

2023
V3

Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in all areas of Debut is a vital measure towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our learners in education. Debut expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through robust and clear procedures and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they are appointed.

Policy Statement

Debut recognises the value of and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which reflects those of the learners we teach and with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within Debut is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, and effective and promotes equality of opportunity. Debut will uphold its obligations under law to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed. This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in our Equal Opportunities Policy. The practices described in this document are designed to ensure a fair and objective process.

Debut's safer recruitment policy statement sets out the organisation's commitment to:

- safeguarding and protecting all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices.
- identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.
- responding to concerns about the suitability of applicants during the recruitment process.
- responding to concerns about the suitability of employees and volunteers once they have begun their role.
- ensuring all new staff and volunteers participate in an induction which includes child protection.

Scope of Policy

All posts within Debut are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions, and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check. DBS certificates are renewed every three years.

The Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) has a published code of practice and explanatory guide. Debut is committed to ensuring that it meets the requirements of the DBS in relation to the processing, handling and security of disclosure information. Debut will:

- Implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with our learners, or is disqualified from working with them, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.

Debut will also:

- Keep and maintain a central record of recruitment and vetting checks.
- Ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. Debut will monitor the compliance with these measures.
- Require staff that are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment to notify Debut in writing of the offence and penalty.

Safer Recruitment Procedure Flow Chart (Appendix A)

The flow chart below provides the clear responsibilities and timeframes relating to safer recruitment measures.

1. **ADVERTISING** - The General Manager to send advertisement to marketing team. Marketing team to post to social media and other sources. Enquiry forms, CV's and Certificates to be sent to General Manager.
2. **CANDIDATE SELECTION** - General Manager to scrutinise, score and select suitable candidates from the enquiry forms and CV's received (based on job specification requirements). General Manager to perform an online search of short-listed candidates prior to inviting individuals for an interview. Send invite for First Stage Interview to successful, short-listed candidates. Send Application Form, to be returned within 48 hours to General Manager.
3. **INTERVIEWING STAGES FIRST STAGE INTERVIEW** - Interview with General Manager and relevant Department Manager. If necessary, book a Second Stage Interview. **SECOND STAGE INTERVIEW** Second Stage interview with General Manager and relevant Department Manager. Tutor applicants will require a micro-teach with Head of Teaching and Learning. Complete Staff Interview and Induction V2 Jotform Applicant to sign reference request declaration form for 2 x reference checks.
4. **REFERENCE CHECKS** - HR to contact the provided references to gain feedback. Once references are checked by HR & General Manager, HR to contact applicant to attend HR Induction.
5. **INDUCTION 1** - HR to provide contract to be signed Issue start date. HR to set a probation period. HR to send off DBS application, collect driving license details, collect passport/ID details to check identification and the right to work in UK. HR to collect car insurance details to validate salon visits/using car for business. HR to set ETF courses - must be completed in 14 days. Set FS initial assessment and diagnostic checks - must be complete in 14 days Set Safeguarding course must be completed in 14 days. Set Prevent course must be completed in 14 days Set EDI course must be completed in 14 days.

6. MENTORING AND SHADOWING - Head of Department to arrange a mentoring plan for new staff member. Head of Teaching and Learning to arrange a shadowing plan if new staff member is a tutor.
7. INDUCTION 2 - GENERAL MANAGER - Provide new staff member with the following resources, declarations must be collected and uploaded to personal file within 14 days: Staff Handbook Quality Manual, Safeguarding Manual, Keeping Children Safe Debut Policies.

Advertising

Debut ensure that all vacancies are advertised in a minimum of two different ways. This may be via website, posters on premises, WhatsApp groups, social media (Instagram, Facebook etc). Debut ensure they reach a wide audience, observe E&D and discrimination law guidance. Adverts will also be accompanied by Debut's commitment statement regarding safeguarding and KCSIE guidelines on online searches as follows.

