Chapter 4
Staff Recruitment and Selection Procedure[1]

1.   PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to identify the process for staff recruitment and selection.

2.   SCOPE

This procedure does not apply to the recruitment of supply teachers.

3.   ADVERTISING

3.1   The purpose is to attract the best applicants available in the most timely and cost-effective way.

3.2   Mainly publicly advertise job vacancies on the school website.

3.3   The advertisement should include the number of job vacancies available and job description for each position.

4.   SELECTION COMMITTEES

Selection committees should be established to shortlist applications and to interview and recommend applicants for employment.   They may vary in size, depending on the position to be recruited:

Position	Composition of Selection Committee
Teaching Staff	• Up to 2 people, including one who has direct line of command to the position.
Senior Teaching Staff	• One member being manager of the SMC; and • Up to 2 other people who are members of the Senior Teaching Staff.
Administrative Staff	• Up to 2 people, including one member of the office administration staff who has direct line of command to the position.

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[1] This *Staff Recruitment and Selection Procedure* was approved in the SMC meeting held on 24 September 2010 (Ref. No. SMCM 3/2010).

5. SELECTION PROCESS

5.1 In the event an interview is required, shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview either in person or, where this is not possible or practicable, by telephone or video conference.

5.2 Applicants should be asked similar core questions based on the requirements for the position. Supplementary questions may be asked to clarify issues or to obtain further information deemed relevant by the selection committee for identifying the best applicant.

6. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT

6.1 A candidate can be recommended for appointment following the selection process, which includes an interview, referee reports and/or other methods of assessment.

6.2 Where the selection committee reaches a consensus on the candidate for appointment, the Principal will issue an offer of employment and determine the terms of appointment.

7. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Any appeals or complaints received on staff recruitment and selection matter should be referred to the Principal to be handled in accordance with the *Guidelines on Public Complaint Handling (Chapter 8 of the Staff Administration Manual)*.

8. VERIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Clerical Assistant should verify the qualification documents of the applicants including their Certificate of Registration as teachers and Certificate of Service from their previous employers, and complete the referee checks.

9. AUTHORISATION OF APPOINTMENTS

Before issuing an offer of employment, the Principal should ensure that all the requirements for recruitment have been satisfied. The recruitment and selection procedure should be strictly followed before issue of offer. SMC's prior approval should be sought for exceptional cases.

10. RECORDS

10.1 Documents of unsuccessful candidates including application forms and individual assessment records should be destroyed 3 months after the completion of any recruitment exercise.

10.2 Other records of the recruitment and selection process should be properly kept according to the *Guidelines on Record Management* (Chapter 18 of the Staff Administration Manual).
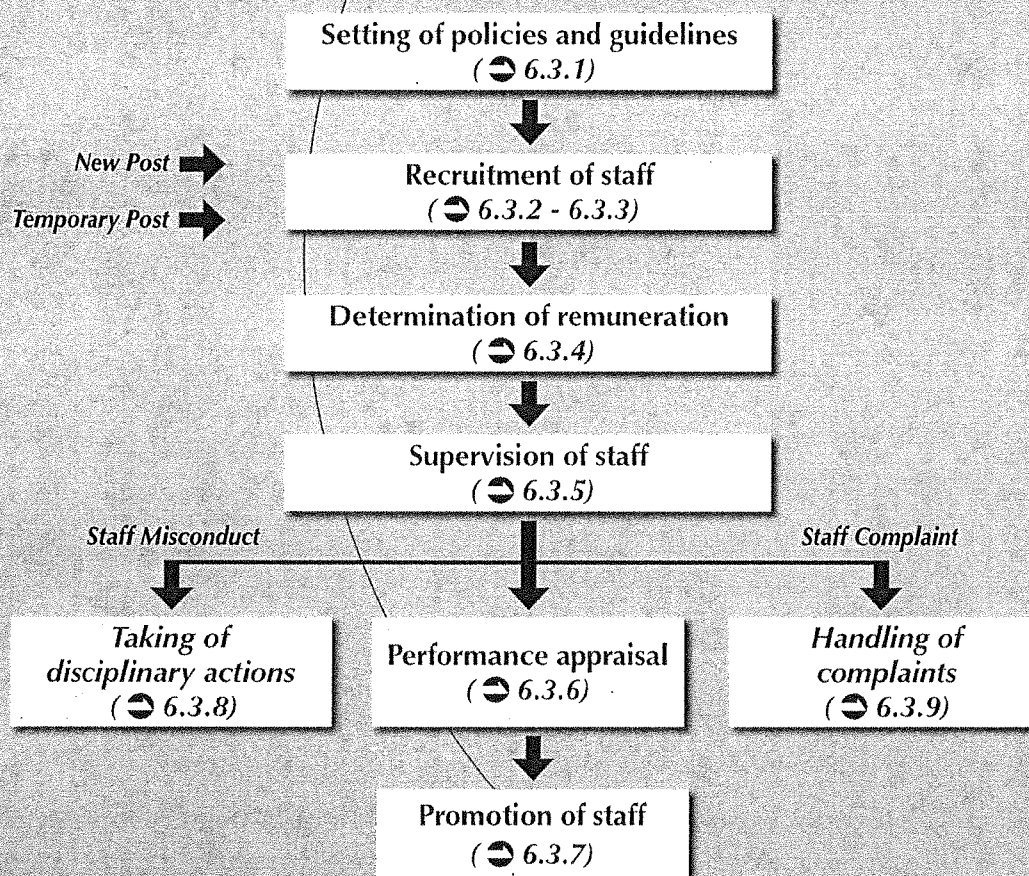
Chapter 6

