

SECTION 3
RECRUITMENT

3 RECRUITMENT

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to develop; implement cost-effective and efficient employee recruitment methods to attract qualified applicants to fill vacant positions in accordance with Ahlia approved manpower plan and organisation structure.

3.2 Scope

- The scope of this section is applicable to all the functions of Ahlia.
- Implementation of this Policy is the prime responsibility of the HR Director under the direct supervision of the Vice President of Admin and Finance. All Deans/Directors are responsible for implementing this Policy with respect to selecting and hiring qualified and capable candidates who meet the requirements of the job.

3.3 Policy Statements

3.3.1 Employment Preferences

- It is Ahlia policy to have employment preferences in line with its objectives and consistent with Bahrainisation policy and any other governmental laws and regulations of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Ahlia shall accord employment preferences as follows:
 - ◆ Bahraini Nationals: Ahlia shall give first employment preference to Bahraini nationals who adequately meet the requirements of an approved vacancy in Ahlia.
 - ◆ Expatriates: Non-Bahraini candidates shall be preferred / selected only in the absence of a suitable local resource. Knowledge of Arabic, Ahlia and familiarity with the operational environment in GCC countries is preferred.

3.3.2 Bahrainisation

- Ahlia shall seek to increase the number of Bahraini nationals in all functions, through the identification and development of quality, competent Bahraini males and females to assume permanent positions in Ahlia.
- Ahlia shall be fully committed to developing initiatives to recruit and retain quality Bahraini nationals.

3.3.3 Policy Statements

- Ahlia is committed to an effective recruitment policy that is based on the principles of merit, fairness, and equal employment opportunity.
- Ahlia shall follow a systematic process for recruitment, which covers sequentially the following; sourcing, screening, interviewing, testing, reference checking, decision-making and candidate mobilization.
- Ahlia shall ensure to identify, efficiently and effectively, the right candidates for vacancies in Ahlia and recruitment shall be based solely on qualifications, experience, and merit.

- Vacant positions shall be filled in a timely manner as per the manpower plan and schedule.
- Qualified and capable candidates shall be selected to execute the positional duties and responsibilities after successfully passing the selection process.
- Ahlia shall ensure to identify and appoint, efficient and effective, temporary employees from subcontractors/directly for vacancies in Ahlia for an agreed period of time (with a provision for time extension) based on the approval President.
- The minimum regular/temporary personnel employment age must be eighteen (18) years, provided it does not contradict the existing labour laws applicable at the time of hiring. Candidates over 60 years of age shall not normally be considered for employment, unless they possess required specialized qualifications and experience and their recruitment is specifically agreed by the President.
- In case a Bahraini employee gives up their Bahraini nationality (during employment with Ahlia), then onwards these employees shall be treated as an expatriate employee of Ahlia.
- Ahlia shall adopt well-defined recruitment planning process in order to select and recruit appropriate employees according to the approved manpower plan.
- All recruitments shall be processed only after receiving the recruitment request from the concerned Division/Directorate Director / Manager as per the approved manpower plan.
- Ahlia shall develop and maintain job descriptions for each position and shall follow the same structure across University. The job descriptions shall be used to select candidates based on the position's required roles and responsibilities.
- All Job Descriptions shall be reviewed and acknowledged by respective Deans/Directors and shall be finally approved by the President. The job descriptions shall be reviewed annually by respective Dean/Director.
- Ahlia shall use various channels to source employment candidates based on grade and criticality of the requirement.
- Ahlia shall adopt uniform and structured approach for candidates' selection and interviewing across all its functions.
- The HR Director shall pre-screen all the shortlisted candidates as per the defined pre-screening procedure.
- The HR Director shall conduct reference check of the selected candidates to ensure data and information provided by the candidate is accurate and also investigate the candidates' interpersonal attributes before issuing the offer of employment.
- As a policy for fair employment, Ahlia shall assist former employee seeking reference letters or recommendation letters for their duration of employment with Ahlia.
- Upon selection of the qualified candidates, Ahlia shall extend the official "Offer of Employment".

