

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

- This policy outlines CT Skills commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and some vulnerable adult learners is part of our core business, and all staff must be aware of their responsibilities in this regard. We have implemented procedures designed to deter, prevent, and identify unsuitable people working with our learners. These procedures are designed to comply with the guidance given by the DfE as defined in “Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016” in conjunction with “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020’ and form an element of the CT Skills Safeguarding and Prevent Policy (10.1 Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy) to which reference should also be made.

The aims of this Safer Recruitment Policy are to ensure that CT Skills:

- recruit the best possible employees based on their merits, abilities, and suitability for the role.
- consider all applicants fairly and consistently.
- ensure no job applicant is treated unfairly due to a protected characteristic.
- comply with relevant employment legislation, recommendations and guidance including statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2020 guidance (or updated statutory guidance), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (The Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and adhere to the obligations set out by the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- ensure CT Skills meets its commitment to Safeguarding by completion of pre-employment checks.
- that all stages of the recruitment process contain measures to deter, identify, prevent, and reject unsuitable people from gaining access to vulnerable young people and adults within CT Skills.
- ensure all personal data is collected and processed in line with the General Data Protection regulations (2018), our Job Applicant Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

2. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, CT Skills will advertise all vacant positions to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

All adverts will have an explicit statement regarding the Company’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners and the requirement for enhanced DBS checks.

All posts advertised will have a job description that clearly identifies the main duties of the role, person specification, minimum qualifications and experience required.

Applications

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

All applicants will be required to submit their CV (including the requirement to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history) to the Human Resources Department.

Interviews

There will always be a face-to-face interview except in extreme circumstances, and wherever possible a minimum of two interviewers will interview the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will also enable CT Skills to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

In addition to the face-to-face interview, the recruiting manager, in conjunction with Human Resources, will decide on the most appropriate assessment methods and timetable for the role; for example, initial assessments in English and Mathematics, micro-teach, work trial sessions etc.

At invite to interview stage, it will be made clear that the role is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants will be specifically asked if, prior to a DBS check being carried out, there is anything they wish to notify the Company.

We recognised the contribution that former or ex-offenders can make as employees and volunteers and welcome applications from them. A person's criminal record will not debar that person from being appointed to a post. Any information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. Suitable applicants will not be refused posts because of offences which are not relevant to the role, and which do not make them a risk in the role for which they are applying.

All applicants invited to interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address, and qualifications. Original documents only will be accepted, and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicants' documents will be destroyed six months after the recruitment process is completed.

References

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the Company. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. References should cover at least the last 3 years of employment.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and information to support appointment decisions. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children or young people. All referees will be asked if they have any concerns that the applicant may have been radicalised so that they support terrorism or any form of 'extremism'.

No questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

CT Skills does not accept open references, testimonials, or references from relatives.

Offers of employment

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- Verification of the individual's identification.
- Verification of the individual's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- At least two satisfactory previous employment references being obtained, one of which should be from their current employment.
- Verification of relevant qualifications.
- Satisfactory 'standard or 'enhanced' DBS check result including barred list (for enhanced checks only) where the post is deemed as "regulated activity".
- Completion of a health questionnaire.
- Verification of full driving license and appropriate motor insurance for business use (where applicable).
- Satisfactory completion of 6-month probationary period.

A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

All appointments will be issued with a written statement of employment particulars.

All appointments are subject to a probationary period of 6 months during which time a reduced notice period applies enabling the termination of employment for whatever reason, by either the employee or CT Skills in a shorter time frame than would normally apply under the standard contract terms. The Company also reserves the right to extend the probationary period should it be deemed necessary.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate

DBS certificates will be re-checked every 3 years for all employees. For those in job roles that are not learner or customer facing they will have a standard DBS check. Where a role is predominantly learner facing these employees will be required to have an enhanced DBS check and certification with Children's Barring List included on a 3-yearly cycle.

In the unlikely event that it has not been possible to obtain a satisfactory Disclosure before the individual is scheduled to commence employment and CT Skills believe it is necessary for the individual to commence employment, the Directors have the discretion to allow the individual to commence work in the event that the employee is appropriately supervised and all the other pre-employment checks have been completed. A risk assessment (*9.47 Risk Assessment Form – Commencing Employment Prior to DBS Clearance*) will be carried out to assess the level of appropriate supervision for individuals who start work prior to the result of a DBS Disclosure being known. This should reflect what is known about the person concerned, their experience, the nature of their duties and the level of responsibility they will carry.

