

# Onboarding Policy



A group of four independent statutory Land Drainage, water levels and Flood Risk Management Authorities working collectively under a partnership agreement in accordance with section 11(5) of the Land Drainage Act (1991).

*Four Independent Boards:*

- *Witham First District Internal Drainage Boards*
- *Witham Third District Internal Drainage Boards*
- *Upper Witham Internal Drainage Boards*
- *North East Lindsey Internal Drainage Boards*

**Version:** 01

**Date of policy:** December 2024

**Review due on or before:** December 2029

**Date of Approval by Joint Services Committee (JSC) on behalf of North East Lindsey (NEL), Upper Witham (UW), Witham First District (W1) and Witham Third District (W3) IDBs:** 09th December 2024

**Author:** Risk Manager

**Policy Owner:** Associate Director of Human Resources

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# 1.0 - Introduction

The Boards recognise that from application to joining the Board, completing induction through to successful completion of probationary period, is part of the larger 'onboarding' process.

Therefore, this Policy incorporates:

- Recruitment and selection
- Induction
- Probationary period

The process for the 'onboarding' of a new employee is vital to ensure that they are provided with the correct information, skills and tools to undertake their duties as well as to settle in and feel part of the team.

Joining a new organisation can be daunting, and this policy is in place to support and guide through the first 6 months from posts being selected and recruited to completion of probationary periods.

## 1.2 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

This policy aims to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and ensure that no employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, transgender, civil partnership/marital status, appearance, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion/belief or no religion/belief, disability, age, carer, pregnancy or maternity, social status or trade union membership.

As legally required by the Equality Act 2010, additional support will be provided to disabled employees to ensure they are not subject to unlawful or less favourable treatment during the recruitment and selection process. Reasonable adjustments must be made to remove any barriers the employee faces during the process.

# 2.0 – Onboarding Policy

## 2.1 – Recruitment and Selection Policy

Witham and Humber Drainage Boards recognise the ability to meet service objectives is dependent on the employment and retention of staff with the appropriate skills and abilities. This Policy is intended to act as a guide for all managers and staff involved in recruitment and selection at any level. It sets out a framework of good practice the Boards recruitment activities should be conducted.

Through this Policy, Witham and Humber Drainage Board actively seeks to ensure that the workforce recruited to at all levels in the Board reflect the best people to undertake the work whilst ensuring that all prospective and existing employees are treated on an equal basis and without discrimination.

### 2.1.1 – Recruitment and section policy aims

- This policy is intended to reinforce the standards agreed and act as a guide for all managers and staff involved in recruitment and selection at all levels, for all posts and promotes the most appropriate employee and/or job applicant in a fair and consistent manner free from discrimination.
- Witham and Humber Drainage Boards are aware of the ability to meet agreed service objectives being dependent on the employment and retention of staff with the appropriate knowledge, skills, competences and behaviours. This policy offers a framework of good practice for recruitment activities.
- All employees are required to comply with this policy and any records required by this policy will be kept on individuals' personal files. The Policy is also to support staff by providing guidance and procedures to follow throughout the recruitment process.

### 2.1.2 – Successful Recruitment and legal context

- Success in recruiting and retaining the right staff is at the heart of improving the well-being of staff – as well as being the key to a flourishing business. Recruiting and selecting the right staff, at the right time, for the right roles, is fundamental to the success of business and the ability to deliver quality flood risk provision. Thus, the quality of staff and the range of skills, knowledge and qualifications can be taken as a direct indicator of the quality of the provision overall.
- Recruitment will be open, fair, and include all checks that are necessary to ensure individuals are appointed who have the required level of qualifications, skills and experience.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974 gives individuals two basic rights in relation to recruitment: the right to not reveal a conviction after it is deemed to be 'spent' and protection from exclusion i.e. refusal to appoint. It is unlawful for an employer to question a prospective employee about a spent conviction – if an employer does this, the prospective employee can deny that the conviction ever occurred. A prospective employee should not be refused employment on the grounds of a spent conviction, but the Act does not allow for the individual to enforce this in any way. Recognition that obtaining employment is an important factor in reducing re-offending has led to a review of elements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

### 2.1.3 – Training

It is essential that all those who are involved in the recruitment process receive suitable training. This may be a formal course, or support and guidance provided by senior and/or experienced managers and colleagues.