- Starting salary or base salary for the selected candidate shall be within the salary range established for the grade. Candidates with exceptional qualifications, skills, experience and / or competencies may be given salary uplift over the salary grade by securing prior approval of the President. All salary uplifts over the maximum salary applicable for the grade requires approval of the President, irrespective of the percentage of uplift.
- The “Offer of Employment” must be authorized and approved in compliance with Ahlia staffing guidelines and approved by President.
- Unless Ahlia agrees to extend the job offer’s expiry date, it is considered unaccepted if it exceeds the time limit stated with no response received from selected candidates.
- Once the applicant submits a written acceptance of the job offer the candidates’ are required to undergo a medical examination by an accredited medical professional in their home country (point of origin) and complete a medical report.
- The date of joining of an employee recruited locally shall be the date the employee reports for work. The date of joining for employees recruited from outside Bahrain shall be the date of their joining the office in Bahrain or the date of arriving Bahrain which is possible. The new employees shall be entitled for salaries from the effective date of joining.
- Ahlia shall make travel arrangements for newly recruited employees (based on grades) from their home country (point of origin). Travel arrangements and class of air ticket shall be based on the grades mentioned in the offer of employment. The air ticket shall be to and from the nearest destination.
- The BoD if deemed in Ahlia interest may add new conditions or make exemptions from any of the recruitment terms.

3.4 Procedures

3.4.1 Recruitment Planning

- In order to select and recruit the right people at the right jobs according to the approved manpower plan, the following steps shall be adopted:
 - ◆ Identification of recruitment requirements for a particular period.
 - ◆ Development of an integrated sourcing plan for each position.
 - ◆ Sourcing of manpower as per the manpower plan.
- On completion of each recruitment cycle, brief statistics shall be compiled by the HR Director to help strengthen the future recruitment planning process through addressing the weak points. These statistics shall at a minimum cover:
 - ◆ Number of applications received/rejected.
 - ◆ Number of applications screened/tested.
 - ◆ Number of applications short-listed for interview.
 - ◆ Number of applicants attending the interview.

- ◆ Number of applicants selected.
- ◆ Number of offers accepted.
- ◆ Number of successful probations.

3.4.2 Requests for Recruitment

- Personnel requisition form shall be initiated by the requesting Function for personnel to be recruited to fill a vacancy. These requests shall be within the approved manpower plan and budget for the financial year. If outside the approved manpower plan / budget it shall be dealt with as an additional personnel request with due approval from President.
- The personnel requisition shall have the job title, grade, and the date by which the personnel are required.
- The HR Director shall review all requests for recruitment before processing to ensure that the requests are in compliance with the approved annual manpower plan.

3.4.3 Job Description

- For existing positions, the Division/Directorate Director / Manager shall ensure the use of standard job descriptions.
- In the event that a vacancy arises from resignation, the Dean/Director shall revise the job descriptions (as required) in consultation with HR Director, to align with present operational objectives.
- Development/updating of Job Descriptions shall be the responsibility of the respective Dean/Director in coordination with the HR Director.
- Based on the job description, the HR Director shall identify relevant titles for the new positions. Job titles can be derived from the job descriptions, and serve as indicators of work responsibility rather than as indicators of status.

3.4.4 Candidate Sourcing

- Various channels shall be used to source employment candidates including the ones listed below in the specified order of preference.
- The HR Director shall liaise with the requesting Dean/Director to ascertain which channel to use to source each particular vacancy, and identify the allotted recruitment budget. Other considerations to take into account when deciding on the sourcing channel shall include: time to fill vacancy, confidentiality, cost effectiveness, and seniority level of potential candidate, etc. These include. Multiple sources can be used to fill positions if and when required:
 - Internal sources (within Ahlia) or employee reference.
 - Networking and database.
 - Advertising (web and newspapers etc.).
 - Head-Hunting

- Recruitment agencies.
- Direct campaign recruitment.

3.4.4.1 Internal sources:

- When recruiting for a specific vacancy, internal sources shall be utilized. Vacancies shall be advertised internally using Ahlia official email. The two ways a role can be filled internally include:
 - ◆ **Promotions:** Giving the employee greater responsibilities that may be associated with pay increase, which represents an excellent way to encourage high performance and instil long term commitment from employees. This shall require approvals of the respective Dean/Director, HR Director and President. In case of a difference in opinion, the President/Chairman decision shall be final.
 - ◆ **Transfers:** Re-allocating employees may take place from one function to another, based on mutual agreement between the Colleges/Directorates and their direct supervisors, with no impact on the individual's salary, level or grade, if the nature of the jobs is similar. Employees above shall obtain approval of their immediate superior and Dean/Director
 - ◆ All transfers and reallocations require an approval of the HR Director and President.
 - ◆ An employee shall be considered eligible for internal transfer if the employee fulfils all of the following criteria:
 - Minimum service of one year in current position.
 - At least good rating in last performance evaluation exercise.
 - No disciplinary action within the past six (6) months.
 - Meet the requirements (qualification/experience/fitness level) of the position.
- If a competent employee is available at Ahlia within a function, the designated Dean/Director shall notify HR Director with the recommendation for promotion/transfer.
- The period during which a vacancy is sourced exclusively by internal means is to be limited to a tight timeframe of up to 2 weeks, i.e., 10 working days.