STAFF ADMINISTRATION

6.1 Introduction

Effective staff administration, such as staff recruitment and appraisal, is important to a school because it helps ensure that staff of the right quality are employed, enhance staff morale, and minimise opportunities for abuse or the perception of such. The basic corruption prevention principles in staff administration are openness and fairness, clear accountability and impartial enforcement of rules and regulations.

6.2 Key Processes

Listed below are the key processes of staff administration. The recommended best practices and control measures for each process are detailed in the respective sections.

Setting of policies and guidelines
(➲ 6.3.1)

New Post ➡
Temporary Post ➡

Recruitment of staff
(➲ 6.3.2 - 6.3.3)

Determination of remuneration
(➲ 6.3.4)

Supervision of staff
(➲ 6.3.5)

Staff Misconduct   *Staff Complaint*

Taking of disciplinary actions
(➲ 6.3.8)

Performance appraisal
(➲ 6.3.6)

Handling of complaints
(➲ 6.3.9)

Promotion of staff
(➲ 6.3.7)

6.3 Recommended Practices

6.3.1 Policies and Guidelines

☐ Lay down in guidelines and make known to all staff the policies for staff administration matters, including:

- staff recruitment, promotion and posting policies;

- staff remuneration packages, covering salary scales, fringe benefits, bonus or gratuity, as appropriate, for each rank of staff or each post;

- job descriptions, working hours and other operational requirements such as overtime work arrangements;

- the authority for approval of overtime work and rates payable;

- the performance appraisal system;

- the disciplinary system, such as the administration of sanctions and levels of authority (e.g. warnings and dismissals); and

- the mechanism for handling staff complaints.

6.3.2 Staff Recruitment

☐ Clearly define the entry requirements of each rank or post (e.g. academic and professional qualifications, years of relevant experience, aptitude and any special skills), and seek approval from the school management or the designated authority.

☐ Advertise job vacancies in newspapers and on the website of the school.

☐ State clearly in the advertisement the job description, entry requirements and other essential information, such as the application deadline, any written test, correspondence address (and email address if any), and enquiry telephone number if available.

☐ Require applicants to declare in the job application form whether they have any friends or relatives working in the school.

☐ Record all applications received in a register or date-stamp and file all applications properly upon receipt.

☐ Require all staff involved in the selection process to declare any potential or actual conflict of interest and reassign staff to take over the process if a conflict is declared (e.g. a candidate is a relative or personal friend) *(Appendix 6).*

☐ Shortlist candidates for interview based on pre-approved criteria, such as years of relevant experience, levels of education attained, results of the written test, etc.

☐ Form a recruitment panel to conduct selection interviews and skill tests as necessary.

☐ Design an assessment form *(Appendix 12)* showing the attributes for assessment and the corresponding marks or weightings, and require individual panel members to give marks on their own.

☐ Record the combined scores of each candidate after the interview and the comments of the panel members on the form.

☐ Prioritize the candidates according to their scores.

☐ Make recommendations for selection to the school management for approval, giving justification if the highest scoring candidate is not recommended for selection.

☐ Designate the authority to approve the panel's recommendation and document the decision properly, in particular the reason if the panel's recommendation is not accepted.

☐ Verify the academic qualifications and work experience of the successful candidate(s) before offer of appointment.

☐   Make provisions for penalties (e.g. termination of employment) in case of corruption offence, fraud, or other misconduct in the employment contract.

☐   Record all refusals of offer and ensure subsequent offers are made to candidates according to their priority.

6.3.3 Employment of Temporary Staff

☐   Estimate the number of temporary staff required, the duration of engagement, and the estimated expenditure, based on the operational need and any performance benchmark, before seeking approval from the school management or the designated authority.

☐   Determine or endorse the pay scale or hourly rates for temporary staff when granting approval.

☐   Recruit temporary staff following proper recruitment procedures.

☐   Maintain a pool of eligible candidates selected through proper recruitment procedures if there is an on-going demand for temporary staff.

☐   Require the supervising staff to complete a performance appraisal form on the temporary staff who are given jobs repeatedly or to report on any adverse performance.

☐   File performance appraisals or adverse records to facilitate record check on candidates before offering jobs.

☐   Maintain proper employment and payment records of all the temporary staff.

