



Booklet 1

Recruiting a personal assistant



EasyRead version

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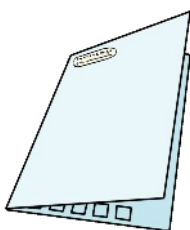
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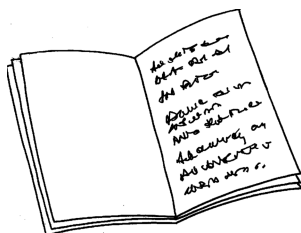
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Some words are in **bold**.

We explain what they mean
at the end of this booklet.



About this booklet



Skills for Care wrote this booklet.



We work with **employers**, carers and people who need **social care** and support.



We want to make sure everyone has the skills and **qualifications** to give good care and support.



Some people with disabilities **employ** a **personal assistant** or PA to help them live independently. They are called **individual employers**.



We have 4 EasyRead booklets to help individual employers:

1. Recruiting a personal assistant
2. Before your personal assistant starts working for you
3. Managing your personal assistant and helping them learn
4. Sorting out problems

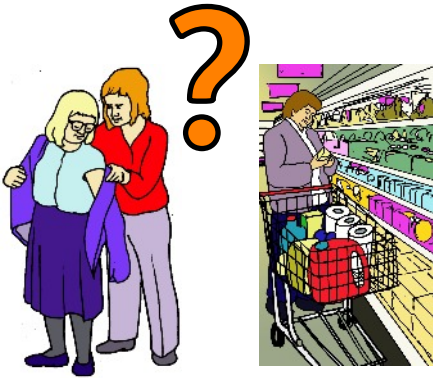


This is booklet number 1.

It tells you what you need to do when you **recruit** a personal assistant. It has helpful ideas and links to organisations and information.



Explain the job and the type of person you need



Before you recruit a personal assistant you need:

- a **job description** that says all the things you want your personal assistant to do



- a **person specification** that says the type of person you want your personal assistant to be.



If you have a care plan it can help you think of things to include.

Think about:



- skills your personal assistant needs. Like driving or good communication



- what type of person you want. For example patient, reliable or with a sense of humour



- all the tasks you want your personal assistant to do. For example, support you at work or going out with friends, personal care or cooking meals



- whether you want your personal assistant to understand your culture, religion or beliefs.

Where to find out more



There is an example of a **job description** and **person specification** on our website:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/templates



In Control have a workbook to help you plan your support on their website:
<http://www.in-control.org.uk/resources/easy-read-resources/driving-seat.aspx>

Write your job advert



What your job advert should say:

- **Who you want to apply**

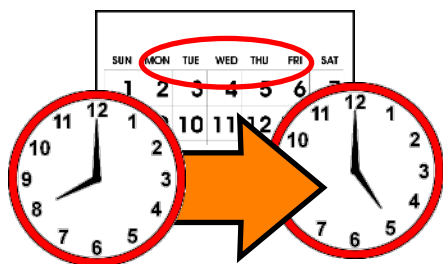
The type of person you want and any skills or **qualifications** they need.



A law called the Equalities Act says you must have a good reason if you only want a man or a woman to work for you

- **The hours they will work and what you need them to do**

The days and times you need your personal assistant to work. And the type of work you want them to do





- **How much you will pay them**

There are rules about the **minimum** hourly amount you must pay your personal assistant.



- **Where they will work**

Do not give your home address.



Just say what area the person will be working in.



- **How you want them to apply**

You can ask people to fill in an application form, send their **CV** or do both.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- **The last date they can apply**

2 weeks is usually long enough for people to see your advert and apply for the job.



- **Whether people need a DBS check before they start work**

This checks if the person has a **criminal conviction** before they work for you.



- **You will ask for references**

People usually ask for 2 references.



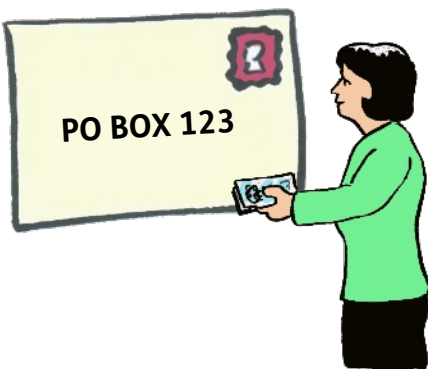
- **Any other information**

Say if anything else is important to you. For example if the person should drive or not smoke.



