

FEEDBACK ARISING FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS PUT FORWARD IN THE WHITE PAPER.

The White Paper makes a number of recommendations with regard to possible changes to the merit selection processes. While many of them refer specifically to the selection of leaders in sites this review is concerned with developing a procedure (or procedures) that will allow the effective selection of candidates across all leadership positions within sites and for all positions under the PSM Act.

Please provide your feedback to these recommendations addressing for each;

- ***Any positive outcomes which may result from such a change***
- ***Any possible negative consequences that may result from such a change.***

In addition, ***please feel free to attach any additional thoughts*** you have had on any aspects of our current selection processes that you believe work effectively and should be retained as well as any ideas/suggestions you have that may result in an improved policy.

The White Paper makes the following recommendations:

1. That DECS maintain its policy on merit being the sole criterion for selection decisions where merit is defined as:

“the extent to which each of the applicants has abilities, aptitude, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience (including community experience) and personal qualities relevant to the carrying out of the duties in question; and

(i) the manner in which each of the applicants carried out any previous employment or occupational duties or functions; and

(ii) the extent to which each of the applicants has potential for development.”
2. That the “Policy and Procedures” Manual be revised and that the initial section of the Manual contain the overarching Merit Principles prepared by the Public Sector Reform Commission and the operating principles proposed in Chapter 4 of this White Paper.

Comment:

3. That the Manual be restructured so that the sections relating to site leadership positions be separated from other sections.

Comment:

4. That greater flexibility be introduced to the processes for documenting, advertising and making appointments to site leadership positions, including:
 - (i) abandoning standard job and person specifications as the basis for selection of Principals and pre-school Directors and retaining them as foundation documents for leadership and management development programs;

Comment:

- (ii) replacing them, on a position-by-position basis, with a statement of key requirements;

Comment:

- (iii) requiring candidates to address only these key requirements in their application and reducing the expected size of applications to approximately two pages accompanied by a curriculum vitae;

Comment:

- (iv) the use of a two part process including a screening process to screen applicants before being interviewed by a formal selection panel;

Comment:

- (v) some additional flexibility to the composition of formal selection panels so that they include the relevant Assistant Regional Director, nominees of the Governing Council or School Council and the AEU and, as appropriate, a member of a proposed retired persons panel and one member of a key external organisation with which the successful candidate will relate when appointed;

Comment:

- (vi) less procedural rigidity in the seeking of referee reports and the greater use of professionally administered techniques to assist with selection decisions as and when requested by formal selection panels;

Comment:

- (vii) the formal documentation of the personal and professional development needs of successful candidates with Assistant Regional Directors being responsible for ensuring the implementation of strategies to address the needs; and

Comment:

- (viii) feedback to all unsuccessful candidates by the Chair of the formal selection panel with a focus on enhancing the candidate's ability to succeed with future applications.

Comment:

5. That site leaders wishing to extend their contract to a maximum of 10 years be able to express that wish and be so extended subject to a comprehensive 360° performance review conducted by the Assistant Regional Director, assisted as need be by an appropriate member of the retired persons panel towards the end of their initial contract term, the review to be completed at least six months before the end of the contract term.

Comment:

6. That the “Teaching in South Australia” website continue to be developed with an immediate requirement to make the links with the revised “Policy and Procedures” document more direct.

Comment:

7. That DECS establish arrangements with providers of professionally administered tools and techniques to be made available to formal selection panels and in so doing ensure that the tools used do not inadvertently discriminate against disadvantaged groups.

Comment:

8. That this White Paper be the subject of extensive discussion and consultation with all relevant stakeholders prior to the DECS Corporate Executive Team making decisions in respect of the recommendations above.

Comment:

In addition you may wish to provide some feedback on any or all of the following aspects of selection processes:

- Joint applications for positions.
- Current guidelines around the shortlisting of applicants for promotional positions.
- Length of time for advertisement of positions and submission of applications.
- Any other matters.

Comments:

If you have any further comments please add to the end of this document.

Feedback can be emailed to decs.meritreview@saugov.sa.gov.au