



# Recruitment and Selection Policy

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# 1 Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in the Horizon Trust's recruitment and selection processes and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people.
- 1.2 This Recruitment and Selection Policy has been produced in line with the latest version of the Department for Education's 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' document. It aims to ensure that safe and fair recruitment and selection processes are conducted by the Trust and its constituent academies at all times.
- 1.3 The Trust is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Trust is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment for all its members of staff. The Trust recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit, reward and retain staff of the highest calibre, who share this commitment.
- 1.4 This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all staff, agency workers and consultants in the Trust or any of its academies.
- 1.5 All staff involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process must be aware of and adhere to the content of this policy. This should ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and complies with current employment legislation, whilst providing value for money for the Trust.
- 1.6 The Trust will
  - ensure that appropriately skilled and qualified staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for each position and the requirements of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014.
  - ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
  - ensure that no job applicant is treated less favourably on any prohibited grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, gender or sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment status, disability or age;
  - ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department of Education (DFE). This includes, but is not limited to, the most recent version of "Working Together to Safeguard Children", "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and the Code of Practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
  - ensure that the Trust meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

## **2. Safer Recruitment**

- 2.1 All recruitment must be undertaken in line with this policy, wherever possible. The flowchart in Appendix 1 clearly shows the recruitment process and is aimed to ensure that the Trust identifies, deters and prevents people who pose a risk of harm from working with its learners.
- 2.2 All offers of employment will be subject to the Trust being satisfied that the applicant, volunteer or consultant is a suitable person to work with its learners.
- 2.3 All staff involved in recruitment must be aware of and adhere to the current version of KCSIE, together with the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (copies of which are available on the Trust website).
- 2.4 All recruitment must be planned in advance to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.
- 2.5 Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during a recruitment process must inform the CEO, Headteacher or Business Operations Manager immediately.
- 2.6 All the safer recruitment pre-employment checks described in this policy and shown in Appendix 2 must be carried out and have a satisfactory outcome before an applicant can commence their employment in the Trust.

## **3. Advertising**

- 3.1 All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal colleagues, or colleagues at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before an external advertisement is placed.
- 3.2 Where possible, all posts will be advertised for a minimum of 14 days.
- 3.3 The Central HR office is responsible for providing advert templates which include:
  - The Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
  - Making clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
  - the safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
  - Whether the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are protected, so they do not need to be disclosed. If they are disclosed, the Trust cannot take them into account.
- 3.4 Quality checking will be carried out to ensure the accuracy of all content including the associated role profile for the vacancy.

## **4. Application form**

- 4.1 All candidates must complete a Horizon application form for all positions. This requests the candidate's personal details, academic and full employment history (including any gaps or discrepancies), qualifications, references and a self-assessment of their suitability for the role.
- 4.2 All application forms include a statement informing applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.
- 4.3 CVs are not accepted and candidates who do not complete the official application form will not be considered.
- 4.4 All volunteers must complete a volunteer application form.

## **5. Role Profile**

- 5.1 A Role Profile is required for all posts, which describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up to date, accurate and specific to the role, setting out the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post. Role Profiles can be obtained from the Central HR office.
- 5.2 All applicants will be provided with sufficient access to information regarding the trust, academy and the relevant post so that they can make informed decisions regarding their suitability.
- 5.3 All Role Profiles must refer to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## **6. References**

- 6.1 Two references will be sought for all shortlisted candidates prior to interview, where possible, using the Horizon reference template. One of these references must be the current/most recent employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer. Permission must be granted by the applicant before referees are approached.
- 6.2 Ideally, references will be requested and received prior to interview. However, if this is not the case, then a conditional offer of employment must not be made until at least one, but ideally both, references are received and approved as satisfactory by the recruiting leader. Any offer made, whether one or both references are received is deemed to be conditional upon all pre-employment checks including references being undertaken and can therefore be withdrawn in the event of unsatisfactory checks.
- 6.3 If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher but has been

previously, an additional reference must be sought from the school, academy or LA at which they were most recently employed, to confirm details of their employment and their reason for leaving.

