

Safer Recruitment Procedure

Background

PACT regards people as its greatest asset and attaches importance to the procedures for recruitment and selection being clearly understood by Line Managers. Human Resources also provide professional support with recruitment.

This policy defines the responsibilities of both Line Managers and Human Resources.

It is critically important that Line Managers at all levels should not enter into correspondence which could be construed as representing offers of employment or offers of terms and conditions.

This procedure ensures that PACT meets its obligations under equal opportunities legislation at all stages of the recruitment process, whether for employees, volunteers, agency staff or self-employed contractors.

All personal data held for either potential or current employees will be collected, stored, disclosed and deleted in a fair and proper way and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This is done by:

- HR files are stored in a locked cabinet and only accessible by HR
- Potential employee application forms are destroyed after 6 months
- Equal opportunity monitoring forms are kept separate from the application form
- Criminal conviction information is not shared with the hiring manager prior to shortlisting.

This policy relates directly to PACT's main service user groups, children and vulnerable adults and requires that issues of safeguarding are considered at all stages of the recruitment process.

Procedure

Requisition of Staff

Resource planning is part of the annual business planning and budgeting process and organisation design charts are controlled by the Head of HR.

Managers are authorised to requisition staff subject to the approval and necessary authorisation of a member of the Senior Management Team, using the

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Recruitment Authorisation Form. In all cases the relevant job description should be attached to the form. The job description sets out clearly the main duties and responsibilities of the post and all roles include a responsibility to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults and children in accordance with PACT's policies and procedures at all times. A template for job descriptions is made available to hiring managers.

The job description also includes a person specification, which explains the essential and desirable attributes (including qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities) required to undertake the role. The person specification will state whether a DBS check is necessary as an essential attribute. The person specification is used for shortlisting purposes. This process is mirrored in the recruitment process for volunteers using role descriptions.

The Recruitment Authorisation Form is authorised by the Hiring Manager's Director or Head of Service, Chief Finance Officer (for budgetary purposes), and the Head of HR. If the role is a new role or there are significant changes to the job requirements, the role will be job evaluated by a job evaluation panel in order to determine the appropriate pay range for the role.

Once approved, HR will contact the Hiring Manager to agree the advertisement and the recruitment campaign and timetable.

Advertising and Recruiting

All job advertisements include the statement that "PACT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults therefore please note our recruitment procedure includes DBS checks and overseas checks (where applicable). Please note prospective employees will need to evidence they have the relevant permission to work in the UK." This statement also appears on the careers page of PACT's website and application form. PACT's safeguarding policy is on the website too.

In the event that agencies are used as part of the recruitment campaign, it is the responsibility of HR to instruct agencies with a view to the necessary staff being appointed expeditiously and at the minimum cost. This action is normally taken in consultation with Hiring Managers. HR will ensure that the agency has verified that staff placed have the necessary recruitment checks (including a DBS check where relevant, 2 references and permission to work in the UK).

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All vacancies are advertised on PACT's website and PACT's social media channels as a minimum and all staff are notified by email of current job vacancies.

In addition to PACT's website, other job boards are used as appropriate, including www.jobsgopublic.co.uk, www.charityjob.co.uk and Guardian on line. We also encourage existing staff to recommend PACT as a potential future employer to relevant individuals.

Application Forms

All job applications are made using the standard application for employment form. CVs are only accepted alongside a completed application form.

A full employment history should be submitted and any gaps are followed up by HR prior to the closing date. Details for 2 referees are requested on the application form but not contacted until after a conditional offer of employment has been made and the applicant has confirmed that PACT may take up references.

In the interest of confidentiality, all original application forms are held by the HR. HR acknowledges receipt of the application and separates the equal opportunities monitoring form from the application on receipt. Equal opportunities monitoring forms are filed separately from the application form.

When the closing date is reached, all application forms are forwarded to the short listing panel, together with the copy of the job description and advertisement and a shortlisting form.

Shortlisting

Each application is assessed against the essential (and if necessary) desirable criteria for the position. Shortlisting is undertaken by the agreed shortlisting panel and recorded on the shortlisting form. Candidates not shortlisted will be informed by HR and feedback provided on request.

Interview Process

All short-listed candidates will be invited to an interview, with the date, time and venue, including a location map with details of access for cars and pedestrians, parking and public transport. They will be advised of length of the interview and the format for the day; any additional assessment methods they need to know about and be asked to confirm their intention to attend the interview at the stated time and place.

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HR will review the confidential equal opportunities monitoring forms and contact those shortlisted candidates that have indicated they will need additional assistance to attend for interview. Shortlisted candidates who have made a disclosure are contacted for information and advised that the panel may ask further appropriate questions about this at the interview.

