

Quaker Council for European Affairs

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

The Quaker Council for European Affairs is a Quaker organisation and seeks to live up to the Quaker Testimony to Equality. This applies equally to the choice of its work and to its recruitment and employment practices.

In terms of the choice of work and projects, it is impossible to compress this into a policy, let alone a procedure. When we consider work to be done we will be mindful of the impact that the work has or could have on groups of people who are disadvantaged in society in some way. Where we can have a positive impact, this will be a factor in choosing to undertake work.

In terms of our sourcing policy for equipment and consumables we will, in so far as is possible, opt for Fair Trade products or for products that come from ethical trading sources.

In terms of our recruitment and employment practices, QCEA is committed to ensure non-discrimination and equal treatment of all applicants. The following applies to these areas.

Recruitment Advertising

We advertise vacancies widely when they arise in order to ensure that all those eligible to be considered for such vacancies have a reasonable chance of hearing about them. We pay particular attention to ensuring that vacancies are advertised on the internet. We do not rely on word of mouth advertising.

Selection criteria

For each post that becomes available, a job description and person specification will be drawn up and made accessible to interested people. We will only ask for experience, aptitude and qualifications that are necessary for the post concerned and we are open to candidates submitting evidence of alternative indications of fulfilling the criteria set out in the person specification.

We recognise three important provisos in this context:

1. QCEA is a Quaker organisation and we will therefore give preference to candidates who can demonstrate significant involvement with Quakers. For Programme Assistant posts this is considered desirable rather than essential. In all cases it is essential that candidates can demonstrate a broad understanding of Quaker values and sympathy with them.
2. QCEA employs Programme Assistants on one-year contracts. These posts are intended to offer work experience and are therefore aimed at younger people;

this is necessary, given the nature of the post and the requirement to live in shared accommodation on the premises.

3. QCEA is a European organisation based in Belgium and subject to Belgium employment and other laws. We have found in the past that it has not been possible to obtain work permits for applicants who come from outside the EU/EEA areas. We therefore make it a requirement that applicants have the legal right to work in Belgium at the point of application.

Selection Process

Applicants for all posts are asked to complete an application form. This is intended to ensure that all applicants supply the information required to assess them against the selection criteria. They are not asked to submit a CV. They are given the opportunity to supply additional information which they consider relevant.

In selecting applicants for interview, only the published selection criteria are taken into account.

Short-listed applicants are interviewed in person. In some cases it might be necessary to interview a long-list of applicants by phone if short-listing from the application forms produces more applicants than can be invited for interview. The phone interview will never be the only interview.

For both phone and face to face interviews, applicants will be asked to complete the same set of tasks/tests and to answer the same range of questions although QCEA reserves the right to follow up answers with specific, individual questions and to discuss an applicant's background on a personal rather than standardised basis.

Tasks, tests and responses to interview questions will be assessed by all members of an interview panel and scored.

Interviews are always undertaken by more than one person; interviews for Representatives will be undertaken by a panel appointed by Council; other interviews will be undertaken by the Representative(s) and one or two Members of Council/Bureau.

Decisions regarding appointments will be made on the basis of the overall performance of the applicants in relation to all tasks, tests and interview questions.

Employment

The terms and conditions for each post are agreed before the recruitment process starts. Applicants are given information about the terms and conditions on request and if not before, then at the point at which a job offer is made.

Where there is room for negotiation on terms and conditions, the scope for such negotiation is set by Bureau or Council as appropriate.

All posts of equal nature will be on the same set of terms and conditions. The terms and conditions will reflect the nature of the post, the length of the contract, and the requirements of Belgian employment law.