



# PLUMPTON

## COLLEGE

### **Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy**

This policy sets out a framework for dealing with recruitment and selection. The policy is applicable to all employees within the **Plumpton College Group**. For the avoidance of doubt the policy is non-contractual.

Any reference to Plumpton College is relevant to the Plumpton College Group, meaning any employee employed by its subsidiaries, its holding company or any subsidiary of its holding company.

SMT Assigned Owner	Principal
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The SMT is delegated to approve minor changes to the policy in response to legal changes and best practice.

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## 1. Scope & Purpose

- 1.1 This purpose of this policy is to set out the framework by which staff are recruited and selected for employment at Plumpton College. The policy is intended to be a source of reference for all staff, and especially those involved in the recruitment and selection of employees. It contains the legal aspects and best practice issues of recruiting and selecting as well as sound practical advice and procedures to promote good practice.
- 1.2 The policy applies to all appointments/employees and is designed to ensure consistent, effective and fair treatment for all. This policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, age, or on the basis of being a part-time or fixed term worker.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with policies and procedures referred to in the Policy Centre on SharePoint, including the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Safeguarding, and Staff Disciplinary policy.

## 2. Equality of Opportunity

- 2.1 The College is committed to the principle and practice of equal opportunities. We aim to ensure that all employees, applicants, and service users are valued as individuals, and treated fairly and with respect, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, age, or on the basis of being a part-time or fixed term worker.
- 2.2 Anyone undertaking recruitment or selection must ensure that they have been adequately trained in recruitment and selection techniques and that they are aware of the relevant legislation before participating in recruitment and selection decisions. Training will be provided by the College.
- 2.3 Senior Management are required to ensure that both they and anyone reporting to them who undertake recruitment and selection are competent to do so.
- 2.4 The College has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy which includes a commitment to treat all employees and potential employees equally. This policy is available on Plumpton online and in hard copy on request.
- 2.5 The College undertakes that all applicants for a vacant post will be given the opportunity to ask to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme if they have a disability and meet the minimum criteria as specified in the person specification.
- 2.6 The College will monitor each vacancy in accordance with its procedure.

### 3. Job Description and Person Specification

- 3.1 Before embarking on the process of recruitment, the Line Manager in conjunction with HR must ensure that there is an up-to-date job description for the post, including a clearly drafted person specification.
- 3.2 The job description will describe the main duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, whilst the person specification will describe the type of qualification(s), training, knowledge, experience, skills, and competencies required for effective performance of the job.
- 3.3 Where the job is to be advertised, the proposed job description and advert will be checked by HR to ensure that it complies with the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and employment law legislation and then the Principal for final approval, prior to advertising the post.

### 4. Approval to fill a vacancy

- 4.1 A line manager who wishes to recruit someone must first complete the 'Request to Recruit Form' form sponsored by an SMT member, and forward to HR with the updated job description and advert attached. This will then be passed to the Principal for approval.

The 'Request to Recruit' form details:

- Whether it is necessary to fill the vacancy
- Whether changing work patterns, organisation or technologies have produced a different job, or the work can be distributed in a different way
- The nature of the replacement, e.g. full time, part time, permanent, temporary, etc.
- Whether the post could be considered for job share, part time working, etc.

### 5. Advertising

- 5.1 The aim of advertising a post is to attract a field of candidates who meet the person specification and job criteria from which a successful appointment can be made. The people may be either internal or external to the College. Restricting competition to internal staff only may be valuable in certain circumstances, particularly in times of organisational change where there may be staff seeking redeployment.
- 5.2 However, a policy of only selecting from within might stunt organisational growth and development and if it is not linked into some form of overall workforce plan it could leave the College open to allegations of indirect discrimination. Therefore, while the College does not have a policy of always advertising externally, the implications of not doing so will be considered carefully.
- 5.3 Job advertisements are designed with two aims in mind:
  - To target a specific audience and encourage appropriately qualified and experienced applicants for the post, and

- To promote a corporate image of the College with which people from outside the organisation recognise and associate.
- 5.4 Care must be taken in writing the advertisement not to discriminate either directly or indirectly.
  - 5.5 The choice of media will be determined by the post, the location and the person specification and may consider previous experience of successful advertising. The final decision of where to advertise lies with the Principal.
  - 5.6 All vacancies will be posted on the College's website (unless a post is being advertised 'internally only' as stated above) and in an 'all staff' e-mail. External media will also be used where appropriate. Existing employees will be encouraged to apply for vacant posts if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.
  - 5.7 All information will be available in an appropriate accessible format on request.
  - 5.8 The College will ensure that employees who are absent by reason of sickness or maternity, adoption, or other types of leave will be made aware of the vacancies.

