



# The GTA Safer Recruitment for Employment Policy

This policy applies to all members of GTA (including staff, learners, volunteers, parents/carer's, and visitor) who access the GTA.

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## **Introduction**

The Doncaster, Rotherham and District Motor Trades GTA (GTA) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners in its care. As an employer, the GTA expects all staff, volunteers and employers to share this commitment.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse learners or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of the GTA's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2020 (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- to ensure that the GTA meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our learners by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

The GTA has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the GTA based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including KCSIE 2020 and Prevent Duty Guidance).

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The GTA aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at the GTA.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Quality Manager to:

- Ensure the GTA has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the GTA's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the CEO and other Managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the College operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the College. To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of learners at every stage of the procedure.

The Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility to the CEO to lead in the recruitment and selection process. Trustees may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the CEO.

## **Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency**

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of the GTA will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- overnight, meaning between 2.00am and 6.00am; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30-day period; and
- provides the opportunity for contact with children.

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid/voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

The GTA is not permitted to check the Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The GTA is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the GTA can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

## **Recruitment and Selection Procedure – Advertising**

To ensure equality of opportunity, the GTA will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the GTA's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA18).

## **Application Forms**

The GTA uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). Applicants submitting an incomplete application form will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CVs will not be accepted.

It is unlawful for the GTA to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the GTA. All applicants will be made 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 referral to the police and/or the DBS.

## **References**

References for the successful candidate(s) will be requested after interview (shortlisted candidates).

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the GTA. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children if possible. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

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 that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised, so that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism".

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The GTA does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

## **Interviews**

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position one of which will have Safer Recruitment Training. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps which have been identified in

order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process, if it has been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed 6 months after the recruitment programme.

### **Offer of Employment and New Employee Process**

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE the GTA carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the GTA's standard terms and conditions of employment
- verification of the applicant's identity (if not previously been verified)
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the College considers to be satisfactory for positions which involve "teaching work":
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the GTA considers to be satisfactory
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List
- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from providing education at a College, taking part in the management of an independent College or working in a position which involves regular contact with children
- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent College
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role
- verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK
- any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK; and
- verification of professional qualifications which the GTA deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where not previously verified).

Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" will be determined by the GTA in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in most cases the GTA will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check.

## **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to learners. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position at the GTA.

## **DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check**

The GTA will apply for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS in respect of all positions at the GTA which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is the GTA's policy that the DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

It is the GTA's policy to re-check employees' DBS Certificates every three years and in addition any employee who takes leave for more than three months (ie maternity leave, career break etc) must be re-checked before they return back to work.

Members of staff at the GTA are aware of their obligation to inform the CEO of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence

## **Portability of DBS Certificates Checks**

Staff may wish to join the DBS Update Service if they are likely to require another check in the future. Applicants may sign up to the Service for a fee of £13 per annum, which is payable by the applicant.

This allows for portability of a Certificate across employers. The GTA will:

- Obtain consent from the applicant to carry out an update search.
- Confirm the Certificate matches the individual's identity.
- Examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, i.e. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information.

The Update check would identify and advise whether there has been any change to the information recorded, since the initial Certificate was issued. Applicants will be able to see a full list of those organisations that have carried out a status check on their account.

## **DBS Certificate**

The DBS service no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees /applicants should bring their original Certificate to the CEO (for employees within 7 days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity).

## **Dealing with convictions**

The GTA operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the CEO. A decision will be made following this meeting. In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the CEO will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the College may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

## **Secretary of State Prohibition Orders (Teaching and Management Roles)**

The GTA is an Independent Training Provider and not a college, sixth college, local authority or school we cannot make Prohibition Order checks using the Employer Access Online Service for Teacher status checks for employers, under guidance from the DfE. The GTA will use the DBS service to check the barred list to identify any section 128 direction.

## **Proof of identity, Right of Work in the UK & verification if Qualifications and/or professional**

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the GTA will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (eg marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

## **Medical Fitness**

The GTA is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at any of the Training Centres, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role.

The GTA is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

## **Overseas Checks**

The GTA, in accordance with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) will, if applicable, sponsor new foreign nationals (see Certificate of Sponsorship section).

In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal records check from the relevant country. The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the GTA.

## **Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)**

If an appointed applicant is a national of a non-EEA country, a CoS may be required. Before any offer of employment is made, the CEO will establish whether the GTA would need to make an application for a Sponsorship Certificate licence.

Criteria for issuing a CoS can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers>

Only the CEO will be able to make an application and issue a CoS. In addition to the CoS the applicant must apply for entry clearance/leave to remain through the UKVI and comply with the UKVI requirements.

The process can take up to three months and staff cannot, under any circumstances, be employed until permission is given.

Detailed advice on the above is available from the CEO.

## **Induction Programme**

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the GTA's policies and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct, and KCSIE, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

## **Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff**

In addition to the various staff records kept in GTA and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the Education (Independent College Standards) Regulations 2014 requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the CEO. The Single Centralised Register will contain details of the following:-

- All employees who are employed to work at the College;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the College whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the College to work in regular contact with children.

This will cover volunteers, trustees, part-time staff and people brought into the GTA to provide additional teaching or instruction for learners but who are not staff members, e.g. motor vehicle tutors etc.

A designated trustee will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to the full Trustees Board once per year (12 months).

## **Record Retention/Data Protection**

The GTA is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the GTA will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of the following but not limited to, documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and evidence of qualifications.

Medical information may be used to help the GTA to discharge its obligations as an employer, e.g. so that the GTA may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by the GTA for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the GTA. All information retained on employees is kept centrally by the CEO in a locked and secure cabinet.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with College activities.

The GTA will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) [DPA18].

## **Ongoing Employment at the GTA**

The GTA recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The GTA will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

## **Contractors and agency Staff**

Contractors engaged by the GTA must complete the same checks for their employees that the GTA is required to complete for its staff. The GTA requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work at the GTA.

Agencies who supply staff to the GTA must also complete the pre-employment checks which the College would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the GTA requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at the GTA.

The College will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency in and will require the provision of the original DBS certificate before contractors or agency staff can commence work at the College.

## **Visiting Speakers (and Prevent Duty)**

The Prevent Duty Guidance requires the College to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by learners, are suitable and appropriately supervised. The GTA does not obtain a DBS disclosure or Children's Barred List information on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the College or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the GTA.

All visiting speakers will be subject to the GTA's usual visitors signing in protocol. This will include signing in and out at Reception, the wearing of a visitor's badge at all times and being escorted by a fully vetted member of staff between appointments.

The GTA will also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and/or permit a speaker to attend the College. In doing so, the College will always have regard to the [Visitors and Security Policy], the

## **Prevent Duty Guidance and the definition of "extremism" set out in KCSIE which states:**

"'Extremism' is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations."

In fulfilling its Prevent Duty obligations the GTA does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age. Please see the GTA Prevent policy CP5.5 for more information.

## **Volunteers**

The GTA will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with learners at or on behalf of the College (the definition of regulated activity set out above will be applied to all volunteers).

Under no circumstances will the GTA permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with learners.

It is the GTA's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the GTA for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the GTA on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the GTA to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

In addition, the GTA will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to the following):

- formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers;
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source; and
- an informal safer recruitment interview.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The CEO will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the GTA. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly Safer Recruitment Evaluation audit.