



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

This policy sets out the process to be followed when recruiting staff.

- The Charity will select the successful candidate based on the best person for the job.
- The Charity will invest time and care in the selection process to give all candidates the initial opportunity to progress equally through the recruitment process.
- The Charity will ensure that its recruitment process is free from discrimination and follows the principles and ethos of the Equality Act 2010

Advertising the Vacancy

We will not discriminate in our advertising of jobs or in our decisions not to advertise a job, in all forms of job advertisement, including e-mails, direct mail, as well as advertising to the general public in websites, newspapers.

Any agency used will be made aware of our Equality and Diversity Policy and other relevant policies and provided with copies of the job descriptions and person specifications for the posts they are helping the employer recruit for.

We will place advertisements to reach a sufficiently wide range of potential candidates.

We will ensure that care is taken over the wording of job advertisements. Inappropriate wording could increase the risk of discrimination claims or be used as evidence of a discriminatory culture. In particular:

- An advertisement should refer to the real (as opposed to the perceived) requirements of the job, including the job description and person specification if the employer has created these for the job in question. This will ensure that nobody is deterred from applying or making an unsuccessful application, even though they could, in fact, do the job
- Care needs to be taken over the wording of the advertisement to avoid any suggestion that we may directly discriminate by asking for people with a certain protected characteristic. For example, an advertisement for a "waitress" would suggest that the employer is discriminating against men.

- Care needs to be taken to ensure that the advertisement does not contain any wording that suggests that the employer might indirectly discriminate. The wording should not, for example, suggest criteria that would disadvantage people of a particular sex, age, or any other protected characteristic.

Application Forms

Application forms will request only the information necessary for the selection process.

At each stage of the process, applicants will be kept informed and should expect to be told the following:

- 1) When they can expect to hear whether their application is to be progressed to the next stage of the recruitment process.
- 2) What the next stage will involve.

All applicants are to apply via the website using a digital link to an online application form, which once submitted is automatically sent to the HR department.

Any gaps in employment must be explained and documented. The application should also include details of all relevant qualifications, professional memberships, and skills applicable to the role.

Applicants must also provide contact details for at least two referees, one of whom must be the current or most recent employer.

Short Listing

Applicants are shortlisted by comparing their application forms against the person specification for the role. Shortlisting and interviewing of candidates will be conducted by more than one person where possible.

All Applicants

We encourage employees to talk with their supervisors or Managers about their career plans, and supervisors or Managers are encouraged to support employees' efforts to gain experience and advance within the organisation.

Equal Opportunity Monitoring

We will uphold equal opportunities for all during our recruitment process. Candidates will be recruited solely on their merits and ability to perform the role.

We aim to monitor all applications from both internal and external candidates to ensure the effectiveness of our procedures. Such monitoring will not be used as a selection criterion for recruitment.

The recording of this information will be solely for monitoring and for taking appropriate steps to prevent discrimination and to improve equality and diversity within the Charity. Such monitoring will not be used as part of the selection criteria for hiring new staff, for training or promoting existing staff, or for any other decision related to your employment with us. All information gathered is stored separately from your personnel file and application forms.

Interviews

Interview questions and selection processes will be relevant to the job and will not be discriminatory. Questions will not be asked that may imply an intention to discriminate because of any Protected Characteristics.

Applicants will not be asked about their health before a job offer is made, apart from asking in the application form if any reasonable adjustments need to be made for the purpose of conducting the interviews. There may be times when this is required to establish whether an applicant can perform a fundamental part of the job, subject to reasonable adjustments, or to assess the reasonable adjustments required; where necessary. Job offers may be made on the condition of a medical check.

Every effort is made to ensure interviews are conducted in conditions conducive to interviewees demonstrating themselves at their best. Interviewers, for their part, ensure they have all the required documentation before the interview begins.

1. All questions asked will be directly relevant to one or more of the selection criteria that have been identified for the position.
2. The assessments made by interviewers are formally recorded on an interview assessment form, and thorough notes are taken.
3. All interviewers are familiar with our equal opportunities policy.
4. No assumptions will be made, nor will questions about the applicant's personal circumstances be asked.

We will endeavour to support and consider any reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities.

Offer of Employment

Once the interview is complete and the decision is made, the successful candidate will be contacted.

Employment is conditional upon satisfactory completion of all safeguarding checks, including but not limited to satisfactory references, a satisfactory DBS Check, and Right to Work checks.

