

Coast Tuition – Recruitment Policy

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1.0 Introduction

It is vital that Coast Tuition creates a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. It is important that we adopt robust recruitment processes to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities.

Safer Recruitment is not just about having a certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) there are many other integral parts of the process which will determine whether a candidate, including volunteers, is deemed safe to work with children and vulnerable adults.

Our recruitment process is designed to be fair and equal for all candidates, each person who is employed or volunteers at Coast Tuition will complete mandatory pre-employment checks before being provided with a start date.

2.0 Advert

When advertising for a role the following information should be included:

- The skills, attributes, experience, attitude, and behaviours required for the role
- The safeguarding requirements e.g., whether the role is in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults.
- Our commitment to safeguarding and the clear safer recruitment checks to be undertaken
- Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

3.0 Application Form

The application form is a record of an applicant's history, this should include:

- Personal details including name, address and National Insurance number
- Details of the current/ most recent employment
- Full employment history covering the period from leaving full time education to present, including reasons for any gaps
- Details of qualifications
- Referee details; and
- A statement of personal qualities and experience.

A candidate may show their prospective interest in a job role/ volunteer placement by sending their CV through for review. However, CVs will not be accepted as the only form of application; all applicants must complete an application form prior to being invited to interview.

Candidates are asked to declare any convictions on their application form, if a conviction is disclosed, this should be investigated during the interview process. See the DBS process for more information regarding the disclosure of criminal convictions.

4.0 Selection Process and Interview

As part of the selection process, all candidates who have applied for the role should be shortlisted against the criteria advertised for the role.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process the shortlisting panel should consider carrying out an online search as part of the due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Any issues identified can then be discussed with the candidate at interview stage.

The interview must be conducted by a minimum of two panel members, one of which should have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

During the interview, a range of selection techniques should be used as well as formal interview questions, for example a teaching and learning observation or in tray exercise. The interview panel should agree the structure of the interviews prior to inviting the candidates for interview and communicate what is expected of them within the invitation.

The interview panel should ask the same questions to all candidates who are being interviewed for the same role which should include asking:

- What attracted them to the post
- What their skills are and asking for examples of experience of working with children or vulnerable adults
- About any gaps in their employment history and asking for the reasons for these gaps
- Questions around declared criminal convictions or warnings

The interview paperwork must be thoroughly completed with clear and detailed notes from the interview panel.

Any explanations regarding criminal convictions, why they left any previous employment and if any disciplinary proceedings have taken place must be thoroughly explained and written on the paperwork.

For successful candidates, the interview paperwork is kept on file for the duration of employment and may be referred to at any point, therefore it is essential that the notes are detailed and accurate.

5.0 Offer of Employment

Any offer of employment should be made to the candidate verbally and followed up in writing with an offer letter.

All offers of employment are conditional until satisfactory completion of mandatory pre-employment checks which include:

- Employment History
- Completed interview paperwork

- Right to Work in the UK
- DBS
- References
- Fitness for Work

If pre-employment checks, when received, are unsatisfactory, the offer of employment can be withdrawn.

6.0 Pre-Employment Checks

Employment History

A full and continuous employment history should be gathered from leaving full time education to present day with any gaps explained. A gap is anything more than two days.

Using a separate employment history form can make it easier to view any gaps and add any explanations for these gaps from the candidate.

The employment history form should be completed with the information provided by the candidate on their application form, CV and at interview. If there are gaps in employment, the form should then be sent to the candidate to review the accuracy and to explain any gaps, if relevant. On completion, with all relevant gaps explained, this should be saved on the candidates employee file.

Right to Work in the UK

A right to work check is required by law, all applicants must have the right to work in the UK in order to be employed. If a candidate fails to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK, they cannot and will not be employed.

Organisations can be fined up to £20,000 and/ or sentenced to prison for up to 5 years for knowingly employing illegal workers. Therefore, seeing a candidate right to work as soon as possible through the pre-employment checks is essential.

To complete a right to work check, please use the right to work form, this gives clear instructions of what documents need to be viewed and copied to ensure an individual has a right to work in the UK.

If there are any concerns over the ID documents which have been provided, please seek advice from People Support.

All ID should be colour copied and the copy should be signed and dated by the staff member completing the check, this should be kept with the completed right to work form and saved on the employee file.

DBS

A DBS should be completed for all employees and volunteers who are working in regulated activity. The DBS application form is completed online by the applicant via Disclosure Services LTD.

The level of DBS check is determined by the level of regulated activity the candidate will be involved with in their role. See the DBS Policy for further information.

