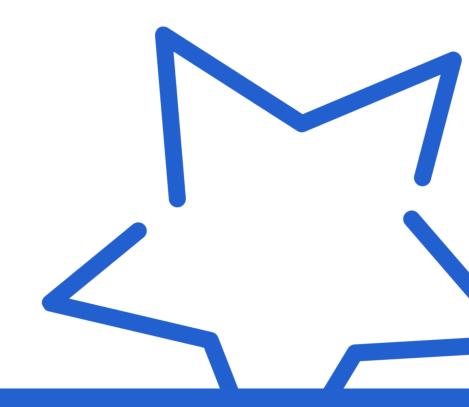


# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY



#### 1 INTRODUCTION

GAET considers the recruitment and selection of GREAT people to be a key management activity. To achieve its vision, the Trust must be able to attract, appoint and retain the right people with appropriate skills, abilities, experience and knowledge.

This policy provides a framework to guide managers and strengthen decision-making when recruiting members of staff and volunteers.

# 2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

#### **Purpose**

This policy aims to ensure that the Trust can attract and appoint GREAT people by adopting recruitment and selection practices that are fair, effective and legally compliant.

The policy also aims to ensure that the Trust creates a culture of safer recruitment and adopts recruitment procedures which have been designed to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse or are otherwise unsuitable to work with children.

# **Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Support Academy leaders to recruit GREAT people who will demonstrate commitment to the academic progress of pupils
- Promote a planned and objective approach to the recruitment of GREAT people
- Ensure robust recruitment procedures are in place to support the Trust's commitment to safeguarding
- Inform all staff involved in recruitment of their responsibilities when recruiting individuals to join the Trust
- Support the Trust's commitment to equality and diversity in its approach to recruitment.

# 3 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

# 3.1 Recruitment process

#### 3.1.1 Overarching approach

It is the Trust's policy that recruiting managers are responsible for the day to day operation of recruitment and selection practice. Support and advice are available from the Trust HR Service. This policy is also supported by a Recruitment Procedure and template documents.

A record must be kept of all parts of the process that can be produced if any challenge about a recruitment process is made (e.g. shortlisting matrix, safeguarding review, interview and assessment forms).

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At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the Trust must have undertaken Safer Recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education. Managers who are responsible for the recruitment process, and staff who have a specific responsibility for supporting the process, are required to complete Safer Recruitment training and undertake refresher training at least every **three** years.

Recruitment advertisements and job descriptions must contain information about the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and identify the level of Disclosure and Barring Service check that is required.

# 3.1.2 Identifying a vacancy

Prior to any recruitment taking place, a potential vacancy will be assessed to ensure that there is a genuine requirement to recruit. It should not be automatically assumed that a 'like for like' replacement is required.

A manager who wishes to recruit must first obtain approval from the Principal and the Director of Finance and Estates.

An assessment is required which may involve a job evaluation process (for support staff vacancies). The Trust is the overall employer of staff in schools, so it is important to establish a consistent approach to the grades of support staff roles.

Whilst not an exhaustive list, consideration should be given to the following:

- Is the post still required?
- Does the post effectively reflect the ongoing needs of the service/Academy?
- Should there be any changes to the working arrangements of the post all year round working, term time only, support role/teaching role?

Before commencing the recruitment process, the manager must ensure that there is an up-to-date job description and person specification. The job description will describe the duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, while the person specification will describe the type of skills, knowledge, abilities, qualifications, experience and qualities required for effective performance of the job.

The person specification is likely to contain both essential and desirable criteria. Essential criteria are the attributes that a candidate must have to carry out the role effectively. It is important to ensure that essential attributes can be justified as being 'essential.' Desirable criteria are not essential to carry out the role effectively but are 'desirable' and may be used when it is necessary to further assess candidates who all meet the essential criteria. The person specification should not include criteria that are irrelevant.

# 3.1.3 Advertising a vacancy

The aim of placing an advertisement will be to attract candidates who possess the qualifications, skills, experience and other attributes that are necessary to perform the job

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competently. It is important to get this stage of the recruitment process right to ensure a successful appointment.

Consideration may be given to the staffing context at other Academies within the Trust, and whether it is appropriate for any vacant post to be filled by staff from another academy as a development opportunity or to recruit to a post that is hard to fill.

