represent any specific job currently in Force).

3.4 Guidance notes on how to write the person specification.

3.4.1 A person specification is a list of criteria, which should be:

Job Related

There should be a clear link between the criteria and the job description. To do this identify the activities that must be undertaken to achieve the job and then from the activities, skills and behaviours can be identified.

For example; if a behaviour identified in the job description is ‘team working’ the person specification criteria may be ‘experience of working as part of a team’

Ability Based

The criteria must be in expressed in terms that describe the abilities one is seeking.
Clearly defined
The criteria should be expressed in terms, which allow for little or no scope in
individual interpretation.

Measurable/Observable
Must be described in terms of measurable and observable facts that are
not distorted by personal feelings or prejudices.

Agreed
Time must be made available for all persons involved in a selection process to
agree the person specification criteria to be used.

It is important that even if the line manager is not directly involved at other
stages in the process, they must be involved at this stage.

This process of agreement also gives an opportunity for differences in
interpretation to be resolved

Justifiable
It must be possible to defend the use of each criterion.
For example, is it required for the safe effective performance of the job?
All criteria should be essential.

Beware of direct or indirect discrimination in your criteria. Ask yourself, will this
criteria adversely affect or eliminate the chances of a minority group directly or
indirectly?

Consistently applied
Criteria must remain unchanged throughout the selection process. If during
the process it is found necessary to change any of the criteria, the exercise
should be aborted and restarted.

Avoid specifying criteria for the very best performance when the person may
only rarely be required to operate at this level and training can be provided to
enhance skills.

3.4.2 The criteria should be categorised in the following way:

- Knowledge and Experience

For example:

- Experience of working with young people between the ages of 11-18
  in a group situation
- Detailed and up-to-date knowledge of the Data Protection Act 1998

- Ensure that any knowledge requirement is at an appropriate level.
  Check if you are asking for too high a level. Check if it can be learned on
  the job.

If possible, breakdown experience into specific parts and specify the quality and
the length of experience required to perform the duties. Can you justify any
length of experience you ask for? Remember, in some instances, someone with
10 years’ experience of doing something may not have as extensive experience as a person with three years’ experience.

- **Skills and Abilities**

For example:

Have the ability to write reports for senior management accurately and within a set time-frame

Be specific with skills. For example, what do you mean by communication skills? Oral communication skills or written? Even then it is possible to break these skills into more specific areas, for example, dealing with difficult customers or the ability to compose letters.

Another example is ‘Leadership Qualities’. What does this mean? It could be possible to break this down again to ‘the ability to manage conflict’, ‘motivate staff’ and ‘planning and prioritising’.

- **Education and Qualifications**

For example:

Must have Graduate Membership of the Chartered Institute PD

Consider the level of general or specialised education required. You should consider why qualifications are needed and try and break these down into Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Abilities and enter specific components within these sections as an alternative way for people to achieve the criteria. This will help to avoid indirect discrimination.

- **Other**

For example:

- Must have the ability to travel around the County to various locations as and when required.

This could be any other essential criteria for the job, for example, the need to work out of normal hours (*this does not mean long hours*) or in different locations. If there is a requirement for the post holder to drive, consider whether it really is essential. Would it be possible for the post holder to use public transport or could someone else cover that part of the job? This is an area of potential discrimination as a person with a disability, for example, may not be able to drive but is able to travel around the county by other means.

Vetting:

- Must be prepared to undertake either recruitment vetting or management vetting.
3.4.3 The method of assessment

To ensure that we are able to test the criteria in the selection process as appropriately as possible and to give the potential candidates an idea of how the criteria may be assessed, alongside each criteria an appropriate method of assessment must be recorded.

This will also focus the selection panel members when thinking about the most appropriate selection process.

Methods of assessment could be:

- Application form – at shortlisting stage
- Interview
- Test
- Competency questionnaire

Criteria could have two or more possible assessment methods. Ensure that you think through, however, the most appropriate methods.

For example, the method of assessment for a qualification will be the application form. ‘Detailed knowledge of the Data Protection Act’, however, will be difficult to assess on an application form but would be possible in an interview and possibly even better as a practical or written test.