Having any convictions disclosed during the application form and investigated during the interview process may pre-empt any conviction's disclosed on the DBS application form. Depending on the type of conviction and whether this is spent or not may or may not be detailed on the DBS certificate.

N.B. just because a candidate has a conviction does not instantly mean that they cannot work for Coast Tuition, the risk must be determined by investigating the type, nature, and date of the conviction through the interview and pre-employment checks. If the risk is low, a risk assessment can be completed to ensure safety of children and vulnerable adults. If the risk is high, the offer of employment can be withdrawn.

References

The purpose of seeking references is to allow employers to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions.

An individual must provide referee contact details for at least two references. One reference must be the current/ most recent employer and the second either a character reference or previous employer.

Work References

Where possible, at least one of these references should be from an employer or a voluntary organisation where the applicant's position required working with children or vulnerable adults, in any of the following capacities: employee, volunteer, student placement or work experience.

For a work reference the work reference pro-forma will need to be sent to the referee's work email address along with the applicant's job description. A work referee may have policies in place at their organisation which state that a reference can only be given with factual information only which would be job title, dates of employment and reasons for leaving. This reference is acceptable as long as we receive an answer to the below question:

'Could you advise if there is any reason you are aware of why the applicant would not be suitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults?'

Due to the nature of our roles, the above Safeguarding question is essential as part of Safer Recruitment.

You should:

- not accept a work reference if it is addressed 'to whom it may concern' or sent to you directly from the candidate
- not accept a work reference sent from a personal email address e.g., Yahoo or Hotmail

- ensure any references that are completed are from a candidate's current or most recent employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information has been provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and discuss any discrepancies with the candidate.
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

Character References

If a character reference is requested, the character reference pro-forma should be sent along with the applicant's job description.

A character reference could be a work colleague, family friend or someone who has known the candidate for a significant period of time and can honestly account for their attitudes and behaviours within a professional setting.

Miscellaneous References

If an individual has not worked previously and this is their first job/ volunteer placement, having two-character references is acceptable.

If an individual has worked for themselves as self-employed then the individual's previous employer should be approached as well as a client from their business. If the individual has been self-employed for a significant period of time, then a client should be asked, and a second referee should be a character reference.

Fitness for Work

To establish whether an individual is fit for the role, a medical questionnaire should be completed by the individual before starting with Coast Tuition.

This medical questionnaire is used to determine whether any support or reasonable adjustments should be made in relation to their day-to-day role. Our commitment to ensure safety within the workplace is vital to all staff and volunteers.

7.0 Warning Signs

The below warning signs are things to look out for when carrying out pre-employment checks:

- **Where an individual has unexplained gaps in employment**
This could be due to having spent time in prison or that they were being investigated for Safeguarding incidents.
- **A significant change in role or drop in salary**
This could be questioned as if an applicant has had a highly paid role and now looking for a much less salary, this could be because they were dismissed from their previous role.
- **References are not from most recent employer**

This could be a warning sign as why wouldn't they want a reference to be requested from their most recent employer? What might have happened for the reference to not want to be requested from them? These are questions to think about.

- **Work references are sent using personal email addresses and not work email addresses**

This may be that the reference is coming from a colleague or friend that may or may not have worked with the individual. If the reference has been sent from a personal email address, then anyone could complete it. Even the individual themselves.

- **Character references and no employer references**

This is a warning sign if an individual has been employed either currently or previously, questions should be raised as to why there are no employer references

- **Unexplained moves across the country**

This could be that something has happened in one part of the country that an individual has run away from, especially if this is a sudden move.

Inadequate understanding of boundaries

This is a major indicator that the candidate does not have any boundaries which could cause serious safeguarding issues if employed.

The above is not exhaustive and there may be other warning signs throughout a person's recruitment process, this is to show that you need to question the warning signs that you may have about an individual.

Also, the above may all have genuine reasons, please remember to question with integrity and respect.

Rigorously check the CV/ application form, check the gaps that are presented to you, keep reasonably questioning until you are satisfied with the answer, if you are not satisfied with the answer the likelihood is that there is something going on which needs to be delved into further. Contact People Support if you need help, guidance, or support.

8.0 Data Protection

The information provided during the recruitment process should be kept confidential and only shared with those who require it as part of their role. The information may be shared with third parties e.g. People Support, to support Coast Tuition with policy, procedure and employment legislation.

Data collected for successful candidates makes up part of the employee file and will be retained for the duration of the candidate's employment plus 6 years following the end of the employment relationship.

Data collected for unsuccessful candidates will be retained for 6 months following the interview date.

Further information can be found in the Recruitment Privacy Policy and Data Protection Policy.