- All vacancies will be advertised internally (and externally as required).
- Internal vacancies will be shared in such a way as to ensure that everyone in the
  organisation can access them, for example, on notice boards, through the email
  notification system and/or notification in team meetings. (please note that employees
  on maternity/adoption leave must be included).
- Teacher vacancies should be advertised on the Department for Education's Teaching Vacancies Service which is free.
- Managers must consider cost and effectiveness when exploring external advertising options – the Trust has a contract with TES, which is reviewed annually to ensure it remains cost effective.

Job advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications must contain information about the commitment to Safeguarding to identify to a potential applicant the level of Disclosure and Barring Service check that is required.

When advertising a role on a fixed term basis, the job advertisement must be clear about the nature and duration of the contract. Advice should be sought as necessary from the Trust HR Service.

# 3.1.4 Application process

Applicants can complete an appropriate online form such as the TES Application Form or a GAET Form which captures the following information to support a safer recruitment process:

- Personal details including teacher reference number for teaching applications.
- Full academic and employment history since leaving school including specific dates of employment and reasons for leaving any employment.
- Reasons for any gaps or discrepancies in academic and employment history.
- A supporting statement addressing the criteria set out in the person specification.
- Details of two suitable referees.
- A declaration that all information provided is true.

#### 3.1.5 Shortlisting

Shortlisting panels must contain a minimum of two people, one of which must have completed Safer Recruitment Training.

It is expected that the same staff members (the panel) are responsible for selection at all stages of the recruitment process (e.g. shortlisting, interviewing and any other selection processes).

Applicants are shortlisted according to criteria set out in the person specification for a vacant role. The shortlisting panel are responsible for assessing the application forms in relation to

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both the criteria set out in the person specification and specific safeguarding related criteria. A record should be made of decisions made.

#### It is recommended that:

- A marking system, including a cut-off score for selection, should be agreed before the applications are assessed, and applied consistently to all applications.
- Applications should be marked separately by each panel member before a final mark is agreed between the people involved.
- Selection should be based only on information provided in the application form.
- The weight given to each criterion in the person specification should not be changed during short-listing; for example, in order to include someone who would otherwise not be short-listed.

Where consent has been provided, written references should be requested on all shortlisted candidates prior to interview. Referees will be provided with copies of the job description and person specification to enable them to comment on the candidate's ability to meet the specific requirements of the job. Reference requests will include specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

Upon receipt of references, the recruiting panel are responsible for reviewing and cross checking the details provided in a reference to the details provided on the application form. Any discrepancies, anomalies or incomplete items must be followed up with referees and/or applicants prior to interview or as part of the interview process.

The Trust should not accept open references or testimonials. References from relatives are not acceptable. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee. In addition:

- One referee must be the current or most recent employer
- Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period
  of employment and reasons for leaving should be obtained from the organisation at
  which they were last employed.
- If the applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past, an additional reference should be obtained from the employer with which the person was most recently employed to work or volunteer with children.
- Referees should be a senior person with appropriate authority, not just a colleague.

References will be scrutinised, and any concerns resolved before confirming appointments. In circumstances where a reference cannot be obtained prior to interview (for example where an applicant has not provided their consent to contact a referee), and an offer of employment is made, satisfactory references must be obtained before an appointment is confirmed. Recruiting managers are responsible for reviewing and cross checking the details as outlined above on receipt of the reference.

# Self-declaration form providing information regarding a criminal record; and information which may make a candidate unsuitable to work with children

Short listed candidates are required to complete a self declaration form which asks questions regarding whether they have a criminal record; and ask other questions regarding their suitability to work with children. The purpose of a self-declaration is so that candidates have

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the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received.

Once an individual has been selected, the recruiting manager should consider an online check of the candidates as part of the Trust's due diligence. Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022, state that, 'This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.' The key things to look out for on a check would be:

- extremism and hate speech;
- violent images;
- nudity;
- toxic language,
- swearing and profanity
- anything which may bring the Trust / School into disrepute

Where any of the above are uncovered, the recruiting manager should consider if they should discuss what has been found with the candidate during the interview. The answers given should then be assessed to determine their suitability for the role.

# 3.1.6 Selection process

The panel should have at least two members and be consistent throughout the short listing and interview process and be appropriately trained (at least one person must be trained in Safer Recruitment).

