

Advertising a job

You're not legally required to advertise a job, but it's a good idea to.

Advertising a job means:

- you're less likely to break the law by [discriminating](#), even if you did not intend to
- you're more likely to get a wider range of applicants who are suitable for the job

You should follow any written rules or recruitment policy your organisation may have. For example, your recruitment policy might say:

- whether you have to advertise a job
- where you should advertise
- who you must advertise to – for example, internal or external applicants

If you have a recruitment policy, you must apply it in the same way to everyone.

Avoid discriminatory language

When advertising a job, you must not ask for or exclude anyone with a certain protected characteristic. This could be discriminatory.

Examples of words and phrases in a job advert that could be discriminatory include:

- 'recent graduate' or 'highly experienced' – these can discriminate against age and you must be able to prove you have a good reason for any job requirement in your advert
- 'barmaid' or 'handyman' – because they imply you want to recruit a man or a woman. You should use inclusive language that defines the job not the applicant
- specifying a nationality rather than a language required for the job, for example 'German sales rep' could discriminate against race, so 'German-speaking sales rep' would be more appropriate
- clothing requirements, for example wearing a hairnet in a kitchen could discriminate against someone who for religious reasons covers their head in other ways. The employer could agree for the employee to use their usual hair covering

There are certain circumstances under the law [when you might be able to ask for specific protected characteristics](#).

Check your advert reaches a wide range of people

It's a good idea to advertise in at least 2 different ways or places. For example, in a newspaper and on a jobs website. This helps you:

- reach a wider range of people
- reduce the risk of discrimination

Consider whether the places you advertise reach a diverse range of people. For example, if you only use social media to advertise the job you could miss out on applicants who do not use it.

Advertising online

You should think about whether you advertise online only and how you advertise online, as there can be a risk of discrimination.

This is because an online job advert might only be seen by specific groups of people. For example, if you put an advert on Facebook it might only be seen by people from a certain background or age range.

Describe what the job involves

When advertising or someone asks to apply for the job, you should give them the following:

- the job description
- a job application form
- the person specification
- information about your organisation
- an equality and diversity monitoring form

These will help make clear what the job requires and reduce the risk of discrimination.

You can use Acas templates for:

- [job description](#)
- [job application form](#)
- [equality and diversity monitoring form](#)

Check that application forms do not discriminate against someone who is disabled. For example, telling applicants they must fill out the application form by hand when handwriting is not crucial to the job. This might put people with dyslexia or arthritis at a disadvantage, as writing can be difficult.

Tell applicants what you'll need from them

You should also tell applicants about anything else you'll need from them, such as:

- proof they have the right to work in the UK
- whether they'll need a reference
- whether they'll need a health check before they start work if they get the job

Important: You could be fined if you do not check that the person you hire is allowed to work in the UK.

[Check an applicant's right to work in the UK on GOV.UK](#)

Protect applicants' personal information

You must tell applicants how you'll use their personal information.

[Find out more about using personal data from the Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#)