Offers will be confirmed only on satisfactory completion of all the above. We are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will exercise due diligence where reasonable adjustments are a consideration. Start dates will be agreed upon once all pre-employment

checks are completed satisfactorily unless in exceptional circumstances, where early start dates are approved by the Senior Management Team with safeguarding provisions in place.

Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS)

An enhanced DBS must include all original identification documentation.

Applicants with a current DBS certificate who are part of the Online Update Service can be checked immediately on the DBS website. Applicants offered a role who need a new DBS check will be required to bring to the HopeWorks office three original forms of ID for verification, and to complete the DBS application form online.

In cases where it is proving impossible for newly appointed staff to obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure, the charity follows the regulations and OFSTED guidance by:

- Arranging for new staff to have a structured induction programme in which they carry out their work under supervision at all times
- Closely monitoring the appointee's work settings
- Terminating employment if the DBS disclosure is unsatisfactory upon receipt.

There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear, but the individual is still suitable to work with our clients. This will be treated on an individual case basis and at the discretion of the Team Manager and relevant Head of Department, taking into account the:

- seriousness of the offence or other information
- accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form
- nature of the appointment including levels of supervision
- age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information
- the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information
- relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with vulnerable adults or children

It is a condition of employment for relevant roles that employees hold a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Certificate. If such a certificate is not supplied, or if, when it is received, it is not deemed suitable, the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

We will comply with the relevant Codes of Practice regarding the appropriate storage, use, retention and disposal of any disclosures and the information contained in such, and also any information regarding any offences of which the applicant may be accused or charged with which they disclose to us personally.

All such information will be kept in secure, locked containers. We will ensure that such information is only seen by authorised and relevant people. Such information will only be used for the purpose for which it was requested. All staff who have authorisation to access such information will be fully aware of the implications of discussing or passing any such information to any unauthorised person, and that to do so would be regarded as both a criminal offence and an internal disciplinary offence.

We will maintain a permanent record of the unique disclosure reference number, the type of disclosure requested, the name of the person to whom it refers, and their job role. We will, however, retain other information contained in any disclosure only for as long as necessary to assess its potential impact on the individual's employment, or continued employment, including any time needed to resolve disputes or complaints.

If we need to retain such information for an extended period, we will seek further guidance, if necessary, from the Disclosure and Barring Service/Disclosure Scotland.

When the documents are no longer required for retention, we will destroy them using a secure method (e.g., shredding, burning, or pulping) so that no other person can access them.

The Charity financially covers Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

References

- A minimum of 2 references, one of which must be from their current or previous employer, is required.
- References must cover the last five years of employment, with any gaps fully explained and documented.
- References will be asked to specifically confirm the candidate's suitability to work in a safeguarding role.
- Verification of the reason for leaving previous employment will be requested from referees, particularly for roles involving children or vulnerable adults.

Any inconsistencies in references, employment history, or documentation will be fully investigated and recorded.

Qualifications

Documentary evidence of relevant qualifications, full employment history and satisfactory information about their ability will be requested either at interview or following job offer.

If relevant for the role, Safeguarding training will be provided or arranged during induction before the employee undertakes any unsupervised duties.

Right to Work Checks

HopeWorks is required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be required to provide original documents before employment begins to satisfy this requirement, such as a passport as part of their pre-employment checks. We will not make assumptions about nationality based on appearance or perceived nationality.

We are committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, equality, and legal compliance in all aspects of our operations, including the right to work.

Training

We will provide training to our employees involved in our recruitment process who are authorised to conduct right-to-work checks. The training will include Shortlisting, Interviewing with a Safer Recruitment approach, and conducting DBS and Right-to-work checks. This is to ensure a clear understanding of the procedures and that they are up to date with current legislation.

Equal Treatment

We apply right-to-work checks to all individuals employed or engaged by us, in line with the principles outlined in our Equality and Diversity Policy.

We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in our workforce. We will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Induction

Your induction programme is designed so that employees fit in quickly and effectively. During the induction, employees will be issued their Statement of Particulars, be required to read the HopeWorks Staff handbook and Health & Safety Policy, as well as being given access to all other policies and procedures. This will include the HopeWorks Safeguarding policy and procedural guidance regarding how to recognise and report concerns to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals connected with the Charity is protected.

Probation

New staff members will have a probationary period for the first 6 months of work during which suitability for the position to which they have been appointed will be assessed. HopeWorks reserves the right to extend the probationary period necessary.