University Technical College Warrington (UTCW)

Safer Recruitment Policy

Document Detail	
Reference Number	UTCW041
Category	Statutory
Authorised by	Trust Board
Author	Business Director
Version	3
Status	Approved
Issue Date	November 2017
Reviewed	January 2021
Next Review Date	January 2022

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1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for the recruitment of teaching and support staff at University Technical College Warrington (UTCW). The aim of UTCW is to:

1.1.1 attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;

1.1.2 deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;

1.1.3 identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

1.2 Decisions concerning the need to recruit staff are delegated to the Principal. All decisions will be made with regard to curriculum needs and financial circumstances.

1.3 Decisions regarding remuneration for posts will be made in accordance with UTCW's Pay Policy.

1.4 This policy takes into account the provisions of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018). UTCW will ensure that the statutory requirements for the appointment of staff will be met. Requirements will change from time to time and this policy will be updated accordingly.

1.5 UTCW is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will abide by existing legislation including the Equality Act (2010). UTCW does not unlawfully discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

1.6 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time on consultation with recognised unions.

2 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY?

2.1 The Trust Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The Trust Board is also responsible for monitoring compliance by UTCW with this policy.

2.2 The Trust Board has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Principal.

2.3 It is the responsibility of the Principal and other managers involved in recruitment to:

2.3.1 ensure that UTCW operates safe recruitment procedures;

2.3.2 ensure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the UTC;

2.3.3 monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document;

2.3.4 promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process.

2.4 It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.

2.5 It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

3 SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

3.1 Subject to the availability of training, UTCW will ensure that the Principal, Vice Principal, Business Director and at least one trustee has successfully completed external training in safe recruitment procedures.

3.2 UTCW must ensure that one person on any recruitment panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training.

4 ADVERTISING POSTS

4.1 Advertisements for posts – whether in newspapers, journals or online – and application booklets issued to prospective applicants will include the following statement:

UTC Warrington is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. All post-holders will be required to have an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

4.2 Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

4.2.1 job description and person specification;

4.2.2 UTCW's Safer Recruitment Policy;

4.2.3 the selection procedure for the post;

4.2.4 an application form.

4.3 Applicants will also be made aware of the relevant College policies, including the Child Protection Policy.

4.4 To ensure equality of opportunity, UTCW will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement (such advertisements will usually appear on the College website, a suitable national website and in some cases a local newspaper or recruitment paper).

4.5 However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal applicants or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement alone may be considered appropriate.

4.6 Advertisements will specify: the main subjects to be taught and/or the nature of any leadership allowance; the start date of the appointment and whether the post is permanent or fixed term and, in the case of fixed term contracts, the end date of the contract; the remuneration for the post will be expressed in terms of the applicable pay scales and the closing date for applications will also be stated.

5 APPLICATIONS

5.1 Prospective applicants will respond to the advertisement by requesting or downloading further information and an application form which includes an Equal Opportunities monitoring form. Applicants are not obliged to complete the Equal Opportunities monitoring form and it will in no way impact the treatment of their application should they elect not to complete it.

5.2 The application form will be returned to UTCW by the specified closing date accompanied by a supporting letter. Other forms of curriculum vitae are not acceptable in place of a completed application form.

5.3 Applications received after the published closing date will not be considered unless there is clear evidence that the late receipt of the application has been caused by a postal delay. Such evidence would generally be an application with franking showing

that it was posted first class at least one day before the published closing date. Applicants are advised to submit their applications via e-mail to avoid late arrival.

5.4 UTCW will require applicants to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview.

5.5 Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

6 SHORT LISTING AND REFERENCES

6.1 The selection panel will shortlist applicants against the person specification for the post. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants. The selection panel will agree the applicants to be invited to interview.

6.2 Two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the selection process. Applicants are entitled to see and receive copies of their employment references and should request these from their referees.

6.3 References will be sought directly from the referee and, where necessary, he/she will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Written records will be kept of such exchanges.

6.4 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Written records will be kept of such exchanges, in line with Data Protection and UK GDPR legislation.

6.5 If an applicant for a post working with children is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment in which the applicant has worked with children to confirm details of the applicant's employment and their reasons for leaving.

6.6 Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm, in writing:

6.6.1 the referee's relationship to the applicant;

6.6.2 details of the applicant's current post and salary;

6.6.3 the applicant's performance history and conduct;

6.6.4 whether the applicant has been subject to capability procedures and the outcome of this;

6.6.5 whether the applicant has been subject to disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children, including where the sanction has expired, and the outcome of this;

6.6.6 details of any substantiated allegations or concerns about the applicant relating to the safety and welfare of children;

6.6.7 whether the referee has any reservations as to the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, the College will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the applicant may be unsuitable to work with children);

6.6.8 the applicant's suitability for the post with explicit reference to the job description and person specification.

6.7 All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

6.8 Employer testimonials i.e. those provided by the applicant and/or marked 'to whom it may concern' will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the applicant has applied. The selection panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the applicant, for any post. References will be verified and any discrepancies or areas of potential concern will be discussed with the applicant at interview.

6.9 If the field of applicants is felt to be weak, the post may be re-advertised.

7 INTERVIEW AND SELECTION

7.1 Prior to the interview and selection process applicants will be given any relevant information, e.g. details of any selection methods that will be used.

7.2 Applicants who have a disability or any other particular needs will be given the opportunity to highlight this prior to any selection activities in order that reasonable adjustments may be made to the recruitment process.

