These are the key tasks of the recruitment process. This section will take you through each of them in turn.

P3  Job description and person specification
P4  Advertise
P7  Choose who to interview
P8  The interview
P9  Offer the job
P10  Do the checks
P11  Keep a record
Job description and person specification

A job description is a list of tasks you would like your personal assistant to do. A person specification is a list of the skills, experience and personal qualities you would like your personal assistant to have. If you have a care plan you may have specific requirements that you will need to think about when writing the person specification.

What you need to do

- List the skills you would like your personal assistant to have, for example, do you want someone who can drive.
- Think about personal qualities, for example, sense of humour, patience or initiative.
- List the jobs you would like your personal assistant to do, for example personal care, making meals.
- You might also want to think about your own cultural and religious needs and whether you want to employ someone who understands them.

More information:
A sample job description and person specification are included in the templates booklet
Advertise

You can advertise for a personal assistant in many ways, some are listed below. Your direct payment adviser or local support organisation may have other helpful suggestions.

**Personal assistant registers**

A personal assistant (or PA) register is a list of personal assistants that are advertising their services. They can also be used by individual employers who are looking to hire a personal assistant. Skills for Care has a list of PA registers at [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub) and look at the ‘in your area’ section.

**Word of mouth**

You may know someone who you trust who would be interested in being your personal assistant. It is important to think about how an employer/employee relationship may affect your personal relationship.

**Local newspaper**

This will reach a lot of people in your area and may mean that you get more applications; however, this can be quite an expensive option.

**Jobcentre Plus**

Your local Jobcentre Plus will advertise for free and will often help you to write the advertisement.

**Online**

Universal Jobmatch (found at [www.gov.uk/advertise-job](http://www.gov.uk/advertise-job)) is a free service that enables you to advertise jobs. Gumtree (found at [www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com)) is a classified advertisement site, but you’ll need to pay a fee to advertise jobs. There may be other suitable websites, ask your direct payment adviser.

**Support organisations**

Local support organisations may advertise jobs on their website. Contact them for more information.

**Local college or university**

You could advertise for mature students (who won’t be going off on long summer breaks).
Writing the advert

Once you have decided where to advertise, you need to write your advert. It should include the following information – remember this is about the type of person you want to be your personal assistant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours, type of work and main duties</th>
<th>The days and times you need your personal assistant to work and a summary of the type of work you want your personal assistant to do.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate of pay</td>
<td>You will need to pay at least the national living wage (or the national minimum wage for workers aged 24 or under). Your direct payment adviser or local support organisation may have information about standard hourly rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General location</td>
<td>This is so applicants have an idea of the location they will be working and will make sure they are able to get there when you need them. Do not give out your home address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience and qualifications</td>
<td>Say if you want someone who has the experience or qualifications (or both) so that they can meet your needs. Is it important if the person is a man or a woman? If so, you need to make sure you say why. For example, you want them to do intimate personal care and you want someone of the same gender. You need to be careful here because of the Equalities Act. The Act bans unfair treatment and helps achieve equal opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application form or curriculum vitae (CV)?</td>
<td>Do you want them to complete an application form or CV? This is your choice, you could ask them to do both. A sample application form template is included in the templates booklet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing date for applications</td>
<td>Choose a date that gives people enough time to see and apply for the job. A minimum of two weeks is usual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (previously CRB checks)</td>
<td>It is important that you are clear in the advertisement whether you want a DBS check. It is usually a good idea to do one to help you know whether people have criminal convictions. For more information see the section called ‘Do the checks’ on page 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other information</td>
<td>Use this section to say whether they have to be a non-smoker or a driver for example.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing the advert (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th>Say that you will ask for references. It is usual to ask for two.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact details</td>
<td>Do not give out your home address, telephone number and email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for further</td>
<td>address on an advertisement. Your direct payment adviser, local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>support organisation or Jobcentre Plus may be able to accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>applications on your behalf. You could set up a PO Box and have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the applications sent there, but you will need to pay a fee for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information and an application form go to [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com) or call 08457 950 950.

More information:
Sample job adverts and a sample job description are included in the templates booklet.
Choose who to interview

This is often called ‘shortlisting’ because you are making a short list of all the applications you have received.

After the closing date look through the application forms or CVs and decide who you want to interview. You could use the job description and person specification to rate the applications and shortlist the ones that most closely fit the job and the type of person you want.

You must make sure how you select who you want to interview (your selection criteria) is fair and you do not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of protected characteristics e.g. age, race, gender or sexual orientation. Remember about the Equalities Act.