- **Who to contact for more information**

Do not give your home address, email or phone number. You might be able to use the address of your **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser, support organisation or Jobcentre Plus.



You could set up a PO Box but you have to pay for this.



Where to find out more

There is an example of a job advert and an application form on our website:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/templates



Your **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser or local support organisation can tell you about hourly rates for personal assistants.



You can find out about setting up a PO Box on the Royal Mail website:
www.royalmail.com



Advertise your job

You can advertise your job in different ways:



- by talking to people you know. But think about whether it would be difficult to **employ** a friend



- pay to advertise in your local newspaper



- advertise for free in your Jobcentre Plus



- on a free website like **www.gov.uk/advertise-job**



- on a support organisation's website



- at a local college or university. But some students go home for holidays so might not be able to work all the time



- on a register of personal assistants who are looking for work.



Where to find out more

You can find out if there is a local register of personal assistants at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/localregisters

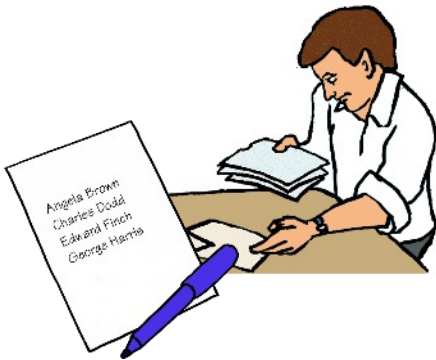


Your **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser or local support organisation can help you think about other ways to advertise.

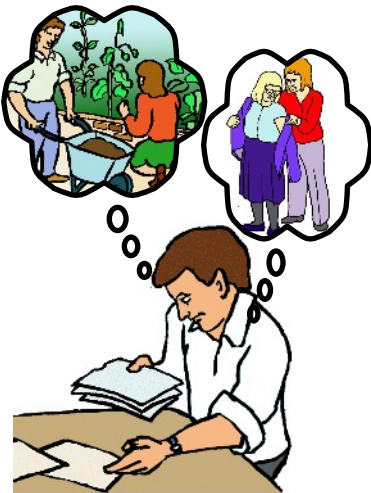


Choose who to interview

This is sometimes called **shortlisting**.



You look at all the application forms and **CVs** and make a shorter list of people you want to **interview**.



Look at people who match your **job description** and **person specification**. Then decide who to **interview**.



The people you ask to come for an **interview** are sometimes called **candidates**.



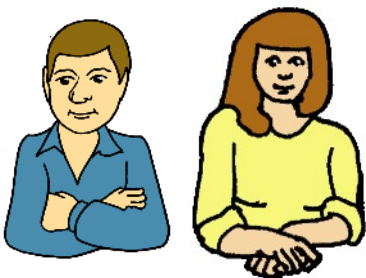
You must be able to say why you chose these people. You must show you did not **discriminate** against anyone because of things like:



- age



- race



- gender



- **sexual orientation.**

Where to find out more



ACAS can give you free advice and information about treating everyone fairly when you recruit staff.



Telephone:
0300 123 1100



Website:
www.acas.org.uk



There is an example of a letter to ask people to come for an interview on our website:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/templates

Do the interview

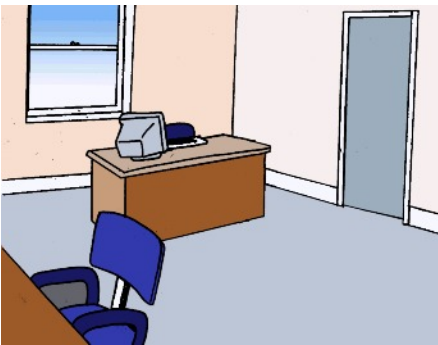


Think about:



- **Where to do the interview**

It is best not to do this at your home.



Your **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser, local support organisation, Jobcentre Plus or library might have a room you can use



- **What you want to ask**

It is good to talk about something that happens to you and ask what the **candidate** would do.



Decide if you want someone to support you with the interview. And what you want them to do



- **Who else could interview with you**

This could be a friend or your **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser.



It helps to know what someone else thinks but the final decision is yours.



- **Allow time**

Take a break between interviews. Make notes to help you remember what each **candidate** said.



- **Do not rush to offer the job**

If you are not sure you can think about it. If you do not think anyone was right you can advertise the job again.