- 6.4 For internal candidates, two references must also be obtained, one of which should be from the member of staff's current line manager.
- 6.5 References must be sought and obtained directly from the referee; testimonials or open references cannot be accepted. All school or academy based references received for a candidate must be confirmed by the headteacher of the institution as correct.
- 6.6 In line with best practice and safer recruitment guidance, all references must be followed up by telephone.
- 6.7 References must be checked carefully to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. Any issue, concern or inconsistencies between the information given by the candidate on his/her application form and that provided by referees must be explored at interview and recorded. The referee should be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate.
- 6.8 To comply with the Equality Act (2010), information relating to sickness absence will only be requested after a conditional offer of employment has been made.
- 6.9 **Under no circumstances should a recruiting leader make unconditional offers of employment.**

## 7. Interviews

- 7.1 Interviews must be carried out by a minimum of two members of staff, one of whom must be the line manager, and at least one member of the interview panel must be trained in safer recruitment procedures.
- 7.2 Considerable care needs to be taken over the practical arrangements for the selection day, as the process has an impact on how the Trust is perceived by candidates. Where candidates have indicated that they have a disability which requires a reasonable adjustment to be made, they must be asked how the process can be made more accessible for them and timely plans must be made for adjustment.
- 7.3 A face to face interview must take place for all applicants to all posts.
- 7.4 The selection panel will draft a set of selection criteria in line with the role profile. They will consider the range of selection activities to be used, clearly identifying how these activities will allow them to apply the criteria. Selection panels must also consider how activities inform candidates of the nature of both the post and the Trust (such as its culture and ethos).
- 7.5 Candidates must be advised of the nature of the section activities prior to interview, which could include:
  - 1. Observations of teaching practices

2. One or more additional panel interviews (e.g student panel)
3. A presentation
4. In tray exercises
5. Psychometric testing

- 7.6 Where the selection process is for a teaching role, including headteacher and leadership roles, the activities must include candidates being observed teaching pupils. Where the process is for a leadership role over a teaching and learning area, an activity witnessing and feeding back on delivery to pupils must also be included.
- 7.7 The interview must explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including awareness of issues relating to the Prevent Agenda. The Trust's interview question template must be used in all cases, which clearly provides sample questions to ask. Safeguarding must be paramount throughout the interview and not simply an add-on question at the end of the interview. Any information about past disciplinary action or substantiated allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.
- 7.8 All candidates must be subject to the same selection tasks. Every interview must be structured and the same questions asked of all candidates. It is, however, acceptable to ask a follow up or probing question based on the candidate's response and/or details/discrepancies in their application form or reference. The interview panel's structured questions should include:
- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children;
  - exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role, and,
  - probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.
- 7.9 Each panel member must complete their own notes on each candidate. Interview notes must be factual, noting candidate responses and performance during the selection process. Notes must not be personal – candidates have the right to request any information written about them.
- 7.10 After the completion of all selection activities the interview panel will discuss the performance of each candidate and collate the scores. Care must be taken to minimise unconscious biases and ensure that any appointment is based on merit. The successful candidate should, as a minimum, fulfil all the essential requirements listed within the person specification.

## **8. Offer and Feedback**

- 8.1 Candidates must be notified of the outcome of the interview process as soon as possible after the selection day by the recruiting leader. It is good practice to offer feedback to unsuccessful candidates.
- 8.2 No offer should be made until at least one, and ideally both, references are received and

are satisfactory. Any offer made is conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references and all pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check.

- 8.3 It is also good practice for the chair of the interview panel to call the successful candidate to make the initial conditional offer, which must then be followed up with a formal letter, confirming the details of the offer and setting out the next steps. Support on this will be given by the Central HR office.

## **9. Pre-Employment Checks**

- 9.1 Once a conditional offer has been made, all pre-employment checks set out in Appendix 2 need to be completed.
- 9.2 The recruiting leader is responsible for ensuring all the pre-employment checks are carried out and that any discrepancies/unsatisfactory checks are followed up. Written confirmation must be retained in the personnel file.
- 9.3 An appointment must not be confirmed until all the necessary checks are satisfactorily completed.
- 9.4 All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained in the personnel file and recorded on the SCR as appropriate.

## **10. Agencies and Other Groups**

### **Agency and Third-Party Colleagues**

- 10.1 Supply agencies are required to carry out the same level of checks as the Trust. Written confirmation that all checks have been undertaken must be provided prior to any engagement. This confirmation must be held on file and recorded on the SCR.
- 10.2 A copy of the individual's enhanced DBS certificate, including a children's barred list check if necessary, must be seen, and evidence retained prior to the contract starting. This can be achieved by the line manager signing and dating the written confirmation received from the agency and clearly stating that they have seen a copy of the DBS certificate. If there is a positive disclosure, a risk assessment must be carried out and a copy of the DBS certificate retained in the file. Further details are available in the DBS Policy.
- 10.3 When using agency staff, academies and the Trust must ensure they are complying fully with the Agency Workers Regulations (2010) and sure that the person presenting themselves for work, is the same person that the checks were carried out on.
- 10.4 The Trust will not allow any contractors or third parties whom have not had any checks carried out, to be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in a regulated activity relating to children.
- 10.5 The Trust will check the identity of any third parties on arrival at the school.