ACAS provides free information and advice to employers and employees, to help them avoid any problems or issues. They have a useful booklet called ‘Delivering equality and diversity’ that can be downloaded from www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/t/l/Delivering-equality-and-diversity-advisory-booklet.pdf. The section on recruitment and selection is particularly helpful. To speak to ACAS call 0300 123 1100 for free and confidential advice.

The people you choose to interview are often called candidates. Once you have made your decision, you can contact the candidates that best fit what you need and ask them to attend an interview.

Where should the interview take place?

It is better to have the interviews away from your home if possible. Your direct payments adviser or local Jobcentre Plus, local library or a support or voluntary organisation like a user-led organisation (ULO) may be able to provide a room you can use. Skills for Care has published a list of support organisations at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub and look at the ‘in your area’ section.
The interview

Interviewing can be as nervous for you as it is for the person you are interviewing. So here is a step by step process to help guide you through it.

**Prepare for the interview**

Interviewing is easier if you prepare in advance a list of questions that you want to ask each of the candidates. You can base these questions on the job description. Ask candidates about their work experience, qualifications and why they want to work for you. It is also a good idea to think of a particular situation relevant to you and ask them how they would deal with it.

**Do not interview alone**

It is a good idea to ask a friend, mediator or your direct payments adviser to do the interviewing with you. It’s always good to have another opinion, but do not let the other person influence your decision making; you make the final decision.

**Allow time between interviews**

Take a break between interviews and make some notes of the answers to your questions. This will help you remember each candidate and make your decision about who to offer the job to.

**Don’t rush a decision**

If you’re not sure who to offer the job to, sleep on it, ask for more information, or even re-interview. If you didn’t think that anyone was good enough, then you can re-advertise and interview different people.

**Do they have a legal right to work in the UK?**

Before you offer someone a job you need to check that they have the legal right to work in the UK. You should check and keep copies of certain documents before your personal assistant starts. The documents you need to check will depend on the type of worker you are employing. See section called ‘list of documents to prove the legal right to work in the UK’ in the templates booklet.

**More information:**

[www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people](http://www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people)
[www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk](http://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk)
Offer the job

Once you have decided who you want to employ, contact them and offer them the job. Tell them that you will first need to check their references and carry out any other checks (for example a DBS check). Make sure you give enough time between offering the job and start date to enable you to carry out the checks.

Telling the unsuccessful candidates

Once your preferred person has accepted the job, send a letter to the people you interviewed who did not get the job (you don’t need to phone them).

Be prepared to give feedback

The people you interviewed who didn’t get the job may want to have some feedback on their performance during the interview. If you are asked this, use your notes from the interview to provide feedback – it is always useful to provide some positive feedback but also areas in which they could improve for their next interview.
Do the checks

References are the only way you can be sure that the information people have told you is correct. It is also good to have the opinion of someone who knows the person you want to employ and knows about their job skills. There are two ways you can ask for a reference, in writing and by telephone.

**NOTE:** If you are handed a reference by the person you interview or receive one by post before you have requested it, always follow it up with a phone call.

A template you can use for references is included in the ‘Templates’ section of this toolkit.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

Disclosure and Barring Service checks help you know whether people have criminal convictions.

**Remember**

- You should only arrange a DBS check for a successful job applicant.
- Your local authority, direct payment adviser or local support organisation may be able to help with arranging a DBS check.
- Alternatively, a list of other licensed organisations who can conduct a DBS check for you is also available at [www.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.gov.uk/dbs).

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**Request a reference in writing**

This is the best way to get the most information. You can ask specific questions and also send a copy of the job description so you are sure that the referee (the person giving the reference) understands what the job involves.

**Request a reference by phone**

This is quicker than waiting for letters and referees may be prepared to say things over the phone that they would not write down. But a quick phone call may not allow the referee to think about what the job involves. It is a good idea to follow up a telephone reference with a written reference.
it costs £26.00 for a standard DBS check or £44.00 for an enhanced check; there may also be a small administration fee

most applications for a DBS check take between two and four weeks to process.

More information:
www.gov.uk/dbs or call 0300 0200 190 (Minicom: 0300 0200 192)
or email customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub

Keep a record

ACAS, who promote employment relations, recommend that recruitment records should be kept for a period of time, perhaps six months in case of any discrimination challenge. You should keep these records confidential and in a secure place.

More information:
www.gov.uk
www.acas.org.uk call their confidential helpline on 0300 123 1100
(Text Relay 18001 0300 123 1100)
Different formats of this toolkit are available on request from Skills for Care.

Please email marketing@skillsforcare.org.uk or call 0113 245 1716