Using external advertising sources

1. Web advertising

Explore the site you are going to use and look at adverts for roles that are similar to the one you want to advertise, to enable you to get a feel for what works.

Web adverts should be short; half as long as a press advert. It is far more engaging for jobseekers to scroll down, scanning headers and digesting short paragraphs as they go.

Key information should be placed at the top of the advert, as only 2-3 lines of text are shown initially when adverts are searched.

Keywords

Most jobsite search engines use keywords to help jobseekers narrow their searches so you will need to decide on the ones you want to use. These might be related to the job title, sector, key aspects of the role, core competencies, or qualifications. Keywords tend to be factual and specific, such as 'higher education', 'postdoctoral', or 'research', not subjective words like 'dynamic' or 'challenging'.

The importance of the job title

It is particularly important in an online advert to use a job title that is familiar to the external world as this is more likely to attract the right people to apply for your role. The job title will feature in keyword searches so it should accurately describe the role, bearing in mind the prescribed job titles outlined in the [Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff.](#) In some cases you may wish to use a more generic job title for the external adverts and a more specific title in the further particulars which would be more appropriate in a university context.

Clear introductory information

The first 20 to 30 words in an online advert are crucial as these often appear in the summary directly below the job title, before the reader has to click for further information. You should ensure that your first one or two sentences are informative and compelling.

2. Directional ('signpost') advertising

Directional advertising in the print media can be used to guide people to the vacancy website where full information is provided about the job and the employer. These can be useful where an online only advert may not reach a broad audience. The advert copy should be short (typically 50 words or fewer) and focused on the key aspects of the post and any essential selection criteria ([filters](#)).

3. Press advertising

University data indicates that very few successful applicants for support and academic-related posts are recruited via print media. In view of the cost, and the declining circulation of many publications, press adverts should generally only be used where it would be difficult to attract a good response through web or directional advertising.