## **6. Placing Advertisements and Sending Application Information**

- 6.1 HR will place all advertisements in the relevant media after receiving the final approval from the Principal. Most weekly publications have very tight deadlines; therefore, if the paperwork is not received on time then this will delay the publication of the advert and, consequently, the overall length of time to appoint.
- 6.2 HR will advise line managers of the appropriate deadlines.

## **7. Short Listing and Selection**

- 7.1 Once the deadline for applications has closed, HR will collate all the application forms received and send them to the recruiting manager.
- 7.2 Short listing will be based on the requirements of the job description and person specification.
- 7.3 Short listed candidates will then be contacted and invited to attend a selection process.
- 7.4 All short-listed candidates will be asked if they have any special interview requirements and all interview materials should be available in an appropriate accessible format on request.
- 7.5 HR will write to all unsuccessful candidates ideally within 3 working days of the application deadline. If candidates request feedback this will be requested from the manager and the HR team will give this to the candidate ideally within 4 working days of the request.

## **8. Selection Process**

- 8.1 Stage 1 of the selection process will comprise relevant assessment exercises to assess the candidates' suitability for the role. All exercises must have been validated in relation to the job, be free of bias, and be administered and validated by a suitably trained person. Candidates who pass Stage 1 of the process will be invited to attend a formal interview. Those interviewing will ensure that the questions they ask candidates are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive.

- 8.2 A record and score of every recruitment exercise must be made (which is recorded on standard forms) and passed to the HR team where it will be retained for 6 months. The candidate should be told at the end of the interview process if they have been successful and if not possible, when they may expect to be informed of the outcome.
- 8.3 The panel should ensure that the candidate is familiar with the full terms and conditions of the post.
- 8.4 We may involve students in the recruitment process to ensure the most suitable person is appointed to the role. This could include observing shortlisted candidates teaching and appropriately supervised interaction between students and shortlisted candidates.

## 9. Safeguarding and Pre- Employment Checks

- 9.1 The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- 9.2 There are a number of pre- employment checks that are required to be carried out prior to offer. Some of these are statutory and some are best practice but all are mandatory within the College.
- 9.3 Pre-Employment Health Statements are an important part of the recruitment and selection process. However, if potential employees are to provide the accurate and detailed information needed to make this possible they must believe that it will be treated with the utmost confidence by properly qualified staff. All medical checks will be reviewed by the College's occupational health service.
- 9.4 Previous Convictions/Disclosure and Barring Service Checks - All job offers are made subject to an enhanced DBS check. Line Managers should note that this can take up to three weeks to come through and in some cases longer. Candidates can, in certain circumstances, take up employment before the check is received. However, it is a requirement that those working alone with children (i.e. anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults do not work unsupervised until satisfactory DBS check is received. (See also Annex A - Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders).

All roles within Plumpton College that involve regulated activity will require a DBS check with adult/ and or children's barred list. This will check that the applicant has not committed an offence which makes them unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults.

All application forms will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. Due to the Disclosure requirements, we encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process.

Any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, or warnings must be disclosed to the School. However, amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be considered. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position

sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment, or dismissal if employment has commenced. Providing false information is an offence and could lead to the application being rejected or summary dismissal and possible referral to the police.

Due to the nature of employment within an establishment providing Further and Higher Education, all applicants are required to declare criminal convictions, bind overs, and cautions, including those regarded as "spent".

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Having a criminal record with spent convictions, will not necessarily bar the candidate from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of offences. A meeting will be held with the candidate, the Principal, and the HR Director to risk assess the situation.

It is a requirement of the Disclosure and Barring Service's (DBS) Code of Practice that all registered Bodies must treat disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed.

