



Safer Recruitment Policy

To be used alongside the recruitment and selection procedure

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Control Sheet

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Signed on behalf of the Company.

Signed: 

Date: 01/09/23

Safer Recruitment Policy

The Aim of this policy

Children and vulnerable adults have the right to live free from harm. Therefore, one of Innovate Dorset's most important responsibilities is to ensure that unsuitable individuals are not allowed to work with vulnerable groups. Part of developing this environment is ensuring that all staff members, whether paid or voluntary, are suitable for a position working with vulnerable people by selecting the best possible applicants to vacancies within the company that have been through and completed all necessary requirements set out in this policy to ensure that unsuitable individuals are deterred, identified, and rejected. While ensuring all candidates are treated fairly, clearly, and consistently in compliance with all relevant legislation. (Equality Act 2010)

Recruitment and selection process

This section focuses on ensuring potential applicants are given the right messages about the company and commitment to recruiting suitable people.

It is vital that Innovate Dorset's approach to safeguarding creates a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. As part of this culture, it is important that we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities.

Management and staff will ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training, the substance of which will at a minimum cover the content of this guidance.

Management will ensure that at least one of the persons who conduct an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

Advert

Innovate Dorset Ltd will include the following information when defining the role (through the job or role description and person specification):

- the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, and behaviours required for the post, and
- the safeguarding requirements, i.e. to what extent will the role involve contact with children and will they be engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

The advert will include:

- Innovate Dorset's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

Application forms

Where a role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, Innovate Dorset will include a statement in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

Innovate Dorset will also provide a copy of the child protection policy and practices or refer to a link on its website.

Innovate Dorset will require applicants to provide:

- personal details, current and former names, current address, and national insurance number
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award
- details of referees/references
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

Innovate Dorset will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information.

Shortlisting

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records, further information can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) For example:

- if they have a criminal history
- if they are included on the children's barred list
- if they are prohibited from working with children or teaching

- if they are prohibited from taking part in the management of a youth organisation
- information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted
- if they are known to the police and children's local authority social care
- if they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- any relevant overseas information.

This information will only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The information will not be requested in the application form to decide who will be shortlisted.

Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of the interview.

The purpose of a self-declaration is so that candidates will have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at the interview before the DBS certificate is received.

Innovate Dorset will:

- ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise
- consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- explore all potential concerns.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process Innovate Dorset will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which Innovate Dorset might want to explore with the applicant at the interview.

Employment history and references

The purpose of seeking references is to allow Innovate Dorset to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. Innovate Dorset will obtain references before the interview, where possible, this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at the interview.

Innovate Dorset will:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with the appropriate authority

- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed.

When asked to provide references, Innovate Dorset will ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold. They will not include information about concerns/allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.

Selection

Innovate Dorset will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Those interviewing will agree on structured questions. These will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience working with children which are relevant to the role
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

The interviews will be used to explore potential areas of concern and to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

- implication that adults and children are equal

- lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- inappropriate idealisation of children
- inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children,
- indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

Young People will be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. Observing shortlisted candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with young people is common and recognised as good practice.

All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. Innovate Dorset will:

- verify a candidate's identity, it is important to be sure that the person is whom they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name.
- obtain an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children).
- obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role
- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then Innovate Dorset will follow advice on the GOV.UK website
 - Have lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate
- verify professional qualifications.

Recording information Single central record

Innovate Dorset will maintain a single central record of pre-appointment checks

The single central record will cover all staff, including volunteers, agency and third-party staff, even if they work for one day,

The single central record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- a check of professional qualifications, where required
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom. In addition:

The details of an individual will be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at Innovate Dorset.

Volunteers.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies, so Innovate Dorset will undertake a written risk assessment and use our professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

The risk assessment should consider:

- the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
- what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability.
- whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of the check, for volunteer roles that are not in regulated activity.

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded.