### 2.1.4 – The recruitment process

- The Boards will plan their workforce and match existing staff numbers with forecasted current and future demands.

- When vacancies occur /during recruitment stages consideration is given to identifying development opportunities, new ways of working, supporting career potential and succession planning.
- As vacancies or new posts arise, the Associate Director for HR will review the job description and person specification in consultation with the line manager. Ensuring they are suitable, not discriminatory and that they comply with the requirements of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- The Associate Director for HR will work with line managers to ensure requirements of the vacant position are agreed, to determine whether a new or replacement post is needed.
- Interview planning including the content of the questions, assessment, presentation or assessments, the length of the interviews, dates for shortlisting and interviews, venue and panel members are all reviewed during the process.
- When reviewing vacant posts, Managers are encouraged to consider if the post could be suitable as a development or training role.
- The determination of hours of work should not contravene the Working Time Regulations and consideration given to flexible working arrangements.

### 2.1.5 – Advertising

- Advertising of all positions are advertised internally and externally. All employees (including fixed-term employees) will be notified of any positions that arise during their employment.
- Advertisements will make clear, in both wording and any illustration, that the positions are open to all suitably qualified candidates, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Details of positions will be fully circulated so as to ensure access to all applicants. This includes forwarding advertisements to employees on long-term leave including maternity leave, paternity and parental leave.
- Applications, and interviews for neuro-diverse applicants are considered to ensure that appropriate time can be made to allow applicants to pre-request questions so they are prepared, and so as to ensure all applicants have a fair process. Where any applicant requests questions prior to interview, for fairness they will be provided to all applicants.
- All advertisements will use “This Board is an equal opportunities employer”.
- All vacancies will automatically be placed on the Board’s website and all vacancies forwarded to our partners for advertising on their website.
- No post should be advertised without discussion with and involvement of Associate Director for HR / SMT.
- The advertising campaign should be accurate and simple. With the aim of advertising to communicate a clear message that not only encourages potential candidates but also draws attention from either a wide variety or particular group of people. A good advert will: -
  - Elicit a good response at the lowest cost
  - Attract a good selection of quality candidates

- Encourage a diverse pool of suitable candidates to apply
- Present a favourable image of the Board

### 2.1.6 – Applications

Applications will be accepted in writing, including evidence of employment and training history, with CVs to be sent directly to the Associate Director of HR and or [recruitment@witham3idb.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@witham3idb.gov.uk)

### 2.1.7 – Screening

- Screening will be carried out by matching details of applicants to the requirements of the job. The screening criteria will be applied consistently to all applicants. Records of the screening process will be retained for a period of one year.
- If you are on shortlisting / interview panels and you know at this stage that someone you are related to, or whom you know personally, is considering applying for the job you must declare this. No one is permitted to shortlist or interview a member of their own family or a known friend and any panel member who feels that their knowledge of a candidate would compromise their objectivity must withdraw from the selection process. Any breach of this policy will be investigated and may result in disciplinary proceedings being commenced.

### 2.1.8 – Assessments

If there is a need to use selection assessments for a role, they will only relate to non-biased, and genuine requirements of the job.

Records of any testing undertaken will be retained for as long as the process dictates.

### 2.1.9 – Interviewing process

The interviewing process will be carried out by:

- no assumptions will be made on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- questions will relate to the requirements of the job as set out in the job description and person specification
- interviews will be carried out by more than one person and the interview panel will preferably comprise of individuals of both genders, wherever possible
- applicants will be assessed at the end of interviewing against pre-defined criteria
- interviewers will complete an interview assessment form for each candidate
- records of the interview process will be retained for a period of one year, including questions asked, answers given, any interview notes and interview assessment forms for all candidates.

