

## P5 HR Policy

Version 1 – Publication Date 01 May 2020 – Next Review May 2022

### 1. PURPOSE AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Forus Training human resource policies and procedures are formal commitments to how we work, collaboratively, with our staff who are either employees or contracted. A supplementary suite of policies and procedures are being developed and/or revised, to take into account wherever possible, the range of circumstances which may impact upon employees and contracted stakeholders work related performance. These policies and procedures **do not** form part of any contract of employment and are subject to change at the organisation's discretion.

### 2. SCOPE

Forus Training aims to reflect the key principles of human resource management;



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Specific areas of management and related policy include, but are not limited to;

1. Quality of Work-Life Balance,
2. Recruitment and Selection,
3. Job Evaluation.

Additional Forus Training HR policy, procedure and process areas, some of which are either embryonic or currently under development;

1. Maternity, Paternity & Adoption Leave & Pay,
2. Parental Leave & Pay,
3. Discretionary Compassionate & Domestic Responsibility Leave & Pay,
4. Discretionary Unpaid Leave,
5. Sickness Leave & Absenteeism,
6. Keeping in Touch,
7. Annual Leave, Public Holidays & Benefits,
8. Returning to Work,
9. Work-life Balance,
10. Arrangement of the Working Day/Flexible Working,
11. Flexible Work Locations/Working Remotely,
12. Performance Review,
13. Learning & Development,
14. Equality & Diversity Policy,
15. Dignity & Respect,
16. Well-being at Work,
17. Capability, Grievance & Disciplinary,
18. Health & Safety at Work,
19. Working in excess of contracted hours,
20. Redundancy.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

At Forus Training we take care to promote an environment in which everyone feels appreciated and empowered. We believe that people work best when they are supported – not just by external factors such as good pay, pensions and terms and conditions, but also by the internal factors that motivate them as individuals.

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### 4. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

For the purpose of this overarching and generic policy, Forus Training have focused immediate attentions on those fundamental areas as annotated below;

#### Quality of working life

- **Annual leave:** Annual leave is calculated pro rata depending on the number of days and hours worked,
- **Compassionate/domestic responsibility/unpaid leave:** Subject to agreement, employees are entitled to up to five days paid compassionate leave or domestic responsibility leave (per issue), if the need arises. We also consider requests for unpaid leave as and when required,
- **Work-life balance and wellness:** Trust, respect and the encouragement of individual responsibility are key components of our working culture. We recognise that employees have responsibilities both inside and outside work. We therefore acknowledge the need for flexibility in the way we manage our work, and will support all staff, employed and contracted, in achieving their individual work- life balance and improving the effectiveness of the organisation,
- **Wellbeing at work:** We aim to promote the wellbeing of employees at work by ensuring that employees have the appropriate knowledge, skills and technology to do their jobs, and work in a safe and healthy environment.

#### Recruitment and Selection Policy

Our aim is to ensure that we appoint high quality employees, well suited to the ethos of the organisation and to the position and associated responsibilities concerned. Forus Training always selects on merit and in ways which conform to best practice in diversity and equal opportunities.

The job descriptions and person specifications are available for potential applicants to view and respond to as part of the application process. The person specification provides the basis of the selection criteria and methods to be used, specifically during the interview process. The following principles for recruitment apply:

- A proposal to appoint will be approved and signed off by the Head of Centre or, in their absence, the Head of Operations,
- All posts will be advertised internally and externally, using fixed term appointments where appropriate, but with the ability to appoint permanently if required.

#### 1. Creation of New Fixed Term Contracts

One or more of the following criteria may be used to decide whether to engage a person on a new fixed term contract:

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- A project which has a specific end date,
- To provide cover for the absence of another colleague for a specified period i.e. maternity or secondment cover,
- To provide flexibility to the organisation in responding to a known or possible uncertainty about future human resource levels.

### **2. Temporary promotion**

Sometimes we will advertise posts on a temporary basis. If colleagues are successful in gaining a temporary promotion the normal expectation is that at the end of the specified period they would return to a post at their substantive pay band. However, there may be occasions, either because there is a continued need for the work or because of staffing changes, where at the end of the specified period the post becomes substantive. In such circumstances we will consider making the temporary promotion of the current post holder permanent without a further recruitment exercise.

### **3. Temporary promotion through 'acting' posts**

In some situations where we have a short term staffing gap and/or where we need to utilize the specific skills or knowledge of an individual, this individual may be asked to 'act up' without running a recruitment process. In these instances we would not normally expect to convert the temporary promotion to a substantive position without a competitive recruitment exercise.

### **4. Extension of Existing Fixed Term Contracts of Employment**

QAAGC executive approval is required for the extension of fixed term contracts where the cumulative contract period will exceed 12 months. This arrangement does not apply to posts to be extended for periods of less than 12 months. We have a standard practice of reviewing the possible need to extend a fixed term contract two thirds through the contract period or three months before the end of the contract, whichever is shorter.

The criteria for deciding whether to extend should take account of not only whether the work needs to be done at the cost incurred by continued employment of the person concerned, but also of wider organisational issues, such as resources becoming available through colleagues returning from extended leave, or existing activities coming to an end.