**SECTION 4 LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

This procedure document has been drafted in accordance with relevant legislation including:-

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act
- Employment Act 2002
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

There is no restriction on the disclosure of this procedure to the public.
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title:

Depart/Location

Responsible to:

Responsible for:

Date:

JOB PURPOSE

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. To participate in the Force PDR process and take responsibility for identifying your own professional and career development needs.

10. *(If appraiser) To undertake regular appraisals of your staff in accordance with the Force PDR process and take responsibility for helping to address their professional and career development needs.

*Delete if not supervising
1 DIMENSIONS

Financial

Staff:

Sphere of activity:

Other:

2 ORGANISATIONAL/DEPARTMENTAL CHART

3 ACCOUNTABILITY

Prepared by____________________________________ (Post)

Signature_________________________________________ Date________
APPENDIX B

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Clerical Assistant
Department; Location: Research and Development; FHQ
Responsible to: Research and Development Officer
Responsible for: N/A
Date: March 2020

JOB PURPOSE

To provide office, clerical and administration support to the Research and Development Assistants Officer and Manager to ensure the smooth running of the office.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To provide routine general advice and information on all aspects of the team’s activity to visitors and callers, referring issues for follow up to supervisors, in order to provide efficient customer service to both internal and external customers.

2. To maintain manual and computer records and files inputting and extracting information as necessary to provide accurate information/data, to comply with requests and meet deadlines.

3. To collect, open and sort mail, distributing correspondence to individuals and to envelope, address and dispatch mail as necessary to ensure a timely and quality service is provided.

4. To word process correspondence from drafts, audio tapes or dictation ensuring accuracy in order to provide a professional service to the team and internal and external customers.

5. To prepare agenda, attend meetings, take minutes and produce and circulate accurate records of meetings as required by the team to ensure communication between team members and clarity of action points.

6. To compile orders for stationery and supplies, before submission for authorisation and delivery through the stores system, maintaining adequate stock levels of routine supplies and requests for other items.

7. To operate office machinery as necessary in order to provide a full administrative support role to the Research & Development team.

8. To participate in the Force PDR process and take responsibility for identifying your own professional and career development needs.
DIMENSIONS

Financial: No financial responsibility Staff: N/A

Sphere of activity:
To provide clerical and administrative support for up to five people within the Research and Development team.

Other:

ORGANISATIONAL/DEPARTMENTAL CHART

Head of Strategic Planning

Research and Development Manager

Research and Development Officer

R & D Advisors          Clerical Assistant  
(x 3)

ACCOUNTABILITY

Prepared by _____ Research & Development Officer _____________ (Post)

Signature _________ Example __________________________ Date  15th March 2020
### Job title:

Department:

Responsible to:

Responsible for:

Date:

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<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION/QUALIFICATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Able to demonstrate a personal commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with force values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be willing to undergo recruitment vetting</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

Prepared by ________________________________ (Post)

Signature ________________________________ Date __________

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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE
PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job title: Clerical Assistant
Department/location: Research and Development; FHQ
Responsible to: Research and Development Officer
Responsible for: N/A
Date: March 2020

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<th>CRITERIA</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Previous experience in the operation of computerised word processing and database systems to produce a variety of documents, i.e., reports, memos and letters.</td>
<td>Application form/Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Previous experience in providing administrative support to a team.</td>
<td>Application form/Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledge and experience of using office equipment.</td>
<td>Application form/Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS AND ABILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to input data accurately using spreadsheets and databases.</td>
<td>Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to communicate effectively and professionally on the telephone, face to face and on paper.</td>
<td>Application form and Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to demonstrate excellent time management and organizational skills</td>
<td>Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be able to work on own initiative with minimal supervision.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION/QUALIFICATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To be educated to GCSE pass standard in Maths and English Language/equivalent level or equivalent level of experience</td>
<td>Application form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able to demonstrate a personal commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with force values.</td>
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ACCOUNTABILITY
Prepared by______________________________(Post)
Signature_________________________ Date __________

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