## **Trainee and Student Teachers**

- 10.4 Where a trainee is on a salaried scheme, the same checks must be undertaken as with other employed colleagues, including an enhanced DBS check and children's barred list check.
- 10.5 Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher's training provider to carry out the necessary checks. Written confirmation must be obtained from the training provider that these checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider as suitable to work with children.

## **Visitors**

- 10.6 DBS and barred list checks are not required for children's relatives or other visitors attending an activity in school, such as a sports day, but professional judgement should be used by the Head/Principal as to whether they require escorting/supervision.
- 10.7 Visitors in a professional capacity should have their identity checked and their enhanced DBS certificate, if required.

## **Volunteers**

- 10.6 Volunteers are seen by learners as trustworthy adults, therefore, the same standard of recruitment process applies to ensure their suitability to work with young people. However, a common-sense approach must be taken, based on the role, level of contact and frequency of volunteering (e.g. one-off school trip vs a repeated ongoing role). A risk assessment should be carried out which considers:
- the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
  - what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
  - whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability, and
  - whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of the check, for volunteer roles that are not in regulated activity
- 10.7 If the volunteer is engaged in regulated activity on a regular basis and has unsupervised access to learners, an enhanced DBS with barred list must be undertaken.
- 10.8 An enhanced DBS certificate (not including barred list information) must be obtained for volunteers who are not engaged in regulated activity, but may have regular contact with learners, e.g. supervised volunteers. The Trust is not legally permitted to request barred list information on volunteer colleagues who are not undertaking regulated activity.
- 10.9 If the volunteer is not engaged in regulated activity a risk assessment must be undertaken to decide whether an enhanced DBS (without barred list) is required.

- 10.10 Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Volunteer information must be recorded on the SCR.
- 10.11 All volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application form and two satisfactory references must be sought.

### **Consultants**

- 10.12 Where appropriate and given sufficient time, a consultant that is appointed to support business or educational operations will be required to go through a rigorous recruitment process. However, it is recognised that this may not always be possible, such as cases where additional capacity is required at short notice.
- 10.13 Approval and guidance on the steps that must be followed should be sought from Central HR before appointing any consultant.
- 10.14 Where appropriate, an application form and references must be sought for consultants.
- 10.15 Where appropriate, if the consultant is contracted directly with the Trust (rather than through a third party agency), a consultancy agreement/letter of engagement must be issued, signed and retained by the responsible manager.
- 10.16 Where appropriate, the interview process in section 7 will be followed for the appointment of consultants.
- 10.17 Consultants must provide proof of their Enhanced DBS check and right to work in the UK. If the consultant does not have a portable DBS check a new check should be arranged.
- 10.18 An IR35 process will also be completed to determine the consultant's employment status for income tax and national insurance purposes.