### 2.1.10 – Career Opportunities

- All employees will be aware of the promotional and career opportunities available to them from details circulated through their line manager, Newsletter and notice boards. Training and job experience needed for promotional opportunities if available, will be available to all employees. Promotion will be determined by merit and performance against objective criteria.
- Unsuccessful internal candidates will be given feedback to facilitate improvement. Managers who are responsible for giving feedback will be trained appropriately.
- No employee will be overlooked in relation to a promotion or an experience-broadening opportunity because of their reluctance to apply or accept on a previous occasion. The process surrounding promotion will be free from discrimination.

### 2.1.11 – References

All external candidates will be required to provide two satisfactory references prior to appointment.

References must not be contacted without the permission of the candidate to whom they relate.

Should a candidate not be in a position to provide two references, this should be discussed with the Associate Director of HR.

### 2.1.12 – Right to work in the UK

The Board will only employ workers who are legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. All applicants will be required to provide the Board with appropriate documentation or an online right to work check share code, wherever possible, to prove their eligibility to work in the UK.

### 2.1.13 – Duty of Confidentiality

The Boards stress the importance it attaches to confidentiality and no information obtained during the course of recruitment and employment relating to staff or the Board should be divulged to unauthorised persons or agencies without the required consent. Any misuse of, failure to properly safeguard confidential data or unauthorised disclosure of confidential data or unauthorised disclosure of confidential information will be regarded and a disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action being taken against you, which could result in dismissal.

### 2.1.14 – Concerns with recruitment process

Any employee who is concerned with this recruitment and selection policy or with its operation within the Board should follow the normal grievance policy and procedure.



## 2.2 – Induction Policy

Witham and Humber Drainage Boards recognise the importance of an effective induction for new employees. A robust mandatory induction Programme containing both Board and local elements ensures that the employee receives vital information, knowledge, skills and essential equipment to ensure that they are adequately equipped to carry out the duties of their post.

The aim of the induction policy is to ensure that all new employees of the Boar are welcomed and embraced into its culture. The induction is intended to be a positive experience, building or relationships, cascading information and putting ‘faces to names’ as well as providing legally required information.

### 2.2.1 – Induction Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- To ensure that all new staff are fully equipped for their new post.
- That they are welcomed and embrace Witham and Humber Drainage Boards’ vision, values and culture.
- It is hoped that the staff induction process will be a positive experience, which will foster good will on both sides and lead to a constructive working relationship.

### 2.2.2 – Boards Induction Programme

The Board’s induction is arranged with the Associate Director for HR.

Inductions will include all mandatory elements of Health and Safety, general risk in the workplace as well as role-specific aspects and ‘meet the team’.

- Lone working
- Infection Prevention & Control
- Moving & Handling
- Fire Safety
- Risk Management
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing
- Equality & Diversity

The Associate Director for HR will provide documents for completion, and the line manager will undertake the main aspect of the induction.

All team departments/ work roles are involved in the induction to try to support and provide an overview of the Boards, their areas of responsibility and the works undertaken by the various team members. This includes both operational and joint administrative employees.

### 2.2.3 – Induction – monitoring and reviewing

The Board recognises the need to monitor the effects of policies, procedures and practices to assess achievement and statutory compliance. To do this the policy and any associated procedures and guidance will be kept under review, and action taken to redress any areas where the Policy has not been applied or where risks have not been managed effectively.

The Board will promote an awareness of this policy to all its employees and will monitor both core and local induction process and procedure.

## 2.3 – Probationary Policy

This policy provides a framework for the management of probation periods and sets a clear process for line manager to manage performance and conduct of employees during their probationary period.

Witham and Humber Drainage Boards are committed to ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to develop in role to reach their potential.

Every member of staff has a personal responsibility to achieve and sustain high standards of performance and conduct at all times and to comply with this policy.

### 2.3.1 – Probationary Policy Aim

It is the Witham and Humber Drainage Board policy is to operate a probationary period for all new staff. Probationary periods will be used constructively to help the new employee integrate effectively into the business and allow the line manager to assess whether the employee is suitable for the role.

The length of probation will depend on the role carried out by the employee. The period of probation will be set out in the documentation provided to the employee.

### 2.3.2 – Managing the Probationary Period

The line manager is responsible for setting objective performance standards for the employee in line with their role, and discuss their expectations with the employee.

A mid-point probationary review meeting should be held with the employee during their probationary period. This meeting will be used to assess how the employee is progressing and discuss whether any improvements are needed for the employee to successfully complete their probationary period.

### 2.3.3 – Providing support during probation

The line manager is responsible for providing guidance and support to the new employee during the probationary period. The level of support required will differ depending on the individual employee. All support necessary should be given by the line manager to allow the employee to successfully complete their probationary period and continue their employment.

The line manager should ensure the employee receives appropriate training at the start of the probationary period. An induction and training plan should be set in place to assist with the employee's development and introduction to the Board. All relevant Board documentation should be made available to the employee at the earliest date.

#### 2.3.4- Providing support for disabled employees

- As legally required by the Equality Act 2010, line managers must provide additional support to disabled employees to ensure they are not subject to unlawful or less favourable treatment during their probationary period. Reasonable adjustments must be made to remove any barriers the employee faces at work.
- The line manager must discuss the support offered to disabled employees with the Human Resources Consultant.

#### 2.3.5 – Addressing concerns during the probationary period

- During the probationary period, the line manager will be continually assessing the suitability of the employee. The line manager should hold a mid-point probationary review meeting to discuss any concerns with the employee's performance or conduct during the probationary period.
- When concerns are raised before or after the mid-point probationary review meeting, the line manager should arrange a formal meeting with the employee to discuss these. Failing to address these concerns in a timely manner could lead to the employee failing to complete their probationary period. Minutes of the meeting should be made and a record of any agreed actions should be made in writing and provided to the employee.

#### 2.3.6 – Terminating employment before completion of the probationary period

- Most employees will remain employed by the Board until the end date of their probationary period. In some circumstances, the line manager may identify that the new employee is unsuitable for their role and will not reach the required standard with further support before the end of the probationary period.
- Where there is sufficient evidence that the required standards are not being met and are unlikely to be met, the employment can be terminated at any stage during the probationary period. The line manager should discuss early termination with the Human Resources Consultant.

#### 2.3.7 – Terminating employment at the end of the probationary period

- Despite being provided with support, necessary training and concerns being addressed as they arise, the employee may not meet the required standards of performance by the end of their probationary period. This includes, but is not restricted to, the employee not meeting their work targets, persistent lateness or unacceptable conduct during their probationary period.
- The line manager may decide that their probationary period has been unsuccessful, and their employment should be terminated at the end of the probationary period. This

should be discussed in advance with the Associate Director of Human Resources to ensure termination can take place at the end of the probationary period.

- The line manager should hold a probationary review meeting with the employee and inform them of the decision to terminate. The reasons for termination should be recorded in the probationary period review form.

### 2.3.8 – Confirming successful completion of the probationary period

- If the employee has met the required standards during their probationary period, the line manager should hold a probationary review meeting with the employee and inform them that they have successfully completed their probationary period.
- Future performance objectives should be discussed and agreed with the employee.
- The line manager shall notify the Associate Director of Human Resource that probation has been successfully completed and they will confirm this to the employee in writing.

### 2.3.9 – Terminating employment after probation

The employee's future performance will be assessed under the Board's capability policy and their conduct will be reviewed under the Board's disciplinary policy. Any breach of these policies will be managed in accordance with the Board's normal processes which could lead to dismissal.

### 2.3.10 – Dishonesty during the probationary period

Following the probationary period, the line manager may discover that the employee has been dishonest when applying for the role. The line manager should inform the Human Resources Lead immediately.