Choosing the most appropriate selection techniques for each vacancy is essential to the success of the selection process. The choice of selection methods should be appropriate to the role.

Examples of selection methods that may be used include:

- Structured interview.
- A work-sample test, where the candidate is required to undertake tasks that they will be expected to perform in the job. This may include lesson observations, presentations, in tray exercises, analysis tasks etc.
- Assessment centres a process whereby candidates undergo a range of different exercises and selection tests.

All processes associated with the selection process must be fair and objective and decision making must be consistent and justifiable. Interview questions and assessment methods must be devised and agreed in advance and will be designed to assess the criteria set out in the person specification in a consistent manner. Line managers conducting recruitment interviews have a duty to ensure that the questions they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory. The interview will focus on the requirements of the role and the skills needed to perform it effectively.

For senior posts within both the Trust and individual academies, it is expected that Trustees/LGC members will form part of the Selection Panel. At academy level, senior posts

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would include Principals and Vice Principals and at Trust level, would include managerial posts.

It is normal practice for senior appointments within schools to include a rigorous two-day selection process, incorporating a range of exercises and panel interviews, with a view to shortlisting further at the end of the first day to determine which applicants should proceed to the final selection day. It is recommended that Trustees/ Governors are invited to attend on either the first or second day to support the overall selection process.

As stated elsewhere in the Policy, it is necessary that at least one person on any recruitment panel is trained in Safer Recruitment procedures and it will be useful if Governors/Trustees have also attended such training.

For posts which involve contact with pupils, questions should be asked that assess the candidate's suitability, attitude and motivation to work with children. The interview should also be used to clarify or explore in more depth information given on the application form. For example: to clarify vague information or question any inconsistencies or omissions. If there are any issues with referees or references already obtained, this should also be explored.

# 3.1.7 Making a conditional offer of employment / pre-appointment checks

The panel responsible for recruitment should review candidate suitability against the factors on the person specification in reaching a decision about the most suitable candidate.

When appointing new staff, any offer of employment will be conditional upon the following:

- Verification of identity.
- Receipt of two satisfactory written references. Written information about previous employment history will be requested and the information checked to ensure that it is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Receipt of a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity. (Or other level of DBS certificate where not in regulated activity and appropriate).
- Verification of mental and physical fitness to carry out work responsibilities.
- Verification of right to work in the UK.
- Verification of professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- Verification that the successful candidate is not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher or other eligible role.
- Further additional checks on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK for 3 months or more in the last 5 years, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent.
- A check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.
- <u>Academies with pupils aged under 8:</u> Appropriate checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

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All these checks should be carried out satisfactorily before a successful candidate commences employment with Great Academies Education Trust.

There may be circumstances that lead to the Trust withdrawing a conditional offer of employment for example, if any of the checks are incomplete or unsatisfactory. The candidate would be informed of this in writing.

In exceptional circumstances, the Trust /Academy may allow an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. In these circumstances, the Academy must ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed. A barred list check can be obtained via the HR Service who will arrange for an external Agency to undertake the check at a cost of £12.00. A risk assessment must be authorised by the Principal before an individual can commence work.

# 3.1.8 Disclosure and Barring Service checks

The majority of staff employed within the Trust will be engaging in regulated activity. An enhanced DBS certificate (which includes barred list information) will therefore be required.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaged in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate.

The Trust will not automatically reject an individual because they have a previous criminal conviction. If the nature of the offence is relevant to the job for which the candidate has applied, the Trust will review the individual circumstances of the case and may, at its discretion, withdraw a conditional offer of employment.

The Trust will assess the suitability of candidates with a criminal record according to individual circumstances. The factors that will be considered include:

- The nature of the offence
- Relevance to the role
- How long ago the offence occurred
- The circumstances/context of the offence and employee explanation

#### 3.1.9 Induction

Induction at Great Academies Education Trust is intended to provide new employees and volunteers with details about the Trust's vision, values, policies and procedures, as well as information specific to their role.

A Trust induction will apply to all new staff members and will cover, amongst other items, specific information relating to safeguarding:

- Safeguarding training
- A requirement to read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education (all staff must read the summary and identified staff must read the full document)

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- A requirement to read and understand the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and other key policies
- The Staff Code of Conduct

# 3.1.10 Single Central Record

Each Academy will record information on the pre-appointment checks carried out on the Academy's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. A central SCR will be maintained for centrally employed Trust staff.