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### 5. Conversion of Fixed Term Contracts into Permanent Contracts

As with temporary promotions, we will normally only convert fixed term positions to substantive positions without a further recruitment exercise if the individual has secured the post through an open recruitment competition, has been in post for a minimum period, normally 12 months, and if all of the following conditions apply:

- It is agreed that there is a continued organisational need for the post,
- There are no returners to the organisation with the appropriate skills who need redeploying to a post at that level,
- The temporary post holder has performed well (very good or above),
- There are no other individuals on temporary promotion at the same level, who meet all of the conditions above, and whose posts aren't being made substantive.

By only converting fixed term posts to permanent positions when there has already been a competitive process and where there are no other individuals in a similar position we are ensuring no individuals are disadvantaged by the process.

### Pre-employment security checks

As part of our pre-employment screening and an integral part of the selection process, we ask applicants to satisfy basic eligibility criteria/certain conditions of employment e.g. nationality, right to work and provide appropriate documentation to verify ID, nationality, employment and/or academic history, criminal record (unspent convictions only).

Forus Training will always request at least two references from applicants who apply for its vacancies. One of these references would normally be their current or most recent manager/employer. All reference information will be treated as confidential. New employees will not be able to commence employment until satisfactory references have been received. In the context of internal applicants, internal references may be sought from current line managers prior to a formal offer being made.

### Probationary Period for New Employees

Forus Training aims to have an effective and fair means of assessing and improving performance in the probationary period. In some cases employees may fall short of our requirements. We expect these cases to be rare and before a contract is terminated we would look to provide opportunity and support for improvement.

Our conditions of service require that new employees serve a probationary period of six months. During this time, performance is kept under review while support and training, where appropriate, will be given to assist new employees to achieve satisfactory standards of work.

We follow a similar procedure with new staff as we do with longer term employees in our management of performance. If any significant problems in performance, conduct or attendance occur in the

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probationary period, new members of staff will be informed during a formal interview in the presence of the Head of Centre/Operations along with the lead for Human Resources. We may extend the probationary period or give notice of our intention to terminate the contract of employment after such a meeting, if appropriate. Any decision to terminate employment will subsequently be confirmed in writing.

### Job Evaluation

Forus Training aims to have a fair, analytical and objective means of assessing the weight of the positions within the organisation so that there is assurance that the organisation equitably complies with 'equal value' legislation.

Job evaluation is applied to all posts in the organisation, before the position is advertised in order to assign the role to the correct pay level. Also, if the requirements of a position significantly change, job evaluation is used to ensure that the post remains at the correct pay level.

Should the requirements of a job significantly change, the Head of Centre will speak to QAAGC who will explore the full requirements of the job and whether there is a need for a job evaluation. There may be occasions whereby a specific aspect of the work required may be more appropriately assigned to an existing role at a higher level.

If a job evaluation is deemed appropriate, consideration will need to be given to the requirements of the job and whether priorities and/or activities should be changed or stopped. An appointed person will undertake the role of 'evaluator' whereby the job evaluation must compare the job description of a similar existing post in the sector. In order to do this the appointed person will need to identify a specific role to compare against. An up to date copy of the comparable job description will be required to allow this to happen. If a comparable post cannot be identified, a job evaluation form will need to be completed by the direct line manager. The evaluator will use this information to analyse the post and provide an outcome of the job evaluation, mapped onto the pay scale in accordance. If a job is evaluated and allocated to a higher pay band, the individual currently in the job will not be automatically promoted. A number of options will be considered in the context of our approach to resource allocation:

- If the role requires a general set of skills, experience and knowledge, the post will be advertised. If the current post holder is unsuccessful in the recruitment process, they will be appropriately redeployed to another post at their substantive pay band,
- If there are colleagues with the appropriate skills set, at the new higher pay band who need placing i.e. returning from extended leave or their current area of work is coming to an end, we may assign one of those individuals into the job,
- If the individual currently carrying out the role brings to it a specific specialism i.e. set of skills,

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knowledge or experience that is critical to the role and the organisation, we may promote that individual without going through a recruitment process.

### 5. RELATED LEGISLATION

1. Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015
2. Equal Status Acts 2000-2015
3. Workplace Relations Act 2015
4. Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994-2014
5. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
6. Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018
7. Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003
8. Protection of Employees (Part-time Work) Act 2001
9. Protection of Employment (Temporary Agency Work) Act 2012
10. Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996
11. National Minimum Wage Act 2000
12. Payment of Wages Act 1991
13. Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Acts 1973-2005
14. Organisation of Working Time Act 1977
15. Organisation of Working Time (Records) Regulations 2001
16. Maternity Protection Act 2004
17. The Paternity Leave and Benefit Act 2016
18. The Adoptive Leave Act 2005
19. The Parental Leave Acts 1998-2019
20. Carer's Leave Act 2001
21. Protected Disclosure Act 2014
22. The Redundancy Payments Act 1967-2014
23. The Unfair Dismissals Act 1977-2015

### 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resource Management is governed by the Quality Assurance and Academic Governance Council. Forus Training manages HR internally via the Head of Centre and Head of Operations and avail of externality expertise with a leading human resource consultant.

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### 7. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Forus Training communicate HRM related policies, procedures and processes via the following resources;

1. Recruitment Application Packs,
2. Employee and contracted staff Contracts incl. of Terms and Conditions,
3. Staff Handbook.

### 8. CONTACT INFORMATION

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