- 9.5 The College is committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated equally and with respect. Applicants may however wish to note that the DBS has a process in place for people who have changed their gender, which protects their confidentiality with employers while enabling the necessary checks against their previous name. After completing a disclosure form and passing this to the HR Recruitment Officer, the person should write separately to a nominated person at the DBS, known as a sensitive caseworker manager, notifying them of their previous names. For further information contact the DBS.
- 9.6 References - It is the College policy to obtain two satisfactory references from at least two previous employers (one of which should be the current/last employer) prior to a candidate starting employment and all job offers are subject to this. It is the HR Administrator's responsibility to obtain these.
- 9.7 Taken on their own, references are not valid methods of assessment because of the high element of subjectivity. Instead, references should be used to verify the information given by applicants and to ascertain the individual's suitability to work within a College environment in the role applied for.
- 9.8 A reference from the last employer is vital and all applicants should, ideally, have a 4-year checkable work history. Where this is not possible then a reference should be sought from their school or college or, as a last resort from a personal referee who can supply a character reference.
- 9.9 Whilst references should be sought as early as possible care must be taken not to compromise an applicant's current position by requesting a reference before they have informed their present employer that they are seeking alternative employment.
- 9.10 Candidates must indicate, via the application form, their permission to approach their current employer but in any case, should be contacted to check that this situation has not changed. In most cases, the HR Administrator will formally request all references and will liaise with the Principal if there are any issues.

- 9.11 We request proof of overseas criminal records checks for those successfully offered a post, who have lived or worked abroad for 3-months or more in the previous 5-years.
- 9.12 Qualifications - A photocopy of the original certificates will be taken of all qualifications relevant to the job (as detailed on the person specification for the post) to verify that the postholder has the required skills for the position applied for. The photocopies must be signed and dated by the recipient to confirm that they have seen the originals. Qualified teachers with QTS will be subject to Teacher Regulation Agency check.
- 9.13 Previously worked with under 18's - if an applicant indicates on their application that they have previously worked in an establishment where there are under 18's then a reference will automatically be taken up from this employer.
- 9.14 Gaps in employment -the application form will be scanned for gaps in the applicant's employment history. If gaps are found, these will be discussed with the applicant at interview.

## 10. Right to Work in the UK

- 10.1 All offers of employment are subject to the candidate providing us with satisfactory proof of their eligibility to work in the UK under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. The College therefore requires the candidate to produce documents specified in the Home Office Lists 1 and 2.
- 10.2 Copies of identification must be taken from all potential employees. Identification can be taken in the form of the following:
- Confirmation of a National Insurance no. – either a letter from the DSS, NI card, payslip or P45/60 and sight of an original UK or EU passport or foreign passport with the required entry visa entitlement.
  - Photocopies of the original documents must be taken and signed to confirm sight of the original. These documents will remain on the employee's personnel file for the duration of their employment.
- 10.3 Checks for non-EU citizens -Where a non-EU citizen is employed, the expiry date of their passport and Visa Letter will be held in the Human Resources department. The employee will be reminded six months before the expiry date that they will need to take the appropriate action to renew their passport/Visa letter. The contract with a member of staff will terminate on the date their right to work in the UK ends.
- 10.4 Pre-entry checks will be made on non-EU citizens applying for a job vacancy at the College. This will include a requirement for the applicant to provide evidence of an English qualification at the level of B2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference, a requirement for the applicant to provide copies of evidence of qualifications, professional accreditations and copies of bank statements to demonstrate they will be self sufficient on entry in the UK. If a non-EU candidate is successful in their application (including meeting these checks) a certificate of sponsorship will be assigned to the applicant within six months of the date the vacancy was first advertised with Jobcentre Plus. The original documentation will be requested on their first day of employment with the College. The College will notify the appropriate authority should a sponsored migrant not arrive for their first day of



employment. The College will notify the appropriate authorities if they stop sponsoring a migrant for any reason or if there are any significant changes to the migrant's circumstances, e.g. change in salary (other than annual increment of natural progression), change in location of employment.

