



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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1. Policy Aims

- 1.1 Portsmouth College is committed to providing a safe environment which safeguards and protects the welfare of its learners so they can flourish and achieve their very best whilst a student of the College. In achieving this aim it is imperative that we attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.
- 1.2 The aims of this policy are fundamentally achieved through the effective adoption of our College policies and procedures, but with particular reference to:
 - Safeguarding Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Policy
 - Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
 - Code of Conduct
- 1.3 A further aim of this policy is to ensure compliance with statutory regulations from the Department for Education (DfE) documented within their guidance publication 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the Code of Practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and any other good practice guidance from organisations such as the NSPCC.
- 1.4 This policy will apply to all job applicants, staff and volunteers at Portsmouth College. Where the term 'applicant' has been used, this can denote job applicants as well as volunteers.
- 1.5 The Corporation has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and will ensure the arrangements for protecting all vulnerable groups are effective, robust and reviewed on a regular basis. There is a designated member of the Board with responsibility for safeguarding and they are responsible for liaising with the Senior Leadership Team and HR Director over staffing matters regarding the safeguarding of vulnerable groups.

2. Recruitment and Selection Principles

- 2.1 The College has adopted a Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure for appointing new staff and a Volunteering Policy and Procedure for the appointment of volunteers at the College. These will be adhered to so that safe recruitment practices are followed when new staff or volunteers join the College or seek to work / volunteer at the College.
- 2.2 All job applicants must complete in full a standard College application form. If there are gaps or missing information these will be sent back to the candidate to complete. A C.V. will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.
- 2.3 Volunteers will need to complete in full a volunteering application form and may attach their CV to this as well. Alternatively a standard College application form will also be accepted.
- 2.4 Any person working or volunteering at the College will need to complete an enhanced DBS check. A volunteer will not be allowed to commence a placement until their check has been finalised.

- 2.5 All job applicants will receive a job description and person specification which is contained within a College recruitment pack. Not all volunteering opportunities will necessarily have a job description but will be given a brief from a College manager from the area within which they will be volunteering, outlining their key area of focus.
- 2.6 Any shortlisted job applicant will be invited to attend a formal interview which may also include formal observations and relevant tests, in order to assess their level of ability, and to discuss their relevant skills and experience. Every interview will include questions relating to safeguarding or a separate safeguarding interview may well be arranged.
- 2.7 If it is decided to make an offer of employment following formal interview and testing, any such offer will be conditional on the following:
- The receipt of two acceptable references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer)
 - The receipt of an acceptable enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service which includes checks against the relevant barred lists
 - The receipt of an acceptable medical check
 - Qualification check
- 2.8 If the above conditions are satisfied and the offer is accepted, the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of their employment.
- 2.9 DBS checks will be obtained before an individual begins work, however, in cases where a potential delay in the return of an enhanced disclosure would have a negative impact on the delivery of service, the Principal will have discretion to allow a member of staff to start work, pending the receipt of an acceptable DBS check. In such a situation, all other checks, including the receipt of acceptable references must be in place for this to be considered as an option.
- 2.10 If an employee is approved by the Principal to commence work prior to a DBS check being received, a risk assessment must be undertaken. The appropriate line manager, in liaison with the HR Director, will draw up and implement the risk assessment and oversee the arrangements to ensure that no risk to children or vulnerable adults could arise whilst the College is waiting for the disclosure clearance. The risk assessment will include that the member of staff does not have any individual contact with students, that there will be appropriate supervision by staff and that access to student / staff information is restricted. The completed risk assessment must be reviewed and signed off by a senior post holder.
- 2.11 For individuals wishing to pursue volunteering opportunities, a potential volunteer will need to fulfil the following activities:
- To have completed a volunteer application form (or standard College application form)
 - To have met with the manager who will take responsibility for the volunteer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team
 - For the Personnel Department to be in receipt of two references (one of which must be from their current or most recent employer or volunteering placement)

- Receipt of an acceptable enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service to include checks against the relevant barred lists
- 2.12 Once these checks have been completed, a volunteer agreement will be issued.
- 2.13 If a previous conviction obtained by the Disclosure and Barring Scheme is deemed to be serious enough to compromise the College's safeguarding commitment, the applicant / volunteer will be informed that the College cannot employ them or accept them as a volunteer. The responsibility for this decision will be with the Principal in conjunction with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and HR Director and will only be made after careful consideration of the relevant conviction.

