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NELFT Candidate Recruitment Pack

If you require this recruitment pack in a different format, please email the recruitment team - recruitment@nelft.nhs.uk

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Introduction

We're delighted that you are considering taking the next step in your career with North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT).

Whether you're exploring a new opportunity with us for the first time or are already part of our team and looking for a change, we want to help you put forward the strongest application possible.

This candidate pack has been put together to offer practical advice and useful insights to guide you through the application and interview process. The NHS is an evolving and dynamic environment and being part of it is both rewarding and impactful.

At NELFT, we are committed to delivering outstanding mental health and community healthcare services, and we're always looking for passionate individuals to join us in making a difference.

We wish you the best of luck with your application! If you have any questions that aren't covered here, please feel free to reach out to us at recruitment@nelft.nhs.uk

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Incorporating Core Values, Enthusiasm, and Conduct into NELFT's Recruitment Approach

At NELFT, we are committed to delivering exceptional mental health and community healthcare services whilst creating a workplace where people feel valued and supported. Our staff and service users are at the heart of everything we do, beginning with how we recruit.

As part of our values-based recruitment approach, we focus not only on skills and experience but also on personal values and we recognise the importance of lived experience. We believe that people who share our commitment to **kindness**, **respect**, and **working with communities** are best placed to thrive within NELFT, provide outstanding care, and make a positive impact.

By prioritising these values, we aim to build a team that reflects the diverse needs of the people we serve, creating an inclusive, supportive, and impactful workplace for everyone.

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NELFT Values

In collaboration with our colleagues, patients, and carers, we have developed three core values that we strive to integrate into NELFT's culture:

1. We are **kind**
2. We are **respectful**
3. We work with our **communities**

What does being **kind** mean?

"I once saw a sign that stuck with me, it said 'Act of Kindness – Pass It On'. Kindness is about helping others and making someone's day easier, even in the smallest way. Whether it's a listening ear, a calm presence, or a thoughtful compliment – these gestures are free and impactful. Kindness is contagious, let's pass it on. " Gul Begum, Involvement Representative

What does being **respectful** mean?

"Respect means valuing each person for who they are, making sure everyone feels heard, valued, and treated with dignity. As a Black Muslim mother, I appreciate when my intersectional needs are considered such as a prayer space, a child-friendly meeting, or culturally appropriate support. Respect is being open-minded and appreciating each other." Racheal Howison, Involvement Representative.

What does working with our **communities** mean?

"The best care happens when we work together – it's about listening, connecting, and taking action. When services come to where people are such as schools, community centres, and local spaces - it makes all the difference. Prevention is better than cure, and by engaging early, we help people live happier and healthier lives." John Lutchmiah, Involvement Representative.

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Understanding Values-Based Recruitment

At NELFT, Values-Based Recruitment (VBR) is a hiring approach that focuses on evaluating candidates' values and behaviours to ensure they reflect our trust's principles and way of working.

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Why NELFT Adopts a Values-Based Approach

- **Ensuring the Right Fit**
  - Value Based Recruitment (VBR) helps us build a workforce that aligns with NELFT's core values and behaviours, ensuring that both new and existing staff share our commitment to compassionate, high-quality care.

- **Building Trust with Service Users and Communities**
  - Patients and carers are more likely to feel safe and supported when they receive care from professionals who genuinely embody NELFT's values, strengthening relationships with the communities we serve.

- **Encouraging Personal & Professional Growth**
  - By focusing on values and potential rather than just qualifications, VBR provides opportunities for individuals to develop and thrive within NELFT, leading to a more skilled and adaptable workforce.

- **Creating a Supportive Workplace**
  - We want our employees to feel valued in a workplace that upholds and reinforces the same principles they believe in, fostering a culture of trust, encouragement, and shared purpose.

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What Does Values Based Recruitment Mean for an Applicant?

At NELFT, we have traditionally used Competency-Based Interviews to evaluate the technical skills and abilities needed for a role. While these remain valuable, we now incorporate Values-Based Interviews to gain deeper insight into what drives you as an individual.

A Values-Based Interview may feel familiar, as it still involves discussing past experiences and how you would approach different situations. However, the key focus is on uncovering your personal values - what motivates you, what you stand for, and how your approach aligns with NELFT's core values.

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Completing the Application Form

1. All applications at NELFT are processed through Trac (our recruitment system), where you'll complete standard sections such as your qualifications, employment history, and references. However, the VBR approach begins in the supporting statement section - this is your opportunity to showcase who you are beyond your qualifications and employment history.

2. We are not just looking for qualifications; we want to understand what motivates you, what you believe in, and how your experiences align with NELFT's values. We highly value lived experience, whether it stems from personal challenges, supporting a loved one, or providing care in any capacity. If you have ever helped someone—whether as a volunteer, a carer, or simply in everyday life—these experiences are valuable and can translate into meaningful contributions in our roles.