All candidates will be asked to bring the following documentation with them to interview:-

- original evidence of qualifications
- proof of Registration as a social worker, if relevant
- three pieces of evidence of identity, as detailed in the DBS guidance
- Proof of Right to Work in the UK.

All the above documentation for unsuccessful candidates is destroyed.

The Prevention of Illegal Working Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 requires that organisations ensure applicants for employment possess documentary evidence of their eligibility to live and work in the U.K. Full details of checking documents are included in the *"Prevention of Illegal Working Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 – Comprehensive Guidance for Employers - updated October 2013* a copy of which is available from HR.

Interviewers will ensure copies are taken of all documentation produced and forwarded to HR to be held securely on the individual's personnel file, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Only original documents will be accepted.

At least two people experienced in interviewing will be on the interviewing panel, and in the case of Senior Management appointments one of these will be a Trustee. Wherever possible at least one member of any recruitment panel must have undertaken safe recruitment training (face to face or on-line) and all those involved in interviewing candidates will have received adequate training in conducting interviews and been adequately briefed about the job in question and its requirements. They will be made aware of the danger of unfair discrimination in the process – which has both legal implications and consequences for the diversity of the organisation.

Interview questions will be prepared in advance by HR using a standard format and include a question concerning safeguarding. All candidates will be asked the same pre-set questions and members of the interview panel can make their own notes. All notes are collated by HR and kept on the personnel file for the successful candidate. A question concerning any gaps in previous employment will be included as required by the Adoption Regulations.

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Before the interview takes place the following documentation will be forwarded to the interview panel members:

- interview schedule
- job description and person specification and job advert
- question sheets for each candidate (each question is the same for each candidate and will be scored)
- copy of application form(s)

For the candidate, the interview is an opportunity to:

- ask questions about the job and the organisation;
- decide if they would like to take the job.

For the organisation, the interview is an opportunity to:

- describe the job and the responsibilities the job holder would need to take on in more detail;
- assess the candidates' ability to perform in the role;
- discuss with the candidate details such as start dates, training provisions and terms and conditions such as employee benefits;
- give a positive impression to the candidate of PACT as a 'good employer' where they would like to work should they be offered the position;
- assess the candidates understanding of safeguarding;
- explain PACT's approach to safeguarding;
- advise the candidate of the timescale for informing them of the outcomes of the interview.

Following the end of the interviews, the panel will assess the candidates' ability to perform the role, based on the questions. The assessment is recorded in a standard format.

Wherever practical, HR will endeavor to ensure all candidates are advised of the outcomes within three working days of the interview and unsuccessful candidates are provided with constructive feedback.

Choice of Candidate

The responsibility for the final choice of the candidate rests with the Interviewing Panel.

Offers of Employment

Offers of employment may be made only by HR and will be subject to the following:

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- a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check (see DBS checks procedure) where relevant
- two written references (using a standard format) and telephone verification. One reference should be from the candidate's current or most recent employer
- evidence the individual is entitled to work in the UK

A conditional offer of employment will be issued by HR, which is conditional until satisfactory checks being received.

After receiving the written references all referees will be contacted by telephone and information gathered will be recorded on the reference held in the personnel File. In addition, for social work staff employed in the adoption department, they will need to be a social worker registered with the HCPC and evidence of this must be supplied. Staff will not commence employment with PACT until these checks have been made. Where PACT is awaiting the outcome of a DBS check and the line manager wishes the person to join before this is received, the manager will complete a DBS risk assessment form which accompanied by a List 99 check (where relevant) for consideration by the Chief Executive.

Prior to commencement of employment all new employees will be requested to sign a Confidentiality Form and a copy of PACT's Safeguarding Policy.

An induction plan will be arranged for each new member of staff which will include the requirement to complete mandatory training on equality and diversity, data protection, child protection and health and safety within the first 3 months of their employment. In addition, all appointments are subject to completion of a satisfactory probation period.

Personnel files

A personnel file is set up for every successful applicant and includes:

- Safer recruitment checklist
- Application form and interview notes
- Job description/person specification
- DBS disclosure number
- 2 references
- A record of ID documents
- Copy of passport or other evidence of permission to work in the UK
- Qualifications
- Induction plan

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- Signed confidentiality and safeguarding agreement forms
- Emergency contact details

Related Documents

Safeguarding Policy

DBS Checks

Equal Opportunities (Recruitment)

Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010

The Data Protection Act 1998

Prevention of Illegal Working Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 –
 Comprehensive Guidance for Employers on Preventing Illegal Working

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