

# Safer Recruitment Policy

Guidance

This guidance has been designed as a source to support safer recruitment in youth work settings.

# Safer Recruitment Policy

Safer recruitment means taking steps to ensure only individuals who are suitable for working with young people, whilst keeping them safe from harm and risks, are appointed. The following process will be adopted and applied consistently when appointing a staff member, associate or volunteer.

## Advertising

When any form of advertising is used to recruit staff or volunteers, the following information will be reflected:

- aims of the organisation and where appropriate, the particular programme involved
- a detailed role description including the qualities, qualifications and standards required in the successful candidate, the safeguarding requirements of the role (including whether it involves regulated activity) and details of the checking procedures to be carried out (references, identity, Right to Work, DBS and barred-list checks where eligible)
- the organisation is an equal opportunities employer, operating within child safeguarding standards
- where the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order), a statement that protected (filtered) cautions and convictions must not be disclosed or considered

## Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information sent to interested or potential applicants will include:

- a job or role description, including roles and responsibilities, specific safeguarding responsibilities, and whether the role is supervised/unsupervised and/or regulated activity
- a person specification which clearly states qualifications and experience required
- an application form
- a self-disclosure form (see Recruitment of Candidates with a Criminal Record Guidance)
- a privacy notice setting out how applicant data will be used, stored and retained

## Application Forms

All applicants, whether paid or voluntary, full time or part time positions will complete an application form, including a full employment and volunteering history with explanations for any gaps. Individuals providing incomplete applications will not be considered.

## References

Contact details of two written references (not relatives) are required, one of which should be a previous employer. References will only be taken up when the position is offered to the applicant and will be requested via email and confirmed by telephone. A reference provided by phone only will not be accepted. References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- The candidate's suitability for working with children, young people or adults at risk.
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- The candidate's suitability for this post.

## Disclosures

All roles that meet DBS eligibility criteria for working with children, young people or adults at risk, will be required to complete an enhanced level DBS check. Where the role involves regulated activity, the relevant barred-list check will also be undertaken. All advertised roles will make clear that the candidate may be subject to a DBS check. The applicant has a responsibility to disclose any previous convictions, in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) and DBS filtering rules. See our policy for Recruiting Persons with a Criminal Record for more information.

## Shortlisting

Short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post and carried out by a minimum of two fully trained staff members.

## Online Search

An online search of publicly available information will be conducted for shortlisted candidates prior to interview for the limited purpose of identifying role-relevant safeguarding risks. Candidates will be advised of this step in the interview invitation. Searches will be fair, proportionate and consistent, and will not consider protected characteristics or non-relevant personal information. Any relevant findings will be shared with the candidate and discussed at interview to provide an opportunity to respond or correct inaccuracies.

## Interview process

Interviews will be carried out by a minimum of two fully trained staff members and will be conducted either in-person or online video call.

Selection methods will be outlined before the interview and candidates will be asked if they need any special arrangements for these.

All candidates will be asked the same core questions. Questions will relate to the person specification to explore experience and suitability for the role. The interview will be used to:

- Explore the candidate's suitability to work with young people
- Explore their attitude and their motivations for applying for the role
- Explore any gaps in work history
- Check the candidate's identity
- Discuss any role-relevant information identified through shortlisting checks (e.g. an online search), giving the candidate an opportunity to respond or correct inaccuracies
- Interview notes and outcome decisions will be recorded and retained in line with the organisation's Data Protection Policy and retention policy.

## Appointment

The successful applicant will be issued with a conditional offer letter, terms and conditions and all new starter paperwork. It will specify full details and requirements of the position and any probation period (if appropriate).

All appointments will be conditional on satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks (two satisfactory references, identity, Right to Work, verification of essential qualifications/registrations, and—where eligible—DBS and barred-list checks, with overseas checks where applicable). Please note that should the applicant be unable to provide references within the UK, overseas references and where appropriate, a DBS and / or barring check will be undertaken.

Where any checks remain outstanding and an earlier start is operationally necessary, a written risk assessment and appropriate supervision will be put in place until checks are completed. Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent employment; any disclosure will be considered fairly and in line with the role and relevant guidance.

All staff and volunteers will undergo a formal induction, which will cover the organisation's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Training needs will be established as part of their induction and refreshed on an ongoing basis.

## Training

Once recruited, all new staff and volunteers will receive training and written guidelines to ensure they remain fully aware of relevant safeguarding procedures.

- All staff and volunteers receive training and written guidelines on safer working practices.
- All staff and volunteers receive training and written guidelines on allegations management and how to raise concerns, including escalation/ whistle-blowing.
- All staff and volunteers receive training and written guidelines on reporting procedures if they suspect that a child or young person working with the organisation is at risk of harm.

## Probation period

All new staff will be subject to a probation period of six months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended). The probation period is a trial period, to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the role for which they have been recruited. Progress will be reviewed at set intervals, and confirmation of permanent appointment will be subject to satisfactory performance, conduct and completion of any required training.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and when legislation, guidance or organisational practice changes.

Approved by:

Date:

Review Date: