

Safer Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment process is intended to recruit and select the best quality staff to support people through a fair and equitable process, ensuring that procedures are legally compliant, creative, efficient, cost effective and focussed on the needs of the organisational objectives.

Recruitment begins at the point at which an employee resigns from their post, or a new post is approved for recruitment, and ends with successful completion of the probationary period.

Inn Churches is committed to ensuring that recruitment is an open and inclusive process that values the skills people might bring to the organisation, and to protection children, young people and vulnerable adults by making sure we employ the right people (on paid and voluntary basis).

Legislation is clear that at no point in the recruitment and selection process must an applicant or potential applicant be discriminated against on grounds such as race, gender, gender reassignment, age, disability, sexual orientation, marriage, civil partnership or pregnancy, religion, belief or offending background. Managers must keep records and notes in order to protect against allegations of discrimination.

There are some occasions when it is objectively justified to discriminate in favour of, or against particular groups of staff, as detailed below.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

It is intended that this policy will apply equally to the appointment of an internal or external appointment. There may be circumstances when this policy is not followed, under the specific instruction of the CEO or trustees, such as in cases where an employee would otherwise be redundant, or where the appointment is for a short temporary appointment.

Procedure

Filling a vacancy

When a member of staff resigns an exit interview should be conducted by their manager to determine why that employee is leaving, and whether there are any issues to be addressed that might affect the retention of other employees, or recruitment to the role. A decision then needs to be made whether to recruit a new employee to fill the vacancy, to look to existing resources to undertake the work, or to rearrange work practices, resulting in a different post being vacant.

To fill the vacancy the charity must decide what will be involved in the role (a job description) and what criteria they require applicants to meet to demonstrate that they would be competent in the role (person specification).

For roles involving contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, both job description and person specification should highlight the importance of understanding safeguarding issues.

If a particular role must be filled by an employee of a specific gender, race, religious belief or with a disability, this may be a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR). Most commonly, a GOR may apply where it is necessary to preserve privacy and decency e.g. physical contact, personal care or where the post holder provides personal services in order to promote client welfare. If a GOR exists, this must be established prior to advertising the post.

Advertising and attracting applicants

As a minimum, all vacancies must be advertised internally to all Inn Churches employees and volunteers and across the Inn Churches mailing list. It is also usually necessary to advertise vacancies externally to attract applicants from outside the organisation. The CEO or line manager will decide the most suitable method of attracting applicants.

The information provided to advertise or attract potential employees should portray a fair and accurate representation of the role and our commitment to making necessary reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants. It should include the right information to attract high quality candidates and deter unsuitable applicants such as those who may present a risk to children. Where a DBS check is required, or there is a GOR, this must be identified in the advertisement.

A standard application pack will be provided to all applications, which will include the application form and a self-disclosure form for applicants to confidentially submit any unspent (or spent if the role requires an enhanced DBS) criminal convictions, child protection investigations or disciplinary procedures on their record. Self-disclosures should only be viewed for candidates who have accepted a conditional offer. Unopened forms should be securely shredded.

Shortlisting applicants

Applications will be made on a standard application form, which may also be accompanied by a CV.

The personal details of applicants will be separated from the shortlisting information before shortlisting. Applicants must be shortlisted for interview based only on the information they have provided and whether it meets the criteria of the person specification. Records must be retained for a period of six months following recruitment to identify where candidates who were not shortlisted fell short of the criteria.

Shortlisting may be done by any appropriately qualified person, but they should also be part of the interview panel if possible. However, any known applicant with an association with any staff member (as friend, family member or other associate) must be declared prior to appointment. Usually at least two members of the interview panel will shortlist.

Selecting and appointing a new employee

To select an applicant an assessment process must be followed and applied equally to all shortlisted applicants. This will normally be an interview but may include a presentation or a practical task appropriate to assess the skills needed for the post. The CEO or manager should determine the most appropriate selection method and the constitution of any interview panel, which should comprise at least two people, including the proposed line manager.

Applicants should be asked to prove their identity at interview.

The structure of any interview must be the same for each candidate, although it is recognised that candidate answers and supplementary questions will vary.

