

Safer Recruitment Policy

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1 Introduction

Oxford Business College (OBC) recognises that the achievement of its goals and the securing of its values are dependent on the recruitment and the retention of a skilled and committed workforce. This policy and procedure outlines our approach to this. This document is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

2 Purpose

Oxford Business College is committed to creating a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt robust recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse their role. The Senior Management Team and Managers involved in the recruitment process will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including criminal record checks (DBS checks), together with references and interview information.

All recruitment and selection activities will be carried out in a fair, consistent, effective and professional manner and will respond appropriately to concerns about the suitability of applicants during the recruitment process. An effective recruitment process contributes directly to the continuing success of the organisation and in addition, it is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that this policy and procedure complies with all relevant legislative and other related policy requirements.

The College is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age or trade union membership, unless lawfully allowed for certain specific posts.

Normally appointments must be made in accordance with this policy and will, therefore, be subject to advertisement and interview. The Principal must approve any exceptions in advance of formal appointment.

Financial approval for the establishment of a new post or the filling of a vacancy must be obtained before recruitment commences.

Appointments will be made subject to the receipt of at least 2 written references; proof of eligibility to work in the UK; documentary proof of qualifications and, where appropriate, Disclosure and Barring Scheme checks.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all prospective candidates and current employees applying for an internal position.

4 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the following procedural guide is to inform managers and employees of the aims and design of the recruitment, selection and appointment policy. It is designed as an aid to assist staff to carry out the process in a fair, effective, efficient and systematic manner.

This will ensure that:

- the best candidate is appointed for the vacant post, with regard to objective criteria, which includes qualifications, skills, knowledge and quality of experience.
- vacancies are filled within agreed timescales and in the most cost-effective manner.
- our recruitment procedure does not unlawfully discriminate at any stage of the process.

5 New Jobs and Job Vacancies

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade salary. Where the duties of a post have changed significantly the Manager must seek confirmation from the Principal of the appropriate salary for the post.

When a vacancy arises, consideration must be given, prior to open advertising, to any staff for whom redeployment is being sought on the grounds of redundancy or disability.

When employing temporary or casual staff on a short-term basis the principles of good practice outlined in this policy should be followed.

5.1 Job Description

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps. It must include:

- The job title
- The location of the job
- Grade or salary scale of the post
- The line manager to whom the post holder is responsible
- Any posts reporting to the post holder
- Main purpose of the job
- Main duties and responsibilities
- Any special working conditions (e.g. evening or weekend work)

Other items that should be included in job descriptions are:

- A note that indicates that, as duties and responsibilities change, the job description will be reviewed and amended in consultation with the post holder.
- An indication that the post holder will carry out any other duties as are within the broad scope and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager or other authorised person.
- All roles in the College will be subject to Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding practices. Applicants will be informed in the job advertisement that a DBS Enhanced Disclosure will be sought. Referees will be asked specifically whether or not they feel the applicant is a suitable person to work with other vulnerable groups; any gaps in employment must be satisfactorily explained; any period of time longer than 3 months spent outside of the UK in the previous 5 years will be subject to overseas checks; Barred List (formally List 99) checks; Prohibition checks.

5.2 Publicising the Vacancy

Job adverts are written from the Job Description and any Person Specification and should contain the following points:

- OBC name and logo
- Title of vacancy
- Salary (does not need to be in advert but ought to be in details sent out)
- Brief details of the job
- Key details of the person specification, i.e. the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post
- The safeguarding requirements for the post
- The necessity of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Duration of the appointment if fixed term
- How to access further details of the vacancy
- Closing date for applications
- Method of application and to who applications should be submitted
- Where known the date and location of the interview
- A statement reflecting OBC's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, and equality of opportunity

The posts will also be concurrently advertised internally and externally to maximise the chances of attracting the best candidate. Consideration should also be given to advertising in locations/publications likely to increase diversity in the workforce.

It is also recognised that OBC receives a number of speculative applications. This is particularly the case for teaching positions. These may be used to fill short-term and 'last minute' vacancies.

Applicants will be made aware that:

- Any gaps in employment will be explored at interview
- Contact details for at least 2 referees must be provided.
- This role meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- All applicants who are offered employment will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions,

reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions

5.3 Arrangements for interview

Invitations to interview should include:

- Date, time and place of interview
- Directions to the interview venue
- A request that the candidate make it known if they have any particular requirements related to access to the venue or any other need related to a disability
- Details of any presentation or task that form part of the selection process
- A request that the candidate bring with them permission to work in the UK documents and qualification certificates – this must be requested of ALL candidates
- Pre-interview guidance notes
- The job description and person specification

The pack may also include, depending on the role guidance notes, a criminal convictions declaration form. Further information relevant to the particular post may also be included – e.g. annual report, organisational structure chart as appropriate.

It is best practice to write to candidates who have not been shortlisted but, if this is not possible due to limited resources, the application pack should make clear that if not notified after a certain date or period, applicants should consider themselves not to have been shortlisted.

5.4 Selecting the Panel

In the normal course of events, shortlisting and interviews should be conducted by a minimum of two, including at least one member of staff with appropriate Safer Recruitment Training. The immediate line manager and senior manager will select interview panel members prior to the closing date. This allows panel members to carry out the shortlisting process. Panels should:

- Consist of a minimum of two people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post
- Reflect a gender and ethnicity balance wherever possible
- Declare if they already know a candidate, clearly noting the connection on the interview notes

- Be willing and able to attend shortlisting and all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates
- At least one member of the panel needs to have undergone Safer Recruitment Training

However, in certain circumstances, shortlisting may be carried out by the appointing line manager alone. This will be the case with urgent 'last-minute' hires where it is unreasonable and impractical to convene a panel. That person must have undergone Safer Recruitment Training.

After the closing date has passed the interview panel should individually assess the applications to determine which applicants are to be called for interview. The panel should then meet to discuss and agree the shortlist. Where the panel has an external member, that person should take part in the shortlisting wherever practicable. Shortlisting decisions should be based on evidence that the applicant has met the requirements of the job description.

The original applications for all applicants, together with a written note of reasons for shortlisting or rejection, must be retained for a minimum of 6 months from the date that an appointment decision is notified, in case of complaint to an Employment Tribunal. All photocopies of application forms must be shredded.

5.5 Criminal Conviction Declaration Forms

Criminal declaration forms belonging to candidates who have not been shortlisted for interview will remain sealed and will be shredded. Short-listed candidates' forms will be opened and checked for relevant convictions. If it is deemed that a conviction is relevant to the post, the candidate may be withdrawn from the list of interviewees.

The Criminal Convictions Declaration Form template is saved in the 'application pack'.

It is best practice to write to candidates who have not been shortlisted but if this is not possible due to limited resources, the application pack should make clear that if not notified after a certain date or period, applicants should consider themselves not to have been shortlisted.

5.6 Interviewing

Interviews should be scheduled as soon after the application closing date as reasonably possible.

The structure of interviews should be decided in advance by determining who will chair the panel and what areas of questioning are required to cover all the elements of the person specification.

The same areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates. Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate and should be designed to seek evidence of how the interviewee meets the criteria on the person specification. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous. Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g. questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job).

Interview panels act for the organisation in making selection decisions and are accountable for them. Interview notes must be taken to help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interviews. Such notes must relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification. The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint. Obviously any inappropriate or personally derogatory comments contained within the notes could be considered discriminatory and are unacceptable.

5.7 Disabled Applicants

Where the candidate being interviewed has a disability for which adjustments may need to be considered, the candidate's requirements should be discussed with him/her once the planned questioning is complete. The outcome of these discussions must not influence the consideration of the candidate's application. If the disabled candidate best meets the person specification, consideration must be made regarding what would be 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of the person in question. On considering these, if it is considered that the adaptations needed would not be deemed to be 'reasonable' under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Manager will draft a letter to the applicant explaining why the adaptations cannot be made. Reasons for not making adjustments to the working environment must be both material and substantial, and must be documented.

5.8 Making a Decision after Interview

The information obtained in the application, the interview, and in any selection tests will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made. The Chair of the panel must ensure that a written note of the reasons for selecting the successful candidate

and rejecting others is made and placed on the recruitment file, together with the original applications and notes of all panel members, for a minimum of 6 months after the appointment decision has been notified to the candidates.

Interview proceedings are confidential, and interviewers are free to divulge to others the decision reached only once the appointee has accepted the post.

The Manager will make a provisional offer to the preferred candidate subject to satisfactory references and Disclosures (if appropriate) being received.

5.9 Feedback

It is good practice to offer applicants feedback after interviews and it is our policy to respond if requested with brief comments by e-mail. Feedback should be specific and honest. Panel members giving feedback must ensure that any feedback they give relates to the selection criteria for the post and that the words that they use could not be taken to infer unlawful discrimination.

5.10 Pre-employment Checks

A number of employment checks are required to be undertaken before a formal offer of employment can be made. It must be ensured that any offer of employment given, is a 'provisional' one, subject to receipt of documentation as shown below.

All new appointments

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary preemployment checks.

When appointing new staff, the College must:

- verify a candidate's identity;
- obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check which will include barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity;
- automatically obtain a separate barred list check in case an individual will start work in regulated activity 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. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then OBC will follow the advice on the GOV.UK website;
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate Safer Recruitment Policy 2020 – 21; and
- ensure that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service.

Since an enhanced DBS certificate is required, it will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after, the person's appointment.

5.11References

References should only be used after interview to confirm, but not influence, a decision. Candidates' permission must be sought prior to seeking references.

Appropriate referees are those who have direct experience of a candidate's work, education or training, preferably in a supervisory capacity and a reference must be obtained from the current or previous employer.

References are confidential and must be sought 'in confidence'. Panel members must return all copies of any references with the application forms and their interview notes to the Manager on completion of the recruitment process. References must only be kept in the personal file. Following receipt of a reference by (post or email) the referee will be contacted by phone, where possible, or email to provide verification of the reference provided.

Note that people have right to see information held about them including Interview notes & references.

5.12Eligibility to Work in the UK

The Immigration, Asylum and Immigration Act 2006 makes it an offence to employ anyone who does not have permission to be in, or work in, the UK. To avoid making assumptions about such permission, it is the hiring manager's responsibility to ask all appointees for evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. It is unlawful racial discrimination to carry out checks only on potential employees who by their

appearance or accent seem to be other than British. It is therefore a requirement to ask all candidates attending interview to bring with them evidence of their right to work in the UK.

For every new employee we must:

- (a) see;
- (b) check; and
- (c) copy

either one or two documents to prove entitlement to work in the UK. The documents must be originals, not copies.

The Home Office requires that we must in particular:

- check that photographs appear to be of the prospective employee;
- check that dates of birth are consistent with the apparent age of the person;
- check that expiry dates have not been passed;
- check that UK government stamps or endorsements do allow the type of work you are offering; and
- obtain a third document (such as a marriage certificate) to explain the reason if the two documents produced are in different names. We will make a copy of the relevant parts of the documents. These are: the front cover and all the pages which give the prospective employee's personal details, especially the photograph and signature; and any page containing a UK government stamp or endorsement which allows the person to do the work we are offering.

5.13 Criminal Conviction Information

The organisation will seek a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all posts that are exempt under the Exemption Order of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A Disclosure request will only be undertaken for the successful candidate, and all candidates will be informed of this process in the invitation to interview. It should be noted that this may delay the offer a position until the disclosure process is complete.

5.14 Qualifications

Proof of academic qualifications and any others considered essential for the post must be verified. Copies must be kept in the members of staff's HR file showing the date and initials of the person that verified the certificate/s.

5.15 Appointment

Only the Principal, a member of senior management team or appointing line manager may issue letters of appointment and arrange for individuals to go on to the payroll.

Conditional offers will be made subject to the checks described above

6 Induction and Probation

All new staff will undergo a probationary period during which they will be introduced to the main duties and responsibilities of their post. An induction programme will be set out which covers information about the organisation and their post and include safeguarding and child protection.

7 Record Keeping

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations Act, all records relating to the recruitment and selection procedure of unsuccessful candidates will be retained only for as long as is necessary (generally 6 months) and will be securely destroyed thereafter.

8 Volunteers

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

Volunteers who on teach on an unsupervised basis will be in regulated activity. The College will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which should include barred list information) for all volunteers who are

new to working in regulated activity.

The College will undertake a risk assessment and use professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity.

In doing so we will consider:

- 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 suitability; and
- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.

9 Visitors

The College does not have the power to request DBS checks and barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates, for visitors. The principal should use their professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise visitors.

SAFER RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS

Safer Recruitment Step	Initials	Date
<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill out staff request form. • Define your requirements – what is the post? Is the position full-time/part-time, fixed term or zero hour’s contract? Discuss and agree salary range with the Principal agree on the interview panel members. • Person Specification (Essential and Desirable skills, experience, knowledge and qualifications) sent to HR Officer. • Job description finalised and includes safeguarding responsibilities. 		
<p>Advertising the Vacancy</p> <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBC name and logo • Title of vacancy • Salary (does not need to be in advert but ought to be in details sent out) • Brief details of the job • Key details of the person specification, i.e. the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post • Duration of the appointment if fixed term • Closing date for applications, method of application and to who applications should be submitted • DBS disclosure is required 		

<p>Insert safeguarding message to deter unsuitable applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “(Our organisation) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.” 		
<p>Short-listing Applications</p> <p>Devise short-listing criteria based on Essential criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinise any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted in order to later be explored further for short listed candidates. Reject all applications which do not meet your essential criteria e.g. Qualifications, experience, skills. Invite to interview. <p>Invitation to Interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes all relevant information and instructions (who will be present, whether there’ll be tests or tasks, location of interview, date & time). 		
<p>Interviews and assessment</p> <p>At least 2 interviewers: panel members have authority to appoint: have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards.</p> <p>Interview</p> <p>Plan a range of assessment methods including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview questions which probe attitude towards safeguarding, and motivation to work with children, young people and/or families Question any gaps exposed on application form, any live disciplinary action and/or criminal offences, police investigations or disqualifications/sanctions 		

<p>imposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HR Officer will request sight of original documents and take copies 		
<p>Recruitment decision made</p> <p>This is subject to references and a satisfactory DBS and ID check.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue a verbal offer of employment to the candidate who is most suitable for the role. Inform candidate that the offer is subject to thorough checks and further references (where applicable). • Inform Principal of appointment and salary offered. The Principal will issue formal offer of employment together with relevant documentation for completion and seek references. 		
<p>Pre-employment checks</p> <p>Identity checks and qualification checks plus a DBS application, is carried out as soon as possible once a conditional offer has been made (usually within days and occasionally at the second interview). The applicant gives permission for referees to be contacted.</p> <p>The HR Officer will confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity using photo ID - where available • Name, address, date of birth • Details and evidence of a change of name • Validity of qualification certificates • Completion of the Health Declaration form • Right to work in the UK using Gov.Uk website • All references including current employer taken up, received and followed up by telephone (where possible) or email verification 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overseas or EEA check, where applicable. <p>The HR Officer will submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed DBS form <p><i>Under no circumstances should a member of the boarding team start work until ALL pre-employment checks, including having sight of the DBS, has been completed.</i></p>		
<p>Plan Induction Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight safeguarding responsibilities and process for reporting concerns about colleagues within the setting. • Ensure appropriate Safeguarding training is taken up by the new worker, if not already achieved. • Ensure appropriate PREVENT training is taken up by the new worker, if not already achieved. • All new members of staff will complete Health and Safety and Fire Evacuation training. 		