INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus had led to a sudden increase in the use of remote interviewing and other recruitment activity bringing particular challenges for recruiters who are required to interview, test and train workers as part of their day-to-day operations. This guidance supports recruiters to introduce remote recruitment processes into their operations.

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Members are invited to contact the ALP if they have any other questions about the contents of this brief.

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REMOTE INTERVIEWING AND INDUCTION

Remote interviewing and induction of agency workers reduces face to face interaction between applicants and interviewers and limits time spent outside the home or office by not requiring travel. Both are practical ways of reducing the risk of infection for both your staff and workers.

Any changes to agreed processes should be discussed and agreed between the labour user and the labour provider to ensure that all parties remain compliant with their supply chain agreements.

1. Job adverts and information can be sent via email, text or app. There are several commercial options where a record can be kept of delivery.

2. Online application forms can be provided as part of a recruitment software package by commercial providers or can be designed based upon your own in-house forms. Applicants can complete application forms online and send to you prior to interview. You should include an agreement on the application form requiring the applicant to confirm that they have filled in the form personally, and that they will not distribute it, but careful interviewing will be needed to validate the applicant's capability.

3. Most people have a smartphone so interviews and induction can take place using Facetime, WhatsApp, Zoom, Skype or other software. Follow these tips for successful online interviews:

   ■ Ensure that interviewers have fast, stable internet connections so that interviews run smoothly. Direct cable connections are more reliable than Wifi. Where working from home, try to schedule interviews when fewer people in your home are online.

   ■ Make sure you have the applicants phone number and email address in case the technology lets you down.

   ■ Minimise distractions by switching off your phone along with alerts and chats. Try to avoid remote interviews from a place where other people are around.

   ■ Dress as you normally would for an interview – at least on the visible part of you! It will make you feel and look more professional.

   ■ Pay attention to your tone of voice, facial expressions and mannerisms – it can be difficult to engage remotely so try to look directly at the camera, speak in the same way that you would if you were face to face and remember to smile when appropriate.

4. Avoid conducting interviews over the telephone. Video interviewing makes it easier to establish rapport and being able to see the applicant's expression and reactions makes it much easier for the interviewer to gauge the applicant's suitability.

5. E-signatures (see government guidance) can be used for Key Information Documents, contracts, assignment details etc. Alternatively, send documents to your worker to review and agree, and have them sign them before commencement on the first day of work.

6. Usually recruiters must be in possession of original ID in order to establish a statutory excuse during video interviewing. The Home Office has authorised temporary changes to right to work checks which expire with effect from 30th September 2022. Until that date, employers may conduct remote right to work checks, on a video call, using a scanned or photographed copy of the original ID. Please see the Home Office "Right to work checks: COVID-19 guidance factsheet".

7. Workers with digital evidence of their right to work (known as an e-visa), and who use it during the recruitment process (such as workers with status under the European Settlement Scheme) are not subject to original document checks. They need to provide you with a share code which enables you to access their digital status. You will need to make a visual check that the person you are interviewing is the person who appears in the photograph in the digital status and check the date of birth and other details to ensure they match the details given in the application form, and are consistent with the appearance of the applicant.

8. From 6th April 2022, Identity Document Verification Technology (IDVT) checks may be used to allow a statutory excuse to be gained without being in physical possession of ID documents. Using IDVT allows people to upload images of their personal documents, instead of presenting physical documents to a prospective employer – reducing time and mitigating risk. This will come at a cost to employers who will pay accredited private sector IDVT service providers to undertake these checks. Alternatively, employers may revert to manual right to work checks for workers who do not have an e-visa.

9. Inductions and other pre-employment training can be achieved either remotely by webinar, or on the first day of work. Businesses should risk assess the training and introduce any necessary measures to reduce risk to a safe level. In line with government guidance, such measures could include ensuring adequate ventilation and ensuring that the room is thoroughly cleaned between uses.

USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE REMOTE RECRUITMENT

ALP members can watch 'Using Technology to Enhance Remote Recruitment' available from the webinar section of the ALP website. It contains many tips and recommendations for both free and paid for tools to support remote recruitment including:

- Online application forms
- Applicant tracking systems
- Candidate relationship management systems
- Communication tools
- Interview and meeting tools
- Testing and assessment tools
- Document management tools including e-signatures for remote agreement to terms
- Onboarding tools

MANAGING THE INCREASED RISK OF EXPLOITATION

The impact of coronavirus increases the risk of worker exploitation by unscrupulous labour providers and criminal gangs. Read more about how and why this happens in the 'Practical Guide to Responsible Recruitment During and Coming out of Covid-19' freely available from the Responsible Recruitment Toolkit.

Added to this, remote recruitment and management of agency workers makes worker exploitation harder to detect by removing many of the opportunities to engage with workers directly.

Just Good Work is a free, interactive app to help all jobseekers and workers understand their UK employment rights, recognise poor treatment at work and access remedy. It's a useful engagement tool to

support remote recruitment and management and ensures that all workers have access to the same guidance on good recruitment and employment practices so that they know what good looks like, and when to report issues.

The app is made freely available in a range of languages to all UK employees, employers and labour providers through the collaboration and support of ALP and its partner organisations and is funded entirely through donations and customisation revenue.

For labour providers exploring technological solutions to remote recruitment and management of workers, a customised version of the free Just Good Work app can perform many of the functions listed in the technology section of this brief and offers additional benefits around worker feedback and the ability to audit remotely. The customisation price point is designed to encourage take up, starting at just £149 a month.

Find out more on our Just Good Work page or contact Just Good Work directly.

ALP and partners have produced a short animated Worker Rights Video explaining how to avoid problems, rights at work, and where and how to report issues. The film is in four sections covering:

- Before work during recruitment;
- Getting the correct pay;
- Staying safe and well at work;
- Key rights at work.

It's freely available to download in English, Bulgarian, Gujarati and Romanian and can be used in inductions, displayed on your website and social media, or sent directly to applicants and workers.

Both Just Good Work and the Worker Rights Video reduce the risk of exploitation by ensuring that workers are aware of their key rights whilst working in the UK and know where to go to report issues. Labour providers who use these free tools should include their use in their Modern Slavery Statements.

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