# 3.2 Existing staff

If a person working at the Trust moves from a post that was not regulated activity into work which is regarded as regulated activity, the relevant checks for that activity must be carried out.

A referral to the DBS will be made in respect of anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child in line with the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.' A referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency will also be made as and when necessary.

# 3.3. Agency and third-party staff

Written notification must be obtained from any agency or third-party organisation to confirm that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that the Trust would otherwise perform. Checks must be undertaken to ensure that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

The actual enhanced DBS check certificate should also be reviewed by an appropriate manager for all staff from an agency, regardless of whether a positive disclosure was made. This requirement is in addition to obtaining written notification of a satisfactory DBS check from the agency or third-party organisation.

# 3.4. Contractors

Any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the Trust must have the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

The Trust will obtain a DBS check for self-employed contractors.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

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The identity of all contractors and their staff must be checked on arrival at an Academy.

<u>Academies with pupils aged under 8:</u> For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, appropriate checks must be carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

# 3.5. Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are paid by the Trust, all necessary checks should be carried out in accordance with the details in section 5.1 7.

Where trainee teachers are not paid by the Trust, written confirmation will be obtained from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been assessed by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

<u>Academies with pupils aged under 8:</u> In both cases (paid by the Trust and fee-funded), this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

#### 3.6. Volunteers

The Trust will adopt the same recruitment procedures for volunteers as for paid staff. Volunteers will be required to complete basic details on the Trust application form in order to provide necessary information about their background and basic details.

# The Trust will:

- Verify identity.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to supervise volunteers.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all new volunteers who are working in regulated activity.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity and retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- Have regard to the statutory guidance on supervision if a supervised volunteer would otherwise be in regulated activity.
- <u>Academies with pupils aged under 8:</u> Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.
- Obtain references to check suitability to volunteer.
- Carry out any additional checks considered necessary.

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#### 3.7. Governors and Trust Board

All Governors and Trust Board members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. (They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity).

The Chair of the Trust board is required to have a DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008).
- Identity.
- Right to work in the UK.
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

#### 3.8 Safer culture

All employees are responsible for ongoing vigilance in relation to staff, workers, volunteers and any other individuals entering GAET premises, and/or with access or opportunity for contact with pupils.

The Trust has a framework of policies and procedures which support staff to uphold the above responsibilities. It is the responsibility of each staff member to ensure that they are familiar with and understand these provisions.

#### **4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All individuals who are involved in any stage of the recruitment and selection process must be aware of and adhere to this policy.

Any person who is involved in recruiting to Great Academies Education Trust must read the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' alongside the provisions of this policy.

# The Trust

• The Trust Board/CEO has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory frameworks.

#### **Principals and CEO**

• The Trust has delegated day to day responsibility for implementing and operating this policy to the Principal of each Academy and to the CEO in relation to senior and central Trust recruitment and selection.

#### **Recruiting managers**

- Conduct recruitment and selection activity in line with the provisions set out in this
  policy
- Operate in a reasonable, responsible and business focused manner

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- Plan recruitment activity to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely and effectively
- Be aware of and comply with legal and statutory provisions relating to recruitment and selection
- Complete Safer Recruitment training and undertake refresher training every three years
- Understand and apply the principles and practices of safer recruitment at all stages of recruitment and selection
- Adhere to agreed administrative procedures
- Seek guidance from the Trust HR Service where appropriate

#### All staff

- Familiarise themselves with and comply with the provisions of this policy.
- Read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education (relevant sections as directed).
- Exercise ongoing vigilance in relation to staff, workers, volunteers and any other individuals entering GAET premises, and/or with access or opportunity for contact with pupils.

