



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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Recruitment and Selection Policy

Introduction

LEAPS Suffolk aims to recruit the best person for each vacancy through fair, systematic, effective recruitment and selection procedures. This will ensure that LEAPS Suffolk continues to deliver a high-quality service to all its attendees and their family.

LEAPS Suffolk values diversity and is committed to eliminating unlawful and unfair discrimination. Appointment will always be on merit, within relevant legislative and statutory obligations.

LEAPS Suffolk is committed to delivering the recruitment and selection of staff in a professional, timely and responsive manner. All candidates will be treated fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.

LEAPS Suffolk will promote best practice recruitment and selection and will continuously review and develop its practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.

Scope

This policy applies to all vacancies and all parts of the recruitment and selection process within the organisation. It will be made available to all potential candidates and employees.

All employees involved at any stage of the recruitment selection of new employees should be aware of and adhere to the contents of this policy and any related policies and procedures. In addition, any external consultants or recruitment agencies who assist in the recruitment process must act in accordance with this policy. Karen Double is responsible for providing such external parties with this policy prior to their involvement in the recruitment process.

Purpose

This policy provides a framework for those involved in recruitment and selection. The aim is to recruit the best person for the vacancy by providing a professional and cost-effective recruitment service that is fair and promotes good practice.

Related Policies

Separate policies exist regarding Equality and Diversity and Data Protection.

Identification of Vacancy

When a vacancy arises, it is the responsibility of the manager and the board of trustees to ascertain whether the post is still required and whether the duties are compatible with the organisation's needs for the future. This review may also include consideration of whether the role could be offered on a more flexible working pattern (such as job share, part-time or term time only working) or on a fixed term or open-ended basis. Prior to recruitment commencing, the role must be job evaluated (if applicable).

Advertising

All posts that are for six months or more will be advertised in an agreed appropriate medium for the role. Exceptions may exist for business reasons when it would be inappropriate to advertise vacancies, for example, when there is a need for redeployment due to a redundancy situation, due to the ending of a fixed term contract or due to occupational health reasons. Exceptions may also apply in cases where a post is externally funded and an individual is specifically named in the supporting grant/funding agreement.

Consideration will be given to internal only advertising in the first instance where posts may offer career advancement opportunities or are fixed term and may be appropriate for secondment.

Advertisements will be accurate and comply with the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy. All advertisements will include a statement about our commitment to safeguarding child and adults.

Initial enquiry

Upon enquiring about a vacancy, we will send potential candidates

- a job description
- person specification
- an application form
- a copy of our Safeguarding Children and Adult Policy and our Recruitment and Selection Policy

Application

The method of application will be determined by the type of role and applications are submitted through the on-line application process.

The application form includes:

- A declaration that all information is correct under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, that asks if the applicant has been awaiting a verdict, convicted, or cautioned or received a court order or warning for any offence that may affect their suitability for working with children and vulnerable people
- A request for the contact details of two referees, one of which should be the last employer. If this is the candidates first post, then their course tutor is a suitable alternative.
- The right to work in the UK
- A declaration on whether the candidate is related to, or has a close relationship with any employee at LEAPS Suffolk

The application form includes:

- A request for the contact details of two referees. These are discussed at interview, to ascertain length of time known, relationship to the candidate etc. If these are not deemed suitable, it will be discussed with the candidate at interview and advised that if offered employment, alternative referees will be needed.
- A section which must be completed in relation to DBS barred list and conduct/misconduct regarding disciplinaries.

Applicants must submit a completed application form by the date on the initial email sent. A stand-alone CV is not acceptable, but can be submitted with a completed application form. The application form does not need to be handwritten.

Shortlisting

The shortlisting process will be based on the requirements of the post as defined in the person specification, assessing candidates against essential and desirable criteria.

Shortlisting will be undertaken by more than one person and normally this will be the interview panel and will be recorded using a standard template.