3. Verification of Identity and Address

- 3.1 All shortlisted applicants applying for teaching posts will be required to bring to interview all relevant documentation confirming their identity and educational / professional qualifications referred to in their application form (e.g. degree and teaching certificates). All documents will need to be originals or official replacements and not photocopies. Individuals applying for support posts will be asked to bring relevant identity / qualification documentation either to interview or once a conditional job offer is made.
- 3.2 Once a conditional job offer has been made, the individual will be expected to bring to the College and share with the Personnel Assistant the following documents:
- Current driving licence or passport or full birth certificate (if they haven't done so already)
 - One utility bill or statement showing their name and home address (if they haven't done so already)
 - Documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card)
 - Documentation confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application (if they haven't done so already).

4. References

- 4.1 References will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview unless otherwise indicated by the applicant on the application form. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from an applicant's current or most recent employer.
- 4.2 Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.
- 4.3 All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification and will be asked to confirm the following safeguarding aspects:

- The applicants dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance and capability record
 - Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired)
 - Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.
- 4.4 The College will only accept references obtained directly from the referee. It will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.
- 4.5 The College will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.
- 4.6 The College reserves the right to contact any previous employers included on an application form.

5. Criminal Records Check

- 5.1 Staff who are providing education and are regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of people who are considered children or vulnerable adults, are considered to work under regulated activity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Therefore, safe recruitment and selection applies to all staff and volunteers (including Governors and individuals carrying out work experience in the College). The College applies for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers. Staff who were appointed prior to March 2002 were not covered by this process and would have been checked against List 99 to ascertain whether an individual was barred or not.
- 5.2 The College uses an on-line umbrella service (CCPAS – Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) to undertake the necessary checks, which also provides the College with expert guidance and advice should this be required.
- 5.3 An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (including those which are defined as 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974), together with any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. It may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer reasonably believes to be relevant.
- 5.4 If the individual is applying for a position working with children or young adults, it will also reveal whether he/she is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

- 5.5 Applicants with recent periods (within the last 5 years) of overseas residence or those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).
- 5.6 The Personnel Department also accesses the Department for Education's Secure Access Portal which records the names of teachers and other individuals who are prohibited from working in the profession.
- 5.7 All Governors are DBS checked and all existing Governors will be asked to complete a DBS check on the introduction of this policy, if they haven't done so already.
- 5.8 Where the College uses staff from supply agencies, contractors, etc., and the circumstances of their work are covered by regulated activity, the College expects DBS checks to have been undertaken and proof of registration will be required before the College commissions services from any such organisation.

6. Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

- 6.1 Where a member of staff / volunteer reveals details of any criminal convictions or offences at the recruitment / pre-employment / pre-volunteering stage, the selection panel for that appointment / volunteering placement will consider the facts in line with the College policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders. Please refer to this document for further details.

7. Retention of Records

- 7.1 If an applicant is appointed, the College will retain any relevant recruitment information on their personnel file. If the applicant is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months unless the applicant requests the College to keep their details on file for longer.
- 7.2 The College complies with the provisions outlined in the DBS Code of Practice and guidelines set by our umbrella organisation.
- 7.3 The College maintains a single central record which provides evidence of the recruitment and vetting checks undertaken prior to employment relating to staff identity, qualifications and criminal records. The central register includes:
- Checks relating to identity – name, address and date of birth
 - Qualification checks for relevant qualifications which are a legal requirement of the role
 - Evidence of permission to work in the UK for those who are not nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) country
 - DBS enhanced disclosure number
 - Date the check was evidenced
 - Prohibition List check (for teaching staff)
- 7.4 The Personnel Department is responsible for maintaining the Single Central Register which is available to be viewed by the Governors or Senior Leadership Team as requested.

Reference

Please refer any comments or queries regarding this document to:
 Personnel Department. E-mail: personnel@tpc.ac.uk

This document is available from the Personnel Department in large print or digital format.

<u>Associated College Documents</u>	
Name of Document	Author
Code of Conduct	HR Director
Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure	HR Director
Volunteering Policy and Procedure	HR Director
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy	HR Director
Risk Assessment	HR Director
Safeguarding Children, Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Policy	Deputy Principal