Questions should relate to the role description and person specification and should be designed to allow candidates to demonstrate the attitudes and values required for the role.

Interviews for work with children, young people or vulnerable adults should always be face-to-face, and allow the candidate to demonstrate their suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Candidates should demonstrate that they understand children, young people and vulnerable adults' needs and perspectives, have realistic expectations of them, recognise that their needs come first, use appropriate language and are clear about boundaries.

The applicant selected must be the individual who, based on objective assessment, most closely meets the criteria or person specification. Records must be retained for a period of six months following recruitment to identify where unsuccessful candidates fell short of the required criteria.

Under no circumstances may friends, relatives or other known associates be employed without the express prior permission of the trustees.

The recruiting manager should inform the successful candidate of the job offer and, providing the candidate accepts, begin recruitment checks and send out an offer of employment. All offers of employment at this stage are subject to satisfactory checks (see below) and a three-month probationary period.

Unsuccessful applicants should also be notified and, wherever practicable, offered feedback.

Recruitment checks

Right to work

All new staff must produce original documentation to demonstrate their **right to remain and work in the UK**. This documentation is normally a UK or European birth certificate or passport.

Additionally, all employees must provide proof of residential address and their national insurance number on an official document.

References

References are intended to provide factual information and an objective assessment of the performance of an individual. They are intended to assist the process of recruiting new employees. Inn Churches will provide and seek open references that can be seen by the individual, except for internal candidates where references are already held.

At least two references must be requested for all posts, from people who have known the applicant for at least a year. One reference must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer.

The manager may decide to seek references from employers other than those given by the applicant. Wherever a work history is available, preference should be given to references from these sources rather than personal references. Any gaps in employment must be explored with the applicant and verified where possible.

An offer of employment will not be confirmed until satisfactory references and other pre-employment checks have been received. The manager may withdraw an offer if satisfactory references cannot be obtained.

References can be written, or given/received via telephone and confirmed in writing.

Self-disclosure form

Any self-disclosure form submitted on application should be checked for the successful candidate before the role can be confirmed.

DBS checks

DBS checks are required for all prospective employees who have unsupervised contact with children, young people, or vulnerable adults. Managers must complete and submit the DBS application form as soon as an offer of employment is made.

Posts working with or with access to vulnerable adults are exempt from the section of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, which normally entitles applicants to withhold information about spent convictions. In these circumstances, applicants must declare any convictions whether 'spent' or current, subject to current legislation.

Where the post is not subject to a DBS check the organisation may, in any event, require the employee to undertake a basic criminal records check, which will highlight unspent convictions.

A criminal record will not necessarily prevent applicants from working for Inn Churches. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against an applicant on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed in a Disclosure. We are committed to the fair treatment of applicants and employees regardless of their offending background. However, it is unlawful to employ an individual in a position involving regular contact with vulnerable adults if they are on the DBS List.

If a disclosure reveals any convictions or other relevant information this should be discussed with the applicant in an open and measured way. Every case should be taken on its individual merits when the decision is taken on whether to withdraw or confirm the offer of employment.

The Trustees must be consulted and approve the final decision in these cases.

Fitness for the role

The manager must ensure that all new staff are deemed **fit to undertake the proposed role** prior to commencing employment, but after an offer of employment has been made.

The responsibility for the health and wellbeing of staff at work remains with Inn Churches.

The manager should seek information and undertake risk assessments where an employee identifies an existing condition.

If necessary, a medical report may be sought on the employee, or they may be referred for an occupational health assessment.

Induction and Probation

For a new employee to be as successful as possible it is essential that they are provided with a structured induction into the organisation. This should cover all aspects of the job role, meeting colleagues, policies and procedures, health, safety and security.

Throughout the first three months of employment, staff are on probation and they should have close supervision and training necessary to ensure that they have the best opportunity to be able to meet the requirements of the job role.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that an employee is confirmed in post in writing at the end of the probationary period or for taking appropriate action during the probationary period if they are deemed not to be competent.

In exceptional circumstances an employee may have their probationary period extended. However, the charity may terminate employment at any point during the probationary period if it is clear the employee is not capable of performing the role satisfactorily.