Interview procedure

- We will notify all candidates selected for interview by email
- The interview will be conducted by at least two interviewers.
- All candidates will be asked the same set of questions
- We will then ask additional questions about any other issues that may arise from their application form. For example, the interviewers will follow up on any gaps in the candidate's employment history rigorously and ensure that they are satisfied with the explanation given, undertaking additional checks if necessary. We will check the referees and explain whether they are suitable or not and if appointed they may need new referees.
- When we have interviewed all candidates, we will make our final selection.

Selection

The selection methods used will be appropriate and relate to job requirements and all decisions will be based on objective criteria. Selection panels will reach agreement on the appointment decision by consensus. The Founder/ Director will be responsible for the final decision in the event agreement cannot be reached.

Members of selection panels will aim to reflect the diversity of the organisation population (e.g. contain at least one member of each sex).

All candidates should have a sufficient demand of the English language. This is required by Ofsted to ensure that the attendee's needs can be met.

Appointing a new member of staff

When we have selected the successful candidate/s we will:

- Contact them by phone to confirm they have been selected
- Send a suitable written offer within 3 days of the phone call. This email will clearly state it is a conditional offer, until we have 3 forms of ID, suitable references, suitable qualification certificates as per the application form and a suitable enhanced DBS check.
- Seek permission in the written offer to contact referees and ask for suitable ones if the ones on the application form are not suitable.
- Notify them of their Induction Day and what they need to bring in relation to proof of ID etc.
- Notify them of the probation period

References

References will be obtained from the candidate's current employer or training provider. The latter may be so in the event that this is a first employment role for some candidates. References are obtained in a timely manner.

LEAPS Suffolk does not accept open references which state 'To whom it may concern', nor do we accept references from a family member. We do not accept any reference that the candidate has requested from previous employers themselves and candidates will never be asked to provide their own. We require the referee to have a work email address if this is a current or previous employer, or a training provider email. A personal email is not suitable for the first reference. However, where some candidates provide services such as a personal assistant, we recognise that a work email may not be available. In this instance, the 2nd referee must hold a professional or business email address.

The reference form is already set out and includes information on whether the candidate has been subject to any disciplinary, performance conduct and any capability procedures in the previous two years. If referees choose to provide their own reference, this must be on headed paper.

Once references are received, we will compare this to the information on the application form and what was discussed at the interview. We will also follow up with a phone call should we have any concerns regarding the content of the reference and if we need further clarification. All concerns are satisfactorily resolved before the candidate completes their induction.

DBS checks

We will obtain enhanced DBS disclosures for all employees who will work unsupervised with the children on a regular basis, or who have access to children's information. If candidates have subscribed to the DBS Update Service, we will carefully review their current DBS certificate and then check their status online. If there has been a change in their status since their last DBS certificate was issued, we will obtain a new DBS disclosure for them. If we feel we need to obtain a new DBS this will be done without question.

The identification required for an enhanced DBS will be seen by the Manager in person and photographs will be taken and kept on file. The Manager will check the ID is valid and that it has not been tampered with. If there are any concerns regarding the ID provided, the candidate will not be permitted to use this as evidence for a DBS.

Suitable ID for a DBS can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-standardenhanced-dbs-check-applications-from-22-april-2025>

New staff will only be allowed to work unsupervised with children/adults when we have had full sight of a satisfactory DBS certificate for them and they have demonstrated they are suitable to do. If we decide to allow a new member of staff to begin work pending the completion of their DBS check, we will complete a written risk assessment first and they will not be allowed unsupervised access to the children/adults until we have seen and reviewed their DBS certificate. Additionally, they will not

be permitted to see any personal information such as address, telephone number of any attendee or their family.

When we appoint a member of staff, we will keep a record of the date and number of their DBS disclosure on our Central DBS Record. As part of their probation period all employees must register with the update service so regular checks can be made.

Volunteers are not permitted to work unsupervised nor support with personal care and therefore a standard DBS is deemed appropriate. Furthermore, any under 18 year old employee is not permitted to work unsupervised in any instance.