## 3.0 – Onboarding Policy Statement

The Boards recognise the importance of a smooth onboarding within the Boards. To offer new starters the opportunity to get to know their teams, their role and be in a positive culture.

The Boards will comply with the policy by:

- Making this policy easily accessible.
- Following the policies consistently within for transparency and fairness to employees.
- Keep the policies updated where any changes in legislation or ADA white book present.
- Ensure that employees understand the policy and how this may apply to them.
- Actively seek to ensure that those recruited into all posts within the Boards', reflect the best people to undertake the work whilst ensuring that all prospective and existing employees are treated on an equal basis and without discrimination.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made as required to support attendance to interview, and where posts enable, for reasonable adjustments to be made to support the onboarding process.

## 4.0 - Glossary / Definitions

Word/ term	Definition

## 5.0 – Legislation

- The Equalities Act 2010
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974
- GDPR and Data Protection legislation.
- ADA Lincolnshire Branch White Book [as the current version]

## 6.0 - Main policy Roles and Responsibilities

### 6.1 Arrangements for roles and reporting lines

The arrangements and organisational responsibilities for implementing the policy are detailed in this section.

#### 6.1.1 – Board Members

- Approve and support the Senior management Team with this policy.
- Support the Chief executive Officer and SMT in following the Policy.

#### 6.1.2 – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Senior Management Team (SMT)

- Lead by example.
- Offer guidance and support to any team members who may require it.

##### *Specifically Associate Director of HR*

- Lead the Policy as necessary and facilitate the onboarding process.
- Provide support/guidance to line managers during onboarding.
- Monitor composition of workforce to identify areas that may need positive action measures to promote EDI.
- Be responsible with the appointing team for selecting the right candidate for the role.
- Ensure all persons on the interview panel are trained commensurate with their role.
- Ensure there are no conflicts of interest on the interview panel.
- Ensure no start date is provided before all pre-employment checks are complete.
- Advertise the role(s) on appropriate platforms and provide advice for best practice.
- Keep required and relevant onboarding records for the process and for onboarding. Records not required, will be securely destroyed.
- Ensure that any ‘reasonable adjustments’ are in place prior to new starter with reviews in place to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient.

### 6.1.3 – Risk Manager

- Support SMT with the review and update of this policy.

### 6.1.4 – Line Managers / Supervisors / Foremen

- Support the CEO & SMT to cascade the policy.
- Follow requirements within this policy.
- Obtain advice, guidance and information from Associate Director for HR.
- Work with the Associate Director for HR for selecting the right candidate for the role.
- Provide support, mentoring and assistance during onboarding process.
- Provide a ‘buddy’ or mentor for the new starter to ensure that ongoing learning and support is provided during the early stages of employment.

### 6.1.5 – Staff members

- Must follow the Employees Code of Conduct, and follow required standards and behaviours.
- Raise any queries with their line manager.
- Work with colleagues and line manager to learn as much as possible.
- Continue with 2-way communication to ensure rapport is built and relationships are fostered within the working environment.

## 7.0 - Document review:

Version	Date	Reviewed by	Changes	Approved by/ date
2.00	2020	Ass Director for HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board approved Probationary Period Policy</li></ul>	JSC July 2020
3.00	2019	Ass Director for HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board approved Recruitment and Selection Policy</li></ul>	JSC July 2020
2.00	2019	Ass Director for HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board approved Induction Policy</li></ul>	JSC July 2020
1.00	2024	Risk Manager and Ass Director for HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated lay out, general review</li><li>• Incorporating v2 probationary period policy, v3 recruitment and selection policy and v2 Induction policy.</li><li>• Renaming as Onboarding.</li></ul>	JSC December 2024

This policy is due for review at 5 yearly intervals, unless a review is required before e.g. change to management, process or anything which may affect the contents of this policy.

## 8.0 - Supporting documents

None.