



AFT

Guidelines for the use of National Assessors in the recruitment and appointment of family and systemic psychotherapists

Information Sheet P2

August 2008

This document should always be read in conjunction with Information Sheet P1, Terms and Conditions of Service for Family and Systemic Psychotherapists

1. Employers are strongly advised to seek the advice of the Association of Family Therapy and Systemic Practice (AFT) national assessors for appointments of family and systemic psychotherapists, both with respect to job descriptions and the calibre and suitability of candidates. Requests for assessors should be made through the completion of a request form available on the AFT website.
2. It is normally helpful to identify and consult assessors early in the appointment process and it is recommended that assessors be given a minimum notice of four weeks when asked for help, advice and attendance at interviews.
3. Whilst the assessor's main role is to advise on the suitability of candidates for appointment to a post, employers may also benefit from their advice – because of their knowledge of standards and the current job market – on job descriptions and appropriate banding for a post before it is advertised. If advising on the suitability of candidates it is useful if assessors can be involved at least from the short-listing stage.
4. The role of assessors on interview panels is advisory. However, assessors can be particularly valuable in guiding the questioning, to allow the candidate to present an effective picture of his/her experience and competence, as well as to reveal gaps and deficiencies. Employers may also invite assessors to rank candidates against the requirements of a post.
5. Assessors can also advise with respect to applications for the rebanding of a post and if required advise on workforce planning issues and career structures for a department.

6. Assessors are usually employed in part or in full as systemic family psychotherapists. Assessors are expected to abide by AFT's Code of Ethics and Practice.
7. There is no charge for assessors. However, employers are expected to pay assessor's travelling expenses.
8. Any cases of difficulty should be referred to the Chair of the National Assessors Panel or the Chair of the Professional Affairs Committee, c/o the AFT Administrator (see below).
9. In order to monitor our service, you are asked to complete a feedback form. The assessor will provide this or it is available on the AFT website.

Recruitment and Appointment Panels

1. For posts on or below band 8b it is advised that the short-listing and selection panel include one assessor.
2. For consultant posts a National Assessor from outside the Trust or agency should whenever possible be asked to sit on the panel.
3. Selection panels should normally include the immediate supervisor/line manager, district head/advisor or equivalent, or head of department. Where the appointment has close associations with a university or other institute of higher education, an additional member from the institution would usually be invited to join the panel.
4. It is important that employers inform candidates of the names of national assessors in advance of the interview.

*The Chair of the Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) welcomes general feedback and suggestions on Information Sheets and can be contacted via Sue Kennedy, AFT Administrative Secretary, 7 Executive Suite, St James Court, Wilderspool Causeway, Warrington WA4 6PS. Tel: 01925 444414
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