RECRUITMENT PROTOCOL IN MPLS

The operation of the [**university recruitment protocol**](https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-protocol) has been devolved to the divisions as at November 2020. The majority of cases may now be determined either within the department or by the division, though the divisions can continue to consult the Registrar or the Pro Vice Chancellor (People & GLAM) for advice or arbitration on any particularly difficult questions. This document sets out the practical operation of the protocol in MPLS.

If you have any questions about a particular case, or you would like to discuss your approach to a complex issue, please do get in touch via [**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk).

BUDGETING, PLANNING AND HEADCOUNT CONTROL

The inclusion of a post in the department’s budget is an important component of the planning process, but it does not replace the need for any necessary protocol approval at the point when the department wishes to fill or refill the post. The university’s headcount control mechanism remains in place as before.

The need also remains to carefully consider how we can most effectively meet ongoing and ever-changing staffing needs within agreed departmental budgets and headcount limits. There is a need to remain conscious of salary costs in this uncertain time, and we must continue to help ensure that where recruitment is occurring, existing staff coming to the end of a fixed-term contract or whose post is at risk of redundancy are given first priority. If it is not possible to fill the post with a priority candidate from within the department, the department should consider whether it may be possible to develop existing staff and create an internal promotion opportunity. Having explored options of this kind, the decision to move to advertise a particular administrative/ professional services /technical /support post rests with the department.

The division and the university will keep the operation of the protocol under review, and the division may decide in the future to increase the range of circumstances where divisional approval is required, should that prove necessary to ensure that the spirit and effectiveness of the protocol is maintained.

CONSIDERING REQUESTS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

Departments should consider any requests that arise with a high level of scrutiny and should ensure that their processes ensure that requests are checked carefully against the criteria for the relevant post type (as set out in the [**university protocol**](https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/recruitment-protocol)) and considered in light of current departmental priorities and the department’s agreed budget and headcount.

Once a department has decided that a request is well supported and meets the criteria, the request must be signed off within the department by the HAF or the HoD (as appropriate to the type of post and the department’s procedures). Staff requests in CoreHR should be raised according to the department’s normal procedures, but should not be approved by the department unless and until all necessary protocol approvals have been confirmed.

***Whenever a department agrees a change/recruitment to a post that has been costed against the departmental budget, and where no further divisional approval is required to proceed,* *please nevertheless send a brief email* s*tating what the change/recruitment is to***[**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk)***to inform the division.***The division then will note it against the record of the budget.

EXTERNALLY FUNDED POSTS

Research, professional services, administrative or technical/research support posts in grades 1-10 which are 80% or more externally funded for the full lifetime of the fixed term position remain outside of the scope of the protocol. These posts require no application or notification to the division. Posts which are internally (i.e A-ledger) funded, or externally funded to less than 80% may require an approval however. See below for more information about making changes to ‘internally funded’ posts and guidance about approvals required to fill different types of post.

SUBMITTING A REQUEST TO THE DIVISION

All requests requiring divisional approval should be set out on the [**MPLS recruitment request form**](https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/divisional-support-and-services/administrative-services-and-resources/academic-appointments/recruitment-protocol-in-mpls/resolveuid/cabd3d35c73248809588c99f6cc83379). Requests to the division for new professional or technical support or administrative posts and teaching posts should be accompanied by a draft of the job description and an org chart/explanation of the structure of the team. Requests relating to academic and permanent research posts should be accompanied by a [**financial case**](https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/divisional-support-and-services/administrative-services-and-resources/academic-appointments/recruitment-protocol-in-mpls/resolveuid/df2b32cc51a944dcb14f4b104e0cdd59) (see here for[**guidance on completing the financial case**](https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/divisional-support-and-services/administrative-services-and-resources/academic-appointments/recruitment-protocol-in-mpls/resolveuid/cfb5ca096a334df3bb386d37c9cfaa42)).

DIVISIONAL CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS

Requests relating to internally funded support, technical and professional services posts and teaching positions that require divisional approval will be considered by the Divisional Recruitment Panel (which includes the Academic HR Team Leader, Divisional Financial Controller and Divisional Registrar). The Divisional Recruitment Panel will report regularly on its activities to the Divisional Personnel Committee. Requests relating to Associate Professorships, Chairs, RSIV posts or to research positions will be considered by the Divisional Personnel Committee. The division will aim to consider requests via the divisional processes within a week or so of submission. The division will supply an approval code for inclusion by the department in its comments on the CoreHR staff request approval. The code confirms that divisional approval has been granted.

REGRADINGS

Regrading remains outwith the scope of the recruitment protocol.However departments are, as always, encouraged to seek informal advice on potential regradings if they wish from the MPLS HR team before submission. *Note, however that if a vacated post is to be upgraded ahead of advertisement, this change to the post must be approved through the divisional protocol (see below*).