3.4.4.2 Networking and Database

- When recruiting externally, Ahlia shall first attempt to fill the role through its existing network and candidate database. Each external recruitment drive may involve:
 - ◆ Inviting existing employees to recommend (employee referral) someone for the position.
 - ◆ Verifying records to see if any previously unsuccessful applications match the requirement.
- The HR Director shall be responsible for inviting employees to recommend a candidate for a position using existing networks and database, internal boards/emails or intranet (where applicable). Recommendations represent an initial form of screening and recommended candidates generally integrate easily into Ahlia.
- The HR Director may keep and update the records of all relevant but unsuccessful applicants as these represent individuals who have already shown an interest in joining Ahlia.

3.4.4.3 Advertising

- If Ahlia wishes to source the candidates for the approved position externally, Ahlia may choose to advertise the vacancy directly, provided it is approved by the President.
- The requesting function shall liaise with the HR Director to finalize the draft advertisement with appropriate publications.
- When applicable, the HR Director may use Ahlia website to publish any vacant positions.
- The HR Director shall look into various publications options to advertise the vacancy considering the allocated recruitment budget.
- The HR Director shall contact the selected publications, agreeing terms of operational and course of action and monitoring advertisement insertion. The HR Director shall also serve as primary point of contact for the publications throughout the recruitment cycle.
- If suitable candidates with the required qualification and experience are not available within Ahlia or Bahrain, external recruitment from overseas sources shall be considered. The recruitment shall be initially based on the recommendation from the Dean/Director and upon approval from the President.
- Upon review of overseas short listed candidates by the concerned Dean/Director, Ahlia shall decide whether to conduct a telephonic or face-to-face interview. If Ahlia decides to conduct face-to-face interview, then Ahlia shall decide send the concerned Manager to the candidates' location for conducting interviews or invite candidates to Bahrain or to nearest location where Ahlia management is conducting the interviews for the candidates.
- Advertisements may give Ahlia nationwide and even international coverage, and must therefore comply with strict regulations to positively represent and market Ahlia.
- It is recommended that advertisements shall also include the following:
 - ◆ The settings of the advertised position and relevant information (location, organizational entity, etc.).
 - ◆ Description of position (tasks, roles, responsibilities, etc.).
 - ◆ Successful applicant's specifications (skills, abilities, etc.).
 - ◆ Required academic, professional qualifications and work experience.
 - ◆ Conditions of employment (i.e. nature of work, hours of work, etc.).
 - ◆ Opportunities for professional development and fringe benefits.
 - ◆ Contact information.
 - ◆ The advertisement shall clearly state the required documents to submit and shall clearly define the deadline for submittal.
 - ◆ Any other necessary information.

3.4.4.4 Head-Hunting & Recruitment Agencies

- If the Dean/Director wishes to use external agencies to source candidates for a vacant position, they must receive an approval from President.
- The HR Director shall consult with the concerned Dean/Director to select the appropriate recruitment agencies.
- The HR Director shall contact the selected external agencies, agreeing terms of operational and course of action and monitor progress. The HR Director shall also serve as Ahlia primary

point of contact for the external agents throughout the recruitment cycle and shall screen all CVs received from agents before forwarding to the requesting Deans/Directors.

3.4.4.5 Direct Campaign Recruitment

- The HR Director may also utilize University/Academic Institution visits and participate in employment fairs provided these are in line with the manpower plan.
- All applications received during direct campaign shall be added to the candidate database maintained by the HR Director and shall be reviewed before each external recruitment.