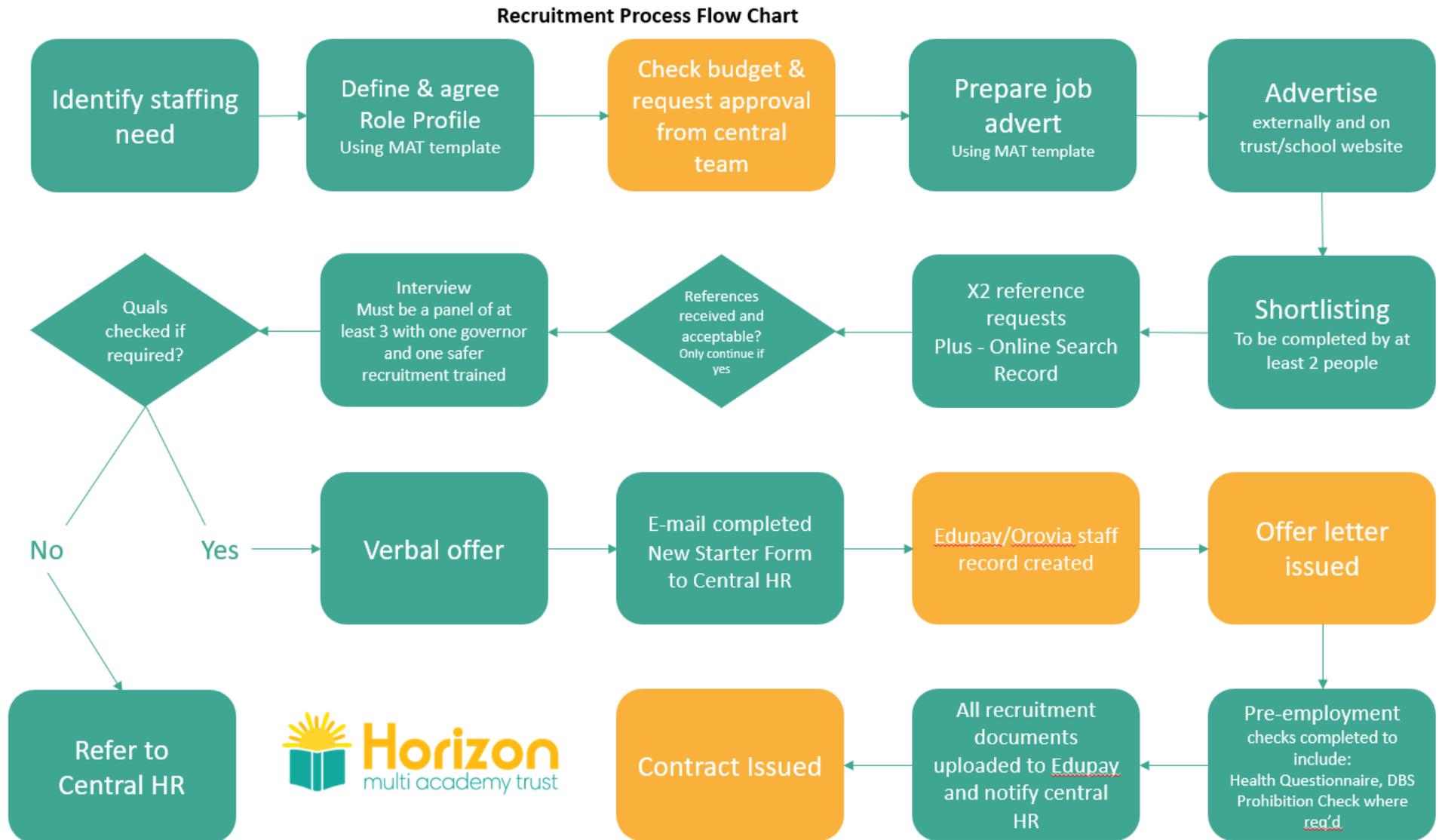
## **11. Breaches of this Policy**

- 11.1 Any breaches of this policy will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.
- 11.2 Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application, will be managed through the Trust's Complaints Policy or Grievance Policy (for existing colleagues).

## **12. Record Keeping and Data Protection**

All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or rejection of candidates will be kept in line with the requirements of the Trust's Data Protection Policy and relevant legislation.

# Appendix 1: Recruitment Process Flow Chart



## Appendix 2 - Safer Recruitment Pre-Employment Checklist

Pre-employment Check		Relevant Colleague	Completed
1	Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, one of which must be from the current or most recent employer (all school or academy references received must be confirmed by the headteacher of the institute as accurate)	All staff and volunteer	
2	Verification of the applicant's identification, preferably from a birth certificate, a current photographic ID and proof of address.	All staff, Volunteers, Consultants (where appropriate)	
3	Verification of the applicants right to work in the UK, including EU nationals	All Staff	
4	Verification of qualifications where relevant, for example examination certificates such as GCSE or Degree.	All Staff	
5	Verification of professional status necessary for the post. Original or certified copies must be seen and copied. For teachers, DfE Teacher Services System must be used to check a teacher's record. This service will provide details of QTS and Induction qualifications, as well as any restrictions or sanctions in place.	All Staff	
6	For teachers, other staff who hold QTS who are working in a non-teaching role or other staff working in a classroom setting such as HLTA, Teaching Assistants and Cover Supervisors, verification that the new employee is not subject to a Prohibition Order or GTCE Order by checking the DfE Teacher Services System	Teach Staff and staff with classroom responsibility	
7	For management positions ( Head Teachers and SLT Members) verification that they are not subject to a Section 128 direction by checking the DfE Teacher Services System.	All senior members of staff, SLT	
8	Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaged in regulated activities). The original physical certificate will still need to be obtained.	All Staff, Volunteers	
9	If the candidate has lived outside the UK, an overseas criminal record check will be required to obtain a "certificate of good character" – additional checks will also include a letter of professional standing and additional references sought from overseas work placements. Candidates must undergo the same checks but the Trust can make any further checks that it thinks are necessary	All Staff, Volunteers	
10	Pre-employment health screen questionnaire – to ensure that colleagues do not have any ill health or disabilities which might make the proposed work difficult or unsafe to our colleagues or others.	All Staff	
11	Online Checks must be completed for all staff using the online checks form.	All staff	

	Verification that those working in reception classes or providing wraparound care for children under 8 are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations	Staff providing childcare/wraparound care	
12	Verification that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State	All staff, Volunteers	
13	Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities, which can be via asking relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role	All staff, Volunteers	