DBS checks with any recorded information

LEAPS Suffolk recognises it is unlawful to employ someone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS as someone who is considered unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. Furthermore, it is also unlawful for LEAPS Suffolk to employ someone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children/adults. This is murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, such as terrorism etc. It is also unlawful of LEAPS Suffolk to knowingly employ someone who works in the relevant or related setting and is disqualified from providing child care under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006 (June 2016) whether by association or otherwise.

If an Enhanced DBS check returns showing criminal records information, this might indicate that the candidate is unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable people that LEAPS Suffolk supports. In this instance, the Director will check the list of offences that automatically disqualify a person from working with children. The list is available here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

We will seek further advice from social care or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if we need further clarification. If the offences detailed on the DBS disqualifies the candidate from working with children, then the conditional offer is withdrawn immediately. As LEAPS Suffolk is committed to protecting children/young people and vulnerable adults. We will report to the police/DBS if a person who is disqualified from working with children/vulnerable adults applies for a position with us as this is a criminal offence. All candidates should also be aware that providing false and inaccurate information is an offence and will result in their application being rejected or dismissed if they have been appointed. We will make a referral to the police and the DBS. If as an organisation we have serious concerns regarding any candidate's suitability to work with children/vulnerable adults we will refer this to the police/DBS.

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by the candidate at any time during the recruitment process, e.g., initial enquiry, application form, interview etc, or obtained through a DBS check, LEAPS Suffolk, Board of Trustees will consider the following before making a final decision.

- Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question

- The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- Whether the candidate's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- The circumstances surrounding the offence/s and the explanation/s offered by the candidate

If the post involves regular contact with children/vulnerable adults, it is LEAPS Suffolk policy to consider it a risk to employ someone with any information recorded on their DBS and that has not already been disclosed, as this may affect the integrity of LEAPS Suffolk and the community we support. Further advice will be sought, e.g. NACRO or UNLOCK.

When a candidate volunteers information relating to a previous minor criminal offence, the candidate will be given the opportunity at a meeting with the Manager and a trustee to provide an explanation of the offence/s as well as the circumstances at the time. The candidate's attitude to the offence will be assessed and whether they would respond differently now.

Immigration status

The management is aware of Asylum and Immigration Act requirements and will check the ability of all new starters to work in the UK. Candidates are expected to provide documents confirming their status, such as a driving licence, passport, and NI number.

Appointment of under 18's (Young workers)

LEAPS Suffolk may employ young people from 16 years depending on the roles and responsibilities of the vacancy. As an organisation/employer we recognise that we have a duty of care to ensure all under 18 employees are safeguarded. Therefore, all under 18 employees are covered by our Safeguarding Children and Adult's Policy. This should be read before applying for any vacancy at LEAPS Suffolk. This policy can be found on our website, www.leapssuffolk.org.uk

LEAPS Suffolk will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate for employment on the basis of a conviction or other details revealed. As an organisation we make appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically exclude him/her from employment within our organisation. Each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective criteria set out below.

Records and data selection

Records of all successful candidates will be kept on file throughout their employment and in the 10 years following. Unsuccessful candidates will have their application form kept on file for 6 months.

Confidentiality

Through each stage of this policy, the organisation will seek to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. However, if we are concerned about any behaviour of a candidate, we have the right to refer this to the police or DBS.

Equality and diversity

Particular care will be taken to ensure that this policy is fairly applied and there is no discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, disability, gender or gender identity, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or any other requirement that cannot be objectively justified.

LEAPS Suffolk will fulfil its legal duties, ensuring that “reasonable adjustments”, where practicable, are made to ensure that individuals with a disability are not disadvantaged as part of the recruitment and selection process.

Statistical information on all stages of the recruitment exercise will be collated, monitored and reported to inform LEAPS Suffolk performance in the area of equality and diversity.

Contact numbers:

Contact numbers:

Karen (manager and DSL) 07761397535

Jenna or Katie (DDSL) 07502775685 (during session time only)

Social Care: 0808 800 4005

Out of hours contact: 0808 800 4005

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): 0300 123 2044

LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board): 08456 066067

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Mash: 03456 061499