3.4.5 Candidates' Selection and Interviewing Criteria

- Core Recruitment Criteria: All prospective employees shall comply with the following core requirements:
 - ◆ Be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of recruitment and shall not be more than sixty (60) years of age.
 - ◆ **Bahraini Nationals:** A prospective Bahraini candidate must be in possession of the proper identification issued by the Kingdom of Bahrain to confirm their nationality before they are considered for employment.
 - ◆ **Expatriates:** Prospective expatriate candidate must possess a valid passport, (passport shall preferably not have an expiry date within the next six months) or any other acceptable official document permitting international travel. In addition, expatriates candidates who are already in Bahrain are eligible for employment only upon obtaining the necessary permits/approvals from the authorities as specified in the labour law
 - ◆ Be of good conduct and not previously convicted of a crime involving a breach of trust or honour unless rehabilitated or be involved in an on-going legal dispute. Ahlia has the right to request for a Police Clearance Certificate from the selected candidate.
 - ◆ Meet the requirements of the job description, roles, and responsibilities.
 - ◆ Possess the requisite educational qualifications, job experience and personality for a particular job.
 - ◆ Successfully pass the personality, culture fit or technical tests that Ahlia may deem the candidate shall take.
 - ◆ Not have been dismissed from service by a disciplinary decision unless a period of four years has passed since the issue of such decision.
 - ◆ Be medically fit as certified by the medical authority.
 - ◆ Meet the requirements of the job description, roles, and responsibilities.
 - ◆ Meet guiding principles of Bahrain's labour laws and regulations.
 - ◆ Not be employed permanently, concurrently, with another employer from which he / she get a monthly regular salary.
- Candidates not holding the minimum core requirements listed above shall not be short-listed for interview.

3.4.6 Pre-screening

- All external applicants shall be requested to fill a standard "Employment Application" form, which shall contain:
 - ◆ Personal information, such as the name, age, marital status, and address.
 - ◆ Both academic and professional qualifications.

- ◆ Years and level of experience, including places of previous employment, responsibilities and duration of employment.
- ◆ Reasons for leaving current/last job as well as any other jobs left in the last 3 years.
- The HR Director shall be responsible for the initial screening of the CVs and Application Forms to filter those applications that do not meet the basic requirements of the job description and the core requirements criteria listed in the Core Requirement Criteria Section.
- The HR Director shall arrange for further interviews of the shortlisted candidates by direct coordination with the candidate or through the Head-Hunting / recruitment agency.
- It shall be noted that some information pertaining to the core requirements may not be available at this stage (medical health certification, criminal records, etc.), but shall be checked as the recruitment process progresses.

3.4.7 Interviewing and Testing

- Potential candidates are short listed by the Human Resources Department based on the data provided in their curriculum vitae (CV). Based on this initial review, potential candidates may be asked to appear for any recruitment tests or exams. Selection interviews will be initiated by the Human Resources Department. Selection panel will include vacancy owner, representative from the Human Resources Department and any other relevant personnel. Selection of the preferred candidate needs to be approved by the selection panel chair person or the concerned final signatory, depending on the level of the job being recruited for.
- The Human Resources Department and the vacancy owner will agree on the remuneration and other components of the offer. The successful candidate will be contacted by the Human Resources Department and will be given a verbal conditional offer. The final employment offer is not issued until the candidate has passed the pre-employment medical/ physical examination; the University has verified reference information on the CV; and submitted the required employment eligibility documentation to the local authorities in accordance to the Kingdom of Bahrain Labour Law.
- The Human Resources Department will contact the unsuccessful interviewed candidates and notify them of the position being filled

3.4.8 Reference and Background Check

- The HR Director shall perform reference and background check for candidates selected for employment prior to issuing the offer of employment (if required).
- The reference and background checks shall include verification of references provided by the candidate, education, professional certifications / license, criminal history information (if required), driving license and previous employment. The candidate shall produce original educational certificates for verification.
- Any reference information (as defined above) that a candidate submits during the hiring process, interview discussion, resume, application, etc. is expected to be correct. All offers of employment and continued employment are contingent upon the success of reference and background check.
- If Ahlia has evidence that any of the information gathered in any of the reference and background checks is incorrect, then the recruitment shall be halted and the applicant shall not be considered for the employment.

- If Ahlia has evidence that any of the information gathered in the reference and background checks is incorrect, after recruitment, then the employee shall be subjected to disciplinary action, including dismissal if warranted.