Where to find out more

There is information to help you employ people on the government website:
www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people



Some things you might ask candidates

- why they would be a good personal assistant



- their qualifications and experience



- what they like to do in their spare time



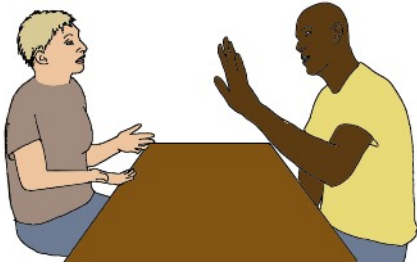
- if they have other experience of working with someone with a disability
if they have not been a personal assistant before



- what they would do if someone ignored you and only spoke to them



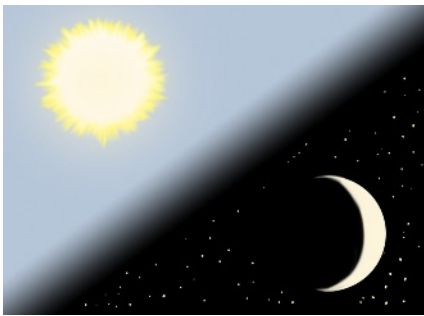
- how they would cope with you explaining how you want them to do things



- what they would do if you disagreed with them



- whether they want to do any training



- if they can work days, nights or a mix of both



- if they want to ask you anything.

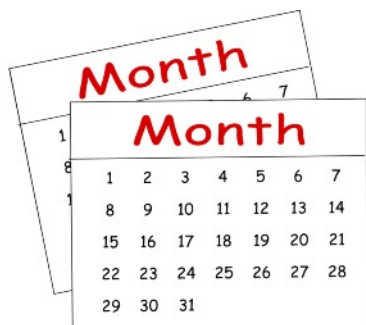
Offer the job



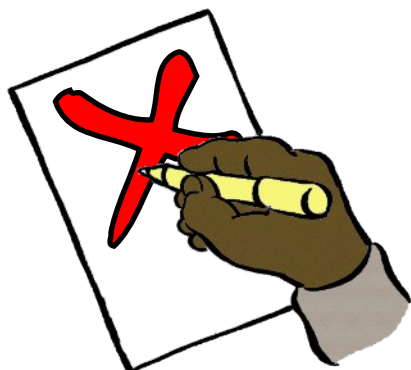
You need to write to the person you decide to **employ**.



Tell them you need to check **references** and do any other checks.



Allow enough time to make these checks before they start working for you.



You must also write to **candidates** who did not get the job.



They might want to know why you did not choose them. Use your notes from the interviews to tell them what they did well and what they could do better.



Where to find out more

There are examples of both these letters on our website:

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/templates



Do the right checks



Even if you think someone is right for the job, you should do these 3 checks before they work for you.



1. References

References help you:

- check the **candidate** told you the truth



- find out what other people think of them.



Candidates tell you who to contact when they apply for the job. One person is usually an **employer**.



The best way to get information is to write to the person who will give the **reference**. Send a copy of the **job description** and ask about the **candidate**.



You can phone the person giving the **reference**. But it is good to also ask them to write down the information you need.



If the candidate gives you a written reference from someone always ring the person to check it.



Where to find out more about references

There is an example of a letter to ask for a reference on our website:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/templates

2. DBS Checks



This tells you if the person has a **criminal conviction**.



You should only do the check when you offer someone the job.



You have to pay for a **DBS** check and it can take up to 4 weeks.

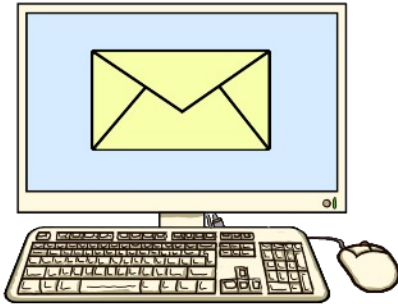
Where to find out more about DBS checks



Your local council, **direct payment** or **personal health budget** adviser or local support organisation might be able to help you do a **DBS** check.