The DBS no longer issues certificates to employers. Where a DBS certificate is returned clear, the DBS management system displays this as "certificate contains no information". The disclosure number and date of issue will be logged on our central register. The Company does not require sight of the original certificate sent to the employee in these circumstances.

Dealing with convictions

Where a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions, CT Skills will consider the Rehabilitations of Offenders Act 1974 and:

- the nature, seriousness, and relevance of the offence.
- how long ago the offence occurred.
- one-off or history of offences.
- changes in circumstances.
- decriminalisation and remorse.

The applicant will be required to provide the Company with a copy of the certificate immediately. A meeting will take place face-to-face to with the manager (or senior manager) to establish facts and will be recorded on form 9.48 *DBS – Consideration of Cautions and Criminal Convictions Meeting Record*. HR may also be present. If relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Company will evaluate all the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If the applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not disputed information, the Company may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications

All applicants invited to attend an interview at CT Skills will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate and driving licence with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

CT Skills Ltd recognises that we have an obligation to prevent slavery and human trafficking and will do all in its power to prevent slavery and human trafficking within its business, partners, and other external relationships with whom it operates.

All CT Skills employees have access to a dedicated whistle blowing procedure which they can use to voice any concerns. We are committed to protecting the confidentiality of any employee who contacts this service.

Medical fitness

CT Skills is legally required to verify medical fitness of anyone appointed to a post at the Company, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and Person Specification (Job Framework) for the role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role.

CT Skills is aware of its duty under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify CT Skills' policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding & Prevent Policy. Our Employee Handbook will make clear the contractual expectations which will govern how employees carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Record Retention/Data Protection

CT Skills is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, CT Skills will retain on their employee file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness, and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the Company to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g., so that the Company may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability.

This documentation will be retained by the Company for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with CT Skills. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the HR Department in a locked and secure cabinet as well as electronically in a secure drive.

The same applied to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with Company activities.

CT Skills will retain the recruitment documentation on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed.

Information about how we collect and process data as part of the recruitment process is detailed in our Job Applicant Privacy Notice and is in line with our Data Protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

Agency Staff

The Agency will be required to submit a copy of their vetting form to confirm the individual meets the requirements for employment in the UK in regulated activity, including a valid standard or enhanced DBS certificate and a copy of the individual's CV to CT Skills prior to agency staff commencing with CT Skills.

On their first day, the agency staff must provide proof of identification for verification by the Training Centre Manager and complete the temporary workers induction checklist and return to Human Resources on the first day of assignment (9.13.2 *Induction Checklist for Temporary Workers*) before any unsupervised activity takes place.

Vetting of Visiting Speakers

CT Skills will invite speakers in from the wider community to help and support our learners to widen their understanding of career opportunities, and to provide motivation through sharing of speakers' experiences. As part of our duty of care under Safeguarding and "Prevent" statutory guidance (DFE June 2015), we are required to have clear procedures in place to ensure that any visiting speakers invited by CT Skills are suitable and appropriately supervised.

CT Skills will:

- Ensure all visiting speakers to have a nominated point of contact
- Conduct proportionate searches of the person/organisation to establish whether they have demonstrated extreme views or actions
- Ensure visiting speakers are always accompanied and are not left unsupervised with learners at any point
- CT Skills to view speakers' material prior to delivery to vet and agree content

CT Skills will ensure that speakers do not advocate or incite hatred, violence, or call for the breaking of law and be mindful of the risk of causing offence to or seek to avoid insulting other faiths or groups, within a framework of positive debate or challenge.

If in doubt of the suitability of a speaker, the decision will be referred to the CT Skills Safeguarding Governance Board.

Volunteers

CT Skills will request the following checks on all volunteers who are involved on a regular basis, undertaking regulated activity:

- Identity checks
- Standard or enhanced DBS Disclosure with Children's Barring List included.
- Qualifications, if applicable
- References
- An informal interview

Appropriate Risk Assessment and/or additional supervision will be planned to ensure safety as necessary.

Work Experience

CT Skills will ensure that any individual on work experience with CT Skills is suitably inducted, using the 9.13.2 *Induction Checklist for Temporary Workers*. A risk assessment will be carried out prior to commencement of placement.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the Company.

Documents

Policies, procedures, and forms referenced in this policy are available on the CT Skills Cloud Document Store.