3.4.9 Selection

- Selection shall follow a rigorous process through which the top candidates are matched with a given job requirement.
- The integrity of this process shall be constantly monitored and controlled by Ahlia management.
- Selection shall be based on interview and test results and the agreement of the Dean/ Director, the HR Director and President.
- If more than one candidate has received the same score or has obtained the same results in interview and testing, the following criteria shall be the basis for selection:
 - ◆ Education level.
 - ◆ Years of experience.
 - ◆ Quality of experience.
 - ◆ Training received.
- In case of local hire, the HR Director shall adopt the following:
 - ◆ Whether a transfer of residence is possible;
 - ◆ Employee must be able to obtain a release from their former employers and transfer their residence visas to Ahlia.
- Final approval for employment shall be in accordance with Ahlia Employment Policy and as per approved grade and salary structure of Ahlia. The salary for a candidate shall be decided based on the following:
 - ◆ Ahlia grade and salary structure
 - ◆ The candidate's experience, skills and specific competencies
 - ◆ The candidate's educational qualifications
- The decision on appointment for positions in Ahlia shall be based on a recommendation by the President of Ahlia University.
- The President shall approve all recruitments based on the recommendations of the respective Dean/Director and the HR Director. The President's decision shall be final.
- The HR Director shall send a standard Rejection Letter to those candidates (for managerial and above positions) who did not successfully clear the interview process.
- Relatives of the employees may not be hired by Ahlia. However for any exception related to recruitment of relatives, approval shall be sought from the Chairman and BoD

3.4.10 Offer of Employment

- Upon selection of the qualified candidates, the HR Director shall be issued an Offer of Employment Form specifying relevant terms and conditions. The offer shall be valid for 15 calendar days from date of issue for local hires, and 30 calendar days for recruits from overseas, within which period the candidate is expected to respond. The candidate shall be required to join at the earliest date, but not later than 45 days after the date of acceptance

of the offer, except those candidates who are required by their present employer to work a longer notice period, and which has been agreed upon the signing of the Letter of Offer, or those employees for which a work visa has to be obtained. A sample Employment contract shall be sent to the candidate for information.

- The offer of employment shall at a minimum state the following:
 - ◆ Designation
 - ◆ Grade
 - ◆ Type of contract
 - ◆ Salary and benefits
 - ◆ Employment terms and conditions
- The employees recruited from overseas shall submit the relevant documents on the date of joining:
 - ◆ Passport
 - ◆ Photographs
 - ◆ Birth Certificates (if applicable)
 - ◆ School/University Certificates
 - ◆ Marriage Certificate (if applicable)
 - ◆ References
 - ◆ Home address
 - ◆ Name and addresses of two (2) personal references
 - ◆ Release letter (for expatriates)
 - ◆ Any other document required by Ahlia
- Ahlia shall process the work permit applications for the selected candidates however the employment shall be contingent upon receiving relevant approvals from the government authorities in Bahrain.

3.4.11 Pre-Employment Medical Examination

- Once the applicant submits a written acceptance of the offer of employment, the selected candidate is required to undergo a medical examination by an accredited medical professional in their respective home country (point of origin) and submit the medical report to Ahlia.
- The HR Director shall review the medical report and if the selected candidate is found medically unfit, the candidate shall be rejected. The HR Director shall notify the selected candidate the reasons for rejection.
- All the medical examination expenses shall be paid by the candidates.

3.4.12 Candidate Mobilization

- Provided the government authorities approve the relevant candidate documents provided and the medical report is accepted, the HR Director and the requesting function shall set the employment date of joining.
- Ahlia shall bear the responsibility of obtaining the required visa and/or work permits from the Bahraini Government immigration services in accordance with the Local Laws for all their employees.

- **Point of origin:** Ahlia shall establish point of origin (home country) for each employee in the offer of employment at the time of engagement.
- The HR Director shall be responsible for ensuring that the necessary government authorization, travel, and accommodation arrangements are finalized for the selected candidate to begin work on the agreed date.
- The HR Director shall be Ahlia principle point of contact with the candidate to answer any questions the candidate may have about the organization and settling in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- The HR Director shall forward employee details to the Administration section to book the required air ticket for the new recruit according to the signed contract. The administration section shall then be responsible for making prior hotel reservation for the employee for up to two weeks or Ahlia provided accommodation, and ensuring pick-up and drop-off from the airport to the required designation destination and to the office subsequently for a duration of up to one/two weeks.
- If an employee stay extends beyond the specified two (2) weeks in the hotel, the amount shall be deducted from the respective employee's housing allowance.
- Where applicable, pre-arrangements will be done by Dean/Director in collaboration with the Directorate colleagues for the newly recruited staff in terms of their boarding, lodging and other arrangements.
- In case of offer of employment to the visiting staff, same procedures will be applicable as that of recruitment for the local candidates.