CHANGES TO FTE

Increases to FTE of 25% or less of an individual's hours have been exempted from the university protocol. In addition, increases to hours greater than this do not require divisional approval unless they have not been budgeted and included in the department’s agreed headcount. Any budgeted increase to FTE whether with a person in post or upon a refilling may be agreed by the department. Divisional approval *is required* however for any unbudgeted increase to FTE of over 25% of the individual’s current hours. *Note that the requirement to seek divisional approval for any proposed change to academic FTE* *remains in place.*

MAKING A POST PERMANENT

Divisional protocol approval is required to make any fixed term position permanent.

COVER FOR PARENTAL LEAVE

Cover for family leave continues to be exempted from the protocol.Departments should note however that the fixed term cover post will add to their headcount as well as to salary costs, and should notify the division if there is any concern that the extra headcount cannot be accommodated within the department’s total agreed FTE for the academic year.

COVER FOR SICKNESS LEAVE

Cover for sickness absence for 12 weeks or less continues to be exempt from the protocol. In addition, approval beyond the department level is not required for fixed term sickness cover of up to 6 months in total. Departments should note however that the fixed term cover post will add to their headcount as well as potentially to salary costs, and should notify the division if there is any concern that that the extra headcount cannot be accommodated within the department’s total agreed FTE for the academic year.

TEMPORARY COVER

Departments in MPLS may appoint contractors, casual workers and TSS staff without divisional or university approval. Preexisting legal requirements and personnel procedures in relation to remuneration, maximum contract length, tax arrangements for contractors etc continue to apply.

APPRENTICES

Departments may proceed to appoint Apprentices funded by the Levy without further divisional approval.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, TECHNICAL, RESEARCH SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS

In the event of a resignation or retirement, departments may refill *existing and budgeted* professional services, technical/research support and administrative posts without the need for divisional approval, provided there is no change to the grade, FTE or general focus of the post. Divisional approval is not required for any short period of overlap between postholders that is operationally necessary, provided this can be accommodated within the department’s agreed total headcount budget. In refilling a post, avenues for redeployment and/or development of existing staff should be explored. No further approval is necessary to place external advertisements however.

Divisional protocol approval *is required* to make any fixed term position permanent, or to fill any *new* professional services technical/research support or administrative post, whether budgeted or otherwise (unless it is covered by external funding at 80% FTE or greater for the full lifetime of the position). Requests for divisional approval are made using the MPLS protocol form and submitted to the MPLS Recruitment inbox at [**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk) together with a job description and org chart. Any proposal to make a direct appointment, whether as a refill, or to a new post, continues to require the agreement of MPLS Personnel.

 Note that separate university procedures continue to apply for posts in grade ALC6 however, and these apply regardless of the funding for the post. Please contact the Academic HR Team Leader for advice about refilling or creating an ALC6 post.

TEACHING POSTS

Departments may refill *existing and budgeted* Departmental Lecturer posts that fall vacant without the need for Divisional approval. Departments may also proceed with any new fixed term teaching posts that are funded by the salary saving from an external fellowship, provided there is a clear connection between the external funding and the post being recruited to. In this case, the salary costs of the post must be fully (though indirectly) covered for the full fixed term of the post by the Associate Professor’s fellowship or other major grant. The length of the teaching appointment must clearly relate to the term of the fellowship/buyout of a specific Associate Professor or Associate Professors in this case. *All other new DL positions* require divisional protocol approval.

RESEARCH POSTS

Fixed term research posts which are externally funded at 80% or more of salary cost continue to be outwith the recruitment protocol, though departments should continue to apply careful scrutiny to the costing and operations of grants, to ensure that extra costs are not being added to the departmental budget. Departments should seek divisional approval to establish or refill any research post where the confirmed external funding in place over the full lifetime of the fixed term post is less than 80%. This includes cases where departmental funding has been offered for a post and/or underwriting has been agreed as part of a startup package for an incoming academic staff member. Requests to establish *any permanent research post* require MPLS Personnel committee approval. Separate procedures apply to posts in grade RSIV (see below).

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORSHIPS

The release of AP posts for refilling requires MPLS Personnel Committee approval. The MPLS protocol from should be completed and submitted with the financial case template to the MPLS Recruitment inbox at [**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk). Existing procedures for approval of the job description and panel composition continue to apply. Post requests for AP positions continue to be raised via the divisional Academic HR team.

STATUTORY CHAIRS

The release of chairs for refilling requires divisional approval via the MPLS Personnel Committee. The MPLS protocol from should be completed and submitted with the financial case template to the MPLS Recruitment inbox at [**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk). The current process whereby University SAP considers a proposed salary range ahead of the interviews for a chair continues to apply. As ever, both Divisional and University approval is required for the creation of, and establishment of the university regulations for, new Statutory Chairs. Post requests for chairs continue to be raised via the divisional Academic HR team.

RSIV POSTS

Divisional and University SAP processes for creation and filling of RSIV research posts (grade D35) remain unaffected. Please contact the academic HR Team Leader [**gwen.booth@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:gwen.booth@mpls.ox.ac.uk) directly for information or advice.

If you have any questions about a particular case, or you would like to discuss your approach to a complex issue, please do get in touch with Gwen Booth or Polly Bunce via [**recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk**](mailto:recruitment@mpls.ox.ac.uk).