3. Your supporting statement is a key part of your application. Use this opportunity to showcase the skills and experiences that distinguish you. Refer to the person specification in the job advertisement to demonstrate how you meet the essential and desirable criteria, making it easy for the hiring manager to see your fit for the role.

4. With a 1,500-word limit, focus on providing concrete examples of how you've applied your skills in practice. Highlight moments that reflect kindness, respect, and community collaboration—qualities important to NELFT. Lastly, ensure your statement is clear and well-structured. A well-presented application helps the shortlisting panel understand your strengths and prevents important details from being overlooked. Make your statement engaging and true to yourself; this is your opportunity to stand out.

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The Supporting Statement

Introduction – First Layer

- This is your opportunity to create a positive first impression and capture the hiring manager's attention. Use the essential and desirable criteria as a guide to briefly introduce yourself by highlighting your key skills, relevant qualifications, and experience. Make sure to demonstrate how your approach aligns with NELFT's values.

For example: With over three years as a Healthcare Assistant, I have developed a compassionate approach to patient care, ensuring dignity and respect. I have assisted patients with daily activities, monitored vital signs, and provided emotional support, enhancing my interpersonal skills.

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The Supporting Statement

Meeting the Criteria – Middle Layer

- This section allows you to demonstrate how you meet both the essential and desirable criteria for the role. Follow the order of the person specification to create a clear structure and ensure you address all necessary criteria. Most importantly, highlight how you can effectively perform the role with examples, rather than merely stating that you meet the criteria.

🚫 **"**I have excellent communication skills**.“**

✅ **"**As a physiotherapist, I regularly communicate with patients, families, and Multi-Disciplinary teams to develop and deliver tailored rehabilitation plans. I adapt my communication style to explain complex treatment plans clearly, ensuring patients feel informed and engaged in their recovery**."**

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The Supporting Statement

Closing Statement – Final Layer

- The final section of your personal statement should confidently summarise what you bring to the role and express why you are eager to join NELFT. This is your chance to reinforce your enthusiasm and commitment.
- For example: I am excited about the opportunity to join NELFT and be part of a team that values kindness and respect. Working in the NHS has given me the best experience and training to become the best at what I do, and I am confident that my skills and experiences will contribute to helping deliver the best care possible.

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The Supporting Statement

- Final Tips
  - Check the deadline – Ensure you submit your application before the closing date.
  - Take your time – Allow yourself enough time to showcase why you're the best fit for the role.
  - Read thoroughly – Review the job advert, job description and person specification before you start.
  - Reflect on your strengths –Consider what unique skills and experience you can bring to the role.
  - Use the person specification as a guide – Treat it as a checklist to ensure you have listed all the relevant information.
  - Follow instructions carefully – Read all questions and guidelines to avoid missing key details of the application.
  - Be concise – Ensure your responses are clear and to the point.
  - Proofread – Check for spelling and grammar mistakes before submitting.
  - Get a second opinion – If possible, ask someone to review your application.
  - Stay updated—After the closing date, check Trac and your emails (including junk) for an update.

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Timeline – Recruitment Process

Interview

Attend the interview on the arranged date – you should hear back shortly after with the interview outcome

Conditional Offer

If you are successful, you will be sent a conditional offer with all your pre-employment checks that need completing

Unconditional Offer

Once your checks have been cleared, you will be sent an unconditional offer and contract which is when you would hand your notice in

Arrange Start Date

You and your manager will agree a start date and you will be booked on to the Trust Induction (if external)

Induction

Induction always starts on the first Monday and Tuesday of each month and will cover a two-week period.

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Interview Preparation

To prepare for your interview, please review our values and behaviours, and think about how to showcase them in the conversation. Familiarising yourself with the job description and person specification before interview will help you understand what we are looking for in our successful candidate.

A typical interview will include:

Opening Questions: These will help the interviewer learn more about you.

Values-Based Questions: These will help the interviewer explore what inspires you and how your personal values align with ours.

Technical/Competency Questions: These assess your skills and how they relate to the responsibilities of the role.

By reviewing these areas in advance, you'll be able to confidently demonstrate why you're the ideal fit for the role and for NELFT.

Top Tips

- Go through the Job Description and Person Specification carefully to ensure you understand what the criteria is and how to relate that to your own experiences
- Come to the interview with 2/3 questions to ask at the end of the interview – this shows your interest in the role as well as the Trust
- For in-person interviews, make sure you're familiar with the interview location, plan your journey with enough time to spare, and check if there is parking available if needed
- For online interviews, double check that you have the correct teams link and make sure your device is fully charged and functional
- If you have a disability and require any reasonable adjustments to ensure interview is accessible, please inform the recruitment team and we'll make the necessary arrangements

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Values-Based Interview Questions

01
Values

Showcase your personal values, behaviours, and how you approach various situations. They allow the panel to assess how well your values align with ours.

02
Prepare

Prepare by reviewing our values and behaviours and think about how they resonate with you. Reflect on times when you've demonstrated these behaviours, whether in personal or professional settings.

03
Examples

During the interview, you'll be asked to provide examples of situations where you've displayed a specific behaviour or value. This gives the panel insight into how you might react in similar future situations.

04
Reflect

Focus on the outcomes and learning from your examples. The panel is more interested in how you reflected on and adapted from your experiences, rather than simply recounting what happened.

05
Outcome

Ensure your examples demonstrate how your actions align with NELFT's core values. This will show that you embody the qualities we value in our team members.

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Competency-Based Interview Questions

01
Demonstrate
The interviewer will ask you to describe a situation demonstrating abilities and skills important for the role you've applied for.

02
Technical
Competencies may include technical skills, relevant knowledge, and experience related to the position.

03
Ability
You might be asked about your organisational ability and how you manage tasks or projects.

04
Judgement
The interviewer could also explore your interpersonal skills, problem-solving abilities, and judgement in various scenarios.

05
Teamwork
Teamwork and innovative thinking will likely be assessed to see how you collaborate and bring new ideas to the table.

Presentations During Interviews

You may have to prepare a presentation for your interview depending on what type of role you are applying for. It is important to put a good amount of time into this as this is an opportunity to allow you to demonstrate your interaction and presentation abilities. It will also show how well you understand information and deliver ideas.

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Interview Technique

STAR Method

		The STAR technique is an organised approach to answering competency-based and values-based questions:
S	Situation	Describe a specific event or task you needed to complete, rather than a general overview of past experiences. Provide enough detail for the interviewer to clearly understand the situation. This could be from a previous job, volunteer work, or any other relevant experience.
T	Task	What goal was you working towards?
A	Action	Clearly describe the specific steps you took to handle the situation, keeping the focus on your individual contributions. Explain what you did, how you did it, and why your approach was effective. Use “I” rather than “we” as this is about your role specifically. Provide enough detail to illustrate your decision-making process and actions.
R	Result	Explain the outcome of your actions. What was achieved? How did the situation resolve? Highlight multiple positive results, such as improvements made, challenges overcome, or skills developed. Reflect on what you learned and how the experience contributed to your growth. Maybe even consider what you would do differently next time.

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What to Expect Post-Interview?

A trained panel will assess each part of your interview based on values and behaviours, ensuring a fair and accurate evaluation of your performance. They will score your answers based on the desired and essential criteria with a final mark which will determine whether you are successful or not.

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Candidate Guidance & Support

At NELFT, we are committed to ensuring a fair, inclusive, and supportive recruitment process for all applicants. This section provides important information on key aspects of your application, including equal opportunities, support for applicants with disabilities, eligibility to work in the UK, and document requirements.

We encourage all candidates to review this guidance carefully to ensure their application meets the necessary requirements. If you need any adjustments or further support during the recruitment process, please do not hesitate to contact our Recruitment Team.

At NELFT, we are committed to upholding the principles of the Equality Act 2010, fostering an inclusive workplace where people of all backgrounds, identities, and experiences are welcomed and valued.

We empower our colleagues with the tools, support, and opportunities they need to thrive, prioritising professional development so they can achieve their goals and deliver exceptional care to the communities we serve.

Equal Opportunities & Inclusive Hiring

We strive to create a positive and supportive work environment for all employees. Our flexible working policy allows for job sharing and adaptable work arrangements, ensuring a better work-life balance.

As an inclusive employer, we welcome applicants from all backgrounds, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability. We are committed to diversity and ensuring equal opportunities for everyone.

The Equal Opportunities Monitoring section of the application is strictly confidential and will not be considered during the selection process. This information is used solely by the Recruitment Department to promote fairness and prevent discrimination in recruitment and employment.

Support for Applicants with Disabilities

If you need the application form in a different format, require specific arrangements for your interview, or need any assistance during the process, please contact the Recruitment Team on 0300 0300 1530 (Option 2, Option 1)

Right to Work in the UK

Employers are legally required to verify the right to work in the UK for all prospective employees. To confirm your eligibility, you must bring original documents proving your right to work to the interview. Photocopies cannot be accepted, and the documents must confirm your entitlement to perform the specific role.

Professional Registration & Qualification Checks

Certain roles require specific qualifications or professional registration, as outlined in the job advert or person specification. If this applies to you, please ensure you bring the necessary original documents to your interview.

Employment History & References

When filling out the employment history section, make sure to list all your previous and current jobs, including dates, even if they don't seem directly relevant to the role you're applying for. You will have the chance later in the application to highlight the skills and experiences most relevant to the position. We will send out reference requests once we send out the conditional offer letter.