## **11. Appointment**

- 11.1 An offer of employment will be made verbally in the first instance and this will be confirmed in writing with an offer letter from the Principal and contract of employment being issued by the HR Administrator.
- 11.2 All offers of employment will be subject to satisfactory references, a positive 'satisfactory' medical, DBS or list 99 checks and completion of mandatory training.
- 11.3 The recruitment literature should state clearly how references will be used, when they will be taken up and what references will be required.
- 11.4 All staff, whether permanent or temporary, and volunteers will be provided with a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1).

## **12. Unsuccessful candidates**

- 12.1 All candidates will be given verbal feedback within 24 hours of the selection day by the line manager or appropriate member of the interview panel.
- 12.2 Any complaints should be dealt with promptly in accordance with the College's complaints procedure.

## **13. Induction**

- 13.1 Information gained from the selection process is likely to form the basis for a development plan for the individual's first year.
- 13.2 Early induction should be drawn up for all new appointments, based on the Staff Induction Guide which can be found on Plumpton Online.
- 13.4 During the first two weeks of employment all employees must complete mandatory training including Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity and Prevent. They must also be advised of the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 13.3 Any adaptation/equipment required for a disabled employee should be available from the commencement of duties.
- 13.4 The induction programme will continue for 24 weeks or until the employee has successfully been signed off for their probationary period.

## **14. Temporary Staff Bank**

- 14.1 Applications to join the 'Temporary Staff Bank' will be considered as they are received. Although 'Bank' posts are advertised from time to time it will not be necessary for all applications to come directly from an advertisement. Therefore, closing dates will not normally apply.
- 14.2 The 'Temporary Staff Bank' will be administered by the HR team. All of the above selection, safeguarding and pre-employment checks will be undertaken for all staff employed to work on the 'Bank'.



## **15. Speculative Applications**

- 15.1 Speculative applications that are received that do not necessarily relate to any current vacancies will be forwarded by the HR team to the appropriate Line Managers.
- 15.2 All speculative applicants will receive an acknowledgement informing them that we will contact them if any suitable vacancies arise.
- 15.3 The HR team will keep the applicant's details on file for a period of six months, as per the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), at which time the applicant will be contacted again to assess their level of interest

## **16. Recruitment Agencies**

### a) Permanent posts

If the College has been unable to successfully recruit to a position after advertising both internally and externally the Principal may decide to use a recruitment agency to recruit to the post. All candidates that meet the requirements of the post advertised will be interviewed by the College before appointment. All offers of employment through an employment agency will be subject to the pre-employment checks (as stated above) and a 6-month probationary period.

### b) Temporary posts

If due to unexpected staff absence or a busy period within the College, the College may require temporary help, this decision will be made by the Principal. The HR team will liaise with the recruitment agencies and will forward all CV's to the appropriate recruiting manager. The HR team will seek confirmation from recruitment agencies that the candidates put forward have been DBS checked.

## **17. Retaining recruitment information**

- 17.1 All recruitment documentation will be retained for 6 months and after this period it will be destroyed.
- 17.2 For all appointments of non-EU members the recruitment documentation will be retained for the whole duration of their appointment. The retained information will include a screen shot of the Jobcentre Plus website on the 1<sup>st</sup> day the job was advertised (showing the Jobcentre Plus logo, advert content, vacancy ref number, closing date and website address), the detailed job description and specification and all applications received.

## **18. Policy Monitoring**

- 18.1 The Corporation will receive an annual report on the recruitment and selection of staff.

## Annex A - Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

### Introduction

It is a requirement of the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice that all Registered Bodies must treat Disclosure applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges Registered Bodies to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; a copy of which can be given to Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

### Policy Statement

As an organisation using the Bureau's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Plumpton College complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Plumpton College is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, trade union membership or non-membership, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, age, or on the basis of being a part-time or fixed term worker.

This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, applicants called for interview are encouraged to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. This information is requested to be sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within Plumpton College and it is guaranteed that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows Plumpton College to ask questions about the entire criminal record, the College will only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Anyone in Plumpton College who is directly responsible for the selection of employees (this is normally the HR team) has been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences and are familiar with the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, an open and measured discussion will take place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Every subject of a DBS Disclosure is made aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and a copy is available on request.

The College undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from employment with us. The nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences will be taken into account.

The provisions of the Data Protection Act will be fully complied with when carrying out this process.