7.3   Staff selection

7.3.1   General principles and procedures

1. The SMC has to draw up guidelines and procedures governing the appointment, regrading and promotion of teachers.   Selection of staff must be determined solely on the basis of merit and ability assessed according to a set of criteria relevant to the requirements of the work to be performed.   All selection exercises (including appointments, regrading and promotions) should be handled by a selection panel, the role of which is to assess the relative suitability of applicants and to make recommendations on the applicants who best meet the criteria.   A checklist on staff recruitment procedures and a flow chart on promotion and acting appointment are at Appendices 2, 3 & 4.   Appendix 5 details the procedures for regrading in primary schools, and similar procedures can be adopted for secondary schools.

2. The basic principles and some key features of an effective selection system are highlighted below to facilitate the formulation of school policies and procedures.

a.   Fairness and transparency

*   Formal selection procedures should be set up under the principles of fairness and transparency.

*   All vacancies should either be advertised in the press, or circulated by internal circulars (for promotions, acting appointments and regrading of serving staff only) as appropriate. Information in the advertisement should be gender-neutral and discrimination-free (including race, religion, sex, marital status, pregnancy, disability, family status, etc.). The number of vacant posts for appointment, regrading, acting appointment or promotion should be made known to applicants.

*   Selection procedures for appointment, regrading, acting appointment and promotion (such as any arrangement for written assessment, number of interviews and the time for the announcement of result(s)), should be clearly understood by applicants and should be made known to parties concerned. Any deviation from the specified procedures should be justified and approved by the SMC.

*   Applicants who meet the stipulated minimum requirements should be given equal opportunity for selection.

*   If the school has a well-established appraisal system, the candidates' performance appraisal reports over a specified period may also be taken into account in promotion exercises.

*   An independent selection panel should be appointed to consider all applications.

*   Applicants should be assessed according to predetermined criteria and specified procedures.   A standard form should be used to record assessments made by individual panel members.   Assessment criteria relevant to the work to be performed, whether for shortlisting applicants or assessment purposes, must be

free from bias and discrimination in terms of disability, sex, marital status, pregnancy, etc. The criteria must be documented and made available to all applicants.

b. Documentation

- The composition and deliberations of the selection panel should be properly documented and recorded on an assessment form. All personal data must be handled with care in accordance with the requirements of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. In case of doubt, schools may consult the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD).

- Schools should note that the assessment record will be subject to data access by the individuals concerned after the completion of the selection exercise. Hence, the reasons for recommending or not recommending applicants should be noted clearly on the assessment form.

- It is also preferable for separate records to be kept of the individual assessment and overall recommendations. The panel's comparison of the relative merits of individual candidates and the recommendations made by the panel should be classified "restricted". Decisions of the SMC should also be properly documented. Please refer to Appendix 7 for the period suggested for the retention of such data.

c. Review

- The SMC may have to appoint an independent review panel on an ad hoc basis to handle any complaint made by unsuccessful applicants. The review should also be documented.

- The SMC also needs to conduct regular overall reviews of the selection criteria and procedures in adequate consultation with the staff concerned. For the sake of fairness, the composition of the review panel should differ from the selection panel.

7.3.2 Selection panel

1. Membership

a. To ensure that decisions are made objectively, the shortlisting and interviewing of applicants should not be conducted by one person.

b. For impartiality in decision-making, the selection panel should comprise a good representation of stakeholders. It is also essential to include professionals familiar with the job requirements of the vacant post.

c. For recruiting staff other than the school head, it is recommended that the panel should comprise the following members:

- an SMC member other than the school head

- the school head

- a senior teacher of the respective subject such as the Head of the History Panel for the recruitment of history teachers, or a senior administrative staff, depending on the nature of the post to be filled

d. For recruiting the school head, the SMC should consider appointing a panel comprising representatives of the following stakeholders:

- the school sponsoring body
- parents of students at the school
- independent persons
- alumni

e. An EDB representative may also join the panel as an observer upon invitation or when PSEd considers this necessary.

f. The membership of all selection panels should be approved by the SMC and communicated to all parties concerned.

2. Conflict of interest

a. To safeguard fairness in decisions, all managers and staff including the school head and individuals involved in the selection or approval process should be required to:

- declare conflict of interest if any applicant is his/ her family member, relative, friend or a person to whom he/ she owes a favour or is obligated in any way; and
- refrain from taking part in the selection assessment if there is any conflict of interest.

b. Such declarations should be recorded, e.g. in the standard assessment form used for evaluating candidates or the notes of panel meetings. Appendix 10 elaborates in more detail on the subject of conflict of interest.

3. Implementation

a. The Chairperson, Secretary and members of the selection panel should understand their roles and responsibilities before conducting the selection exercise.

b. To facilitate a decision by vote, there should be an odd number of members on the panel.

c. Panel members are required to sign all documents, which should include assessment forms in respect of individual candidates and recommendations of the panel. The records should be kept for a prescribed period of time.