#### **5 DATA PROTECTION**

The Trust processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy and records retention schedule. In particular, data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Trust's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

#### **6 BREACH OF POLICY AND COMPLAINTS**

Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

# **7 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with national and local guidance and the following GAET/Academy policies:

Data Protection Policy
Privacy Notice
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Staff Code of Conduct

#### **8 SOURCES CONSULTED**

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 – This statutory safeguarding guidance states
that it is vital for schools to create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that,
adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might

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- abuse children. Specific statutory requirements are detailed in terms of practicing safer recruitment.
- Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Statutory Code of Practice The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against job applicants (and existing workers) because of a "protected characteristic". The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also sets out an employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments and other specific duties that apply to bodies exercising public functions.
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 Sets out that employers have a duty to prevent illegal working by carrying out document checks to confirm if a person has the right to work in the UK.
- Data Protection Act 2018 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) establish how an organisation must deal with the processing and retention of recruitment data.
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
  (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013 and 2020) Govern the circumstances
  in which an employer may lawfully decide to reject an individual for employment on
  the grounds of a conviction.
- Childcare Act 2006 The Act sets out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified from providing relevant childcare provision or being directly concerned in the management of such provision.

#### **9 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

This policy is guided by legislative duties, national guidance, best practice and the GAET Vision and Values.

# Key legislative duties and national guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Statutory Code of Practice
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)

# **GAET Vision and Values**

#### Vision

"Great Academies Education Trust will be a truly outstanding, outward facing multi-academy trust supporting its academies, from their starting points, to become outstanding.

All pupils will make exceptional academic progress in all subjects and regardless of age or stage will be work and college ready.

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Our academies will be places where pupils are valued as individuals, where they will have opportunities to achieve highly, lead strongly and develop into confident, responsible and successful young adults."

This policy will support the Trust to attract and recruit GREAT people to assist in delivering the Trust vision.

#### **Values**

All individuals will embody our values

**G**enuine - mutually trusting, open, honest and reflective.

Respect(ful) to all.

**E**xcellent at what they do, striving for excellence and intolerant of mediocrity.

Achievement focussed-understanding that academic excellence is the goal and high aspirations key to each child achieving their academic potential.

Together believing that we can make the biggest difference when we work as a strong team.

The Trust values guide the way that all GREAT employees work together to achieve the Trust vision and should be embedded in the main duties of each job role.

#### **10 EQUALITY**

The Trust is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people for employment based on their skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and where appropriate, qualifications and training.

All stages of recruitment will be carried out without regard to sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion or belief, marital status, or pregnancy and maternity.

Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of a disability.

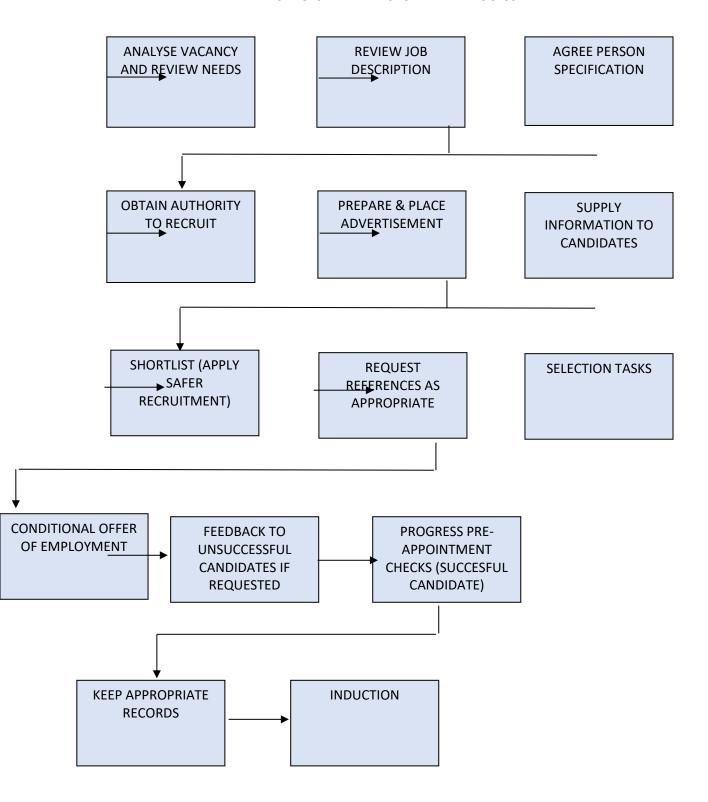
The Trust will also consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments to working practices or premises that could be made to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage that a disabled person might face when seeking employment.

# **APPENDICES**

Flowchart of stages in the recruitment process.

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#### STAGES IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS



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