There is more information about **DBS** checks, including how much they cost on the government website: **www.gov.uk/dbs**



You can also email:
customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk



Or telephone:
0300 0200 190



There is a list of organisations that do DBS checks for you at: **www.gov.uk/find-dbs-umbrella-body**

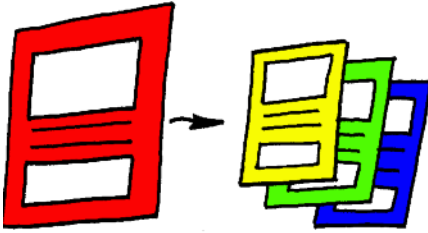


There is information about DBS checks on our website:
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/DBScheckPA

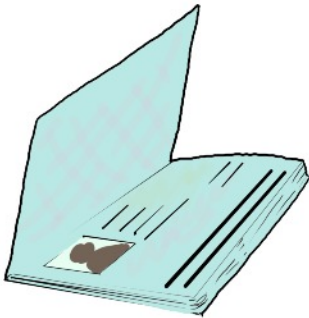


3. Right to work check

You must check the person meets the laws about working in the UK.

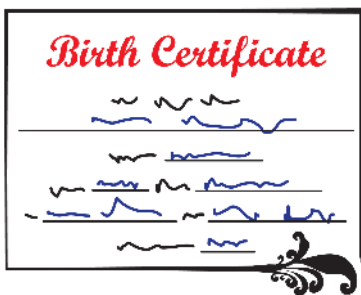


Before they can start work you must check and keep copies of papers that prove this.



These papers usually include:

- A British or European passport



- Birth certificate to say they were born in the UK or Republic of Ireland



- A letter from the Home Office that says they have the legal right to work in the UK.

Where to find out more about right to work

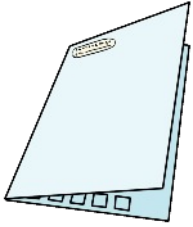


The government website tells you more about right to work checks at:
www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk

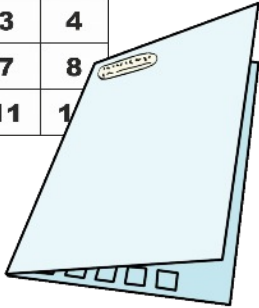


There is also a guide on the Home Office website:
<https://tinyurl.com/checkrightstowork>

Keep a record



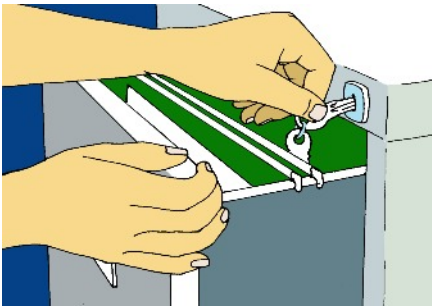
MONTHS			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
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You should keep all the paperwork from recruiting your **personal assistant** for at least 6 months.



This is in case a **candidate** says you did not treat them fairly.



These papers are confidential and you must keep them somewhere safe.

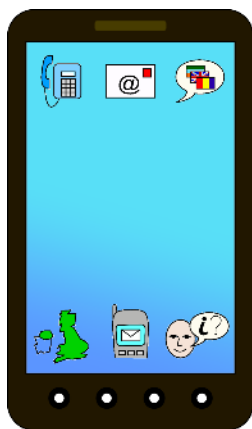


Where to find out more

You can find more information about keeping records on the **ACAS** website:
www.acas.org.uk



ACAS have a telephone helpline:
0300 123 1100



Text Relay:
18001 0300 123 1100.

What the words mean

ACAS

An organisation that gives employees and employers free advice about rights, rules and how to do things properly.

Apply

Ask for something officially.

Candidate

Someone who applies for a job.

Criminal conviction

When someone is found guilty of a crime. The police have a list of these crimes.

CV

CV is short for curriculum vitae. It is a paper that tells employers about you. It includes jobs you have done, qualifications and training.

Discriminate

To treat someone worse than other people because of who they are or where they come from.

Employ

Pay someone to work for you.

Employer

A person who pays someone to work for them.

In Control

A national charity that works to make sure everyone has the support they need to live a good life.

Individual employer

A person with a disability who employs a personal assistant to help them live independently.

Interview

A formal meeting where you ask someone questions to find out if they are right for a job.

Minimum

The least or smallest amount possible.

Personal Assistant or PA

Someone who a person with a disability employs to help them live more independently.

Personal budget

Money from your local council or NHS to arrange and pay for your care or support instead of using services.

Recruit

Find a new person or people to work for you.

References

Information from people who can talk about what a person is like, their work experience and skills.

Register

An official list of people or organisations.

Social care

Support with things like washing, dressing, meeting friends and living independently.

Qualifications

An official record that shows you have finished a training course or have the skills you need.



Credits

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