You must also provide referee details covering the last three years of employment or the last twelve months if you're coming from the NHS. One should be your current line manager or someone in a position of responsibility who can assess your work experience, skills, and suitability for the role.

If you are a student, please include a teacher from your school, college, or university. Personal references from friends or family will not be accepted.

If you are working via an agency, please give us the agency email address instead of your employer's contact details.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Requirements

We require a standard or enhanced disclosure for all roles involving access to children, vulnerable adults, or those exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its amendments.

Salary and Pay Information

New employees will typically start at the minimum of the pay band. If transferring within the NHS to a role in the same pay band, staff will maintain their current pay point and incremental date. Those promoted to a higher band will begin at either the minimum of the new band or the first point that provides a salary increase, with their incremental date resetting to the start of the new role. All previous NHS service will be verified by an Inter Authority Transfer (IAT) which you will give consent for us to check through Trac. An IAT is an electronic way of gathering information from an employer for an applicant's previous or current NHS service using the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system.

Data Protection and Handling of Personal Information

The details you provide in your application will be used for recruitment and selection purposes, ensuring the Trust meets its employment obligations for successful candidates, as well as for equal opportunity monitoring. If your application is unsuccessful, it will be securely stored for 12 months before being confidentially disposed of. We appreciate your interest and wish you the best of luck with your application. For any further assistance, please reach out to the Recruitment Team or the department mentioned in the job advert.

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Requesting Adjustments During the Application Process

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to support people with disabilities and ensure they are not disadvantaged at work. This could include modifying the workplace, adjusting work hours, or changing the recruitment process. For more details, see the government guidance on reasonable adjustments for disabled workers.

Reasonable adjustments for workers with disabilities or health conditions - GOV.UK

As a Disability Confident employer, NELFT is committed to supporting applicants who need adjustments during the recruitment process. You will be asked at each stage if you require any adjustments to ensure a fair and accessible process. Our Trust values guide our approach, and we aim to make the process straightforward, putting your needs first. You do not need to qualify for the Disability Confident Scheme to request support.

To request an adjustment, please provide:

- The reason you need an adjustment

- Possible adjustments that may help

- Any previous adjustments you've had (if applicable)

Send your request to recruitment@nelft.nhs.uk. A recruitment officer or hiring manager will contact you to discuss and confirm your needs. You can request an adjustment at any stage - before applying, during the process, or ahead of an interview.

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Adjustments at Later Stages of Recruitment

If you realise later in the process that you need an adjustment but didn't request it when submitting your application, don't worry. You can still ask for support by reaching out to the named contact in the job advert.

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments You Can Request:

- Application form in an alternative format
- Changing the time, location, or format of interviews
- A sign language interpreter

Once you submit your request, the hiring manager and recruitment team will review it and send you the outcome via email.

Workplace Adjustments and Ongoing Support

If you are offered a job, you will have the opportunity to discuss any ongoing adjustments you may need before you start work. This ensures that the necessary support is in place to help you succeed in your role.

We understand that adjustments can occur at any time during employment and these can change.

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Additional Information and FAQ's

- When can I hand in my notice?
  - We strongly recommend waiting until all pre-employment checks are completed. You will receive an email via Trac once these checks are finalised, with your new manager copied in. At that point, we advise submitting your notice.
- When is pay day?
  - You will get paid on the 27th of every month. On the occasion of this falling on a weekend or bank holiday, you will be paid the working day beforehand.
- Will I get a pension?
  - All eligible staff will be automatically enrolled in the National Health Pension Scheme (NHSP). You have the option to opt out if you prefer, but you will have to opt in initially.
- When is Trust Induction?
  - The Trust induction is the first Monday and Tuesday of every month, and covers a two-week period – all external starters (even those currently working on NELFT bank) will be required to attend.
- How can I speed up the Occupational Health process?
  - This is managed by the Occupational Health Service so we are unable to give you a timeframe. You can contact OH Works for more information
- Will I receive a uniform?
  - If your role requires uniform, please reach out to your new manager.
- How many days can I take off without it affecting my continuous service?
  - Please see information on continuous service. Reckonable Service and Continuous Service Dates (NHSE) · Customer Self-Service
- How can I speed up the Occupational Health process?
  - The timeframe of this check is out of our control since a third party handles it. However, to speed things up, please have your immunisation records ready, as they'll require them initially.
- Does NELFT accommodate remote interviews?
  - If you request a remote interview, we may be able to accommodate this, but it is at the manager's discretion. Please reach out to the manager (or the recruitment team) with your reason for the request, and we will inform you of the outcome.
- Will I receive a laptop and mobile phone?
  - Yes, if your role requires either of these, you will be provided with them.

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If you have anymore questions, please email recruitment@nelft.nhs.uk

We wish you the best of luck with your application!