

## SECTION 10

# Promotions

### Introduction

Promotion is viewed by the great majority of teachers as the vehicle which provides professional progress and salary enhancement. It introduces a form of competition which at times is healthy but at others, because of the inadequacies in the procedures used, produces rancour, bad feeling and disenchantment.

It is, therefore, essential that promotion arrangements are seen to be open to all those who are suitably qualified, that selection for consideration is carried out in accordance with agreed procedures, that the actual appointment is made using professional criteria and that the process as a whole can stand detailed scrutiny.

### Checklist

- (1) Do guidelines exist which ensure that:
  - the vacancy does exist at the level requested?
  - there is a procedure which ensures that the appointing panel knows the grade, qualifications and experience of acceptable candidates?
  - the appointing panel is provided with a priority grading for the filling of the post?
- (2) Has a job description been devised for each promoted grade of teacher?  
Is this available to all Personnel Officers handling appointments?
- (3) Has the Headteacher or District Education Officer been given the opportunity to provide a detailed description of the personal qualities sought for the post?  
(This would include such matters as disposition, aptitudes, interests, as well as attainments, experience etc)
- (4) Is there a policy on advertising vacancies of all promoted grades of teachers?  
Is this strictly adhered to?
- (5) What background information is sought before an appointment is considered?  
Is this by a single reference or by a number of reports?  
What other evidence of suitability is considered?  
Who are the most able to give an unbiased opinion on the suitability of the candidate?
- (6) Have clear criteria been established on the selection of the candidates for the appointment?  
For example:
  - who is involved in the appointment?
  - will selection be by interview?
  - if so, what form will the interview take?
  - what factors are to be taken into account before a recommendation for appointment is made?

- (7) Is there a defined series of steps which leads to the issue of a letter of appointment, including the arrangements for the payment of salaries and allowances?
- (8) What procedures exist to inform unsuccessful candidates of the outcome?

### **Policy Suggestions**

A systematic approach is necessary which:

- is seen to be fair and transparent;
- ensures that all suitably qualified and experienced candidates can apply for the vacancy;
- follows a logical published sequence of events;
- ensures equality of opportunity for all candidates;
- has procedures which ensure objectivity and avoid nepotism;
- reduces bureaucracy to the minimum;
- ensures that the opportunity exists for a professional input into the selection and appointment process;
- is designed to fill vacant posts without undue delay.

### **Procedures for Consideration**

It is important that there be clear documentation which sets out the promoted staff establishment for schools of different types and different sizes. This establishment should be strictly adhered to and be used to recognise when a vacancy for a promoted post exists.

Secondary Headteachers should have the right to express their views on which subject the candidate should be qualified. In the case of primary schools the Headteacher should be consulted with regard to the acceptable qualifications and level of experience the candidates should profess.

Job descriptions and job specifications should be prepared in clear terms for all categories of staff. They not only assist the newly promoted teacher to be aware of his/her responsibilities but are essential for measuring performance and are helpful for appraisal, promotion and disciplinary purposes. When appointing Headteachers it can be of value to have the District Education Officer prepare an appendix outlining the specific characteristics of the vacant post and an outline of the qualities required from the applicants.

To ensure transparency the procedures used in filling vacancies should be published and followed in making all appointments. The involvement of teacher representatives in filling promoted posts ensures that professionals have an input to the process. To make the process more efficient, consideration should be given to decentralising the more junior promoted posts. Steps would require to be taken to ensure nepotism did not arise.

The basic principles adopted for the appointment of unpromoted staff should, therefore, be extended when filling promoted posts by:

- Stage 1 - Checking the nature of the vacancy
- Stage 2 - Producing a job analysis and a job description

- Stage 3 - Attracting suitable candidates
- Stage 4 - Using widely experienced and highly respected teachers to assist with filling the vacancy
- Stage 5 - Issuing the documentation which should include the contract, job specification, salary scale and notch on scale, code of conduct, disciplinary regulations etc.

Whatever procedures are adopted they must gain the respect of the teaching community. Without this there will be no faith in, and commitment to, the education system. To ensure that the appointment process is achieving all that it sets out to do, a periodic review should be instituted with comments sought from all involved.

**References:**

**Turning the Tables on Teacher Management**

*Chapters 12, page 53*

*18, pages 76-78*