7.3 All vacancies will require an interview of short-listed applicants. Interviews will always be face-to-face but may be through remote video conferencing if

circumstances require. Telephone interviews may be used at the shortlisting stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

7.4 Whilst an interview is always likely to be used as the primary feature of the selection process, the selection panel will consider whether any additional selection methods are required to supplement the interview. These may include presentations, teaching observation, interaction with students, in-tray exercises, psychometric, verbal or numerical tests, according to the requirements of the role. Any psychometric tests used will have been validated in relation to the job, be free of bias, and be administered and validated only by a suitably trained person.

7.5 Whichever methods are chosen, the panel will use these to assess the merits of each applicant against the person specification and explore their suitability to work with children. This will include exploration of the applicants understanding of child Safeguarding issues.

7.6 The selection panel will ensure that all applicants are asked the same main questions at interview based on the list of essential criteria for the post, although supplementary questions may differ according to the applicants' answers and backgrounds.

7.7 Applicants will always be required:

7.7.1 to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;

7.7.2 to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel;

7.7.3 to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure;

7.7.4 to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

7.8 The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions that the applicant has declared and are relevant to the prospective employment.

7.9 Particular care will be taken to ensure that no questions or selection methods could be viewed as discriminatory.

7.10 UTCW may provide feedback if requested or they have reached a later stage of the recruitment process before a decision to offer employment is made.

8 EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

8.1 All successful applicants are required to:

8.1.1 provide proof of identity (e.g. passport; driving licence photocard);

8.1.2 complete a DBS disclosure application and receive satisfactory clearance;

8.1.3 obtain a Barred List check if the individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;

8.1.4 provide actual certificates of professional qualifications (teaching staff or where required);

8.1.5 provide proof of address (e.g. recent utility bill, bank or credit card statement);

8.1.6 provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK;

8.1.7 Applicants from overseas are responsible for obtaining a certificate of good conduct from their previous employer.

8.2 Documentation will be checked by a member of staff suitably trained in safer recruitment processes.

8.3 Once an applicant has been offered the post they may be required to complete a confidential health questionnaire to confirm that the candidate is medically fit to carry out their role. A self-declaration form is also used which requires the individual to confirm that they are not aware of any reasons – mental or physical – which would prevent them from discharging the responsibilities associated with the post in question. Any individuals who have medical conditions that place potential barriers to enabling them to carry out the intended role will be referred to an occupational health provider and, where possible, reasonable adjustments will be put in place to enable individuals to carry out their duties effectively. The school is committed to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to make any such reasonable adjustments as required and viable.

9 ADDITIONAL CHECKS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE WORKED OR LIVED OUTSIDE OF THE UK

9.1 Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges. In addition, schools and colleges must make

any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

9.2 These further checks should include a check for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that a professional regulating authority has imposed, using the TRA Teacher Services' system. Although restrictions imposed by another EEA regulating authority do not prevent a person from taking up teaching positions in England, schools and colleges should consider the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed when considering a candidate's suitability for employment.

9.3 The DfE has issued guidance on the employment of overseas - trained teachers. This gives information on the requirements for overseas-trained teachers from the EEA to teach in England, and the award of qualified teacher status for teachers qualified in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America.

9.4 UTCW will perform additional checks on individuals who have worked or lived outside of the UK for 3 months or more within the last 5 years.

10 CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT

10.1 The final offer of employment will be subject to:

10.1.1 a satisfactory enhanced DBS and Barred List check;

10.1.2 a check that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition order using the Employer Access Online Service (teachers only);

10.1.3 receipt of a completed confidential health questionnaire which is required to verify the applicant's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work;

10.1.4 receipt of final references from previous employers;

10.1.5 a valid work permit for overseas applicants;

10.1.6 the applicant's details have been added to the UTC's Single Central Record (SCR).

10.2 UTCW reserves the right not to proceed with or to terminate employment with immediate effect if the DBS checks reveals convictions which have not been declared on the application form or if any of the documents provided have been falsified in any way.

11 INDUCTION

11.1 All employees who are new to the College will receive full induction training that will cover all relevant matters of UTCW policy including Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, child protection procedures, whistle blowing, and guidance on safe working practices.

11.2 Employees will also be required to read, and confirm that they have read, Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE (as amended)'.

12 PERSONNEL FILE AND SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD

12.1 Recruitment and selection information for the successful applicant will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of their employment with UTCW in accordance with Data Protection and UK GDPR legislation:

12.1.1 application form – signed by the applicant;

12.1.2 interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history;

12.1.3 references;

12.1.4 proof of identity;

12.1.5 proof of right to work in the UK;

12.1.6 further checks on all individuals who have lived or worked outside of the UK;

12.1.7 proof of relevant academic qualifications;

12.1.8 completed a confidential health questionnaire and any medical clearance obtained from the Occupational Health service;

12.1.9 evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List (where applicable), Teacher Prohibition checks and Section 128 checks;

12.1.10 offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment.

12.2 UTCW will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with relevant Department for Education guidance.

13 ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT EMPLOYED DIRECTLY BY UTCW

13.1 **Supply Staff**:

UTCW will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. UTCW will carry out identity checks when the supply staff member arrives on site.

13.2 **Volunteers**

UTCW will carry out DBS and pre-employment vetting checks appropriate to the post (as above) and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips/visits) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

13.3 **Students on placement**

When volunteers are working at UTCW as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, NVQ etc.), references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, UTCW will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at the UTC.

13.4 **Students on work experience**

Students on work experience at UTCW will always be supervised.

13.5 **Contractors**

UTCW ensures that contractors, or any employee of a contractor, working at the UTC have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required.

Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children.

If a contractor working at UTCW is self-employed and will be in regulated activity, the UTC will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

UTCW will check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the UTC.