Debut has a high commitment towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including adults at risk. Debut will conduct robust safer recruitment checks and respond to all child protection concerns promptly. Our safer recruitment due diligence will involve online searches on shortlisted applicants and will reject any candidates that may be unsuitable to work with children and young people. Applicants will be required to apply for an enhanced Disclosure and Barred check (as appropriate). If you are on a barred list, it is an offence to apply for a role that involves working with children.

Job Specification

This should be clear and can be part of the job vacancy advert or be provided to applicants on request. It should detail desirable qualifications and experience. It should also list other requirements needed to perform the role, e.g. experience, qualifications etc. It should also indicate the competencies and qualities that a successful candidate should be able to demonstrate. The job specification will provide clear expectations, mix of qualities and experience the candidate will need to demonstrate, encouraging appropriate candidates to apply and prevent unwanted applications. The job specification can be referred to during the interview process by relating questions to elements within it and asking the candidate about their experience and skills.

Application Form

Debut do not accept applications with just a CV as it does not go into detail. A fully completed application form must be forwarded as part of the application process. When application forms are sent out to prospective candidates, an electronic copy of Debut's Safeguarding Policy will accompany it so that individuals are aware of the company's commitment to this important area. Application forms are fully scrutinised to check the following elements:

- The application form has been fully and properly completed – incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies – any discrepancies must be noted and these can be taken up if the applicant moves forward to the interview process. This includes any history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post.
- Identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and National Insurance Number.

- N.B. To comply with the Equality Act 2010, recruiting bodies may wish to adopt a practice that the date of birth should not be included on the main application form, but added to a diversity monitoring form, which can be retained by HR/Personnel and not made available to those involved in the short-listing process;
- A statement of any academic and/ or vocational qualifications with details of awarding body and date of award;
- A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training and reasons for leaving employment;
- A statement of the skills and abilities, and competencies/experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post and how they meet the person specification;
- There should be an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- Information should be requested about any previous - including spent - convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or bind-overs.

Online Searches

Note that Keeping Children Safe in Education states:

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

References

- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.
- One reference should be from the current or most recent employer/line manager or HR (not from a colleague within the organisation);
- They should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.
- A copy of the job description and person specification should be included with all requests.
- References or testimonials provided by the candidate, or open references, i.e. To Whom It May Concern should not be accepted. Open references/testimonials may be forged or the result of a 'compromise agreement'.
- References should be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones. If possible, these should be obtained prior to interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. (This may be particularly helpful for posts where a safeguarding interview is planned). Note that the Equality Act 2010 places strict limitations on the making of enquiries about a person's health before an offer of employment is made.
- Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before the interview, once received it should be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the person's appointment is confirmed.
- References should seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion. Debut use a reference proforma which supports this.

Requests for references should ask:

- The referee's relationship with the candidate, e.g. did they have a working relationship and how long has the referee known the candidate.
- How s/he has demonstrated that s/he meets the person specification.
- Whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job.
- Whether the applicant has been the subject of any disciplinary sanctions and whether the application has had any allegations made against him/her or concerns raised, which relate either to the safety and welfare of, or the applicant's behaviour towards, children and young people. Details about the outcome of any such concern should be sought.
- Whether the referee is satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children/young people/Adults at Risk. If not, for details of the referee's concerns and the reason why the person might be unsuitable.

Requests should remind the referee that they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate, and that relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

Requests addressed to a candidate's current employer or a previous employer should also seek:

- Confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary and sickness record.
- Specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct.
- Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to which relate to the safety and welfare of children or to the applicant's behaviour towards children, young people or Adults at Risk and the outcome.
- Details of any allegations or concerns about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children, young people or Adults at Risk and the outcome of these concerns.

Referee contact information can be provided on the application form or via an electronic reference request form. Applicants must provide 2 separate referee names, their email and their telephone number.

- The prospective candidate will also complete and sign a reference consent form to agree that referees can be approached on their behalf and provide information on them, so that the request complies with data protection and privacy.
- References should not be accepted from relatives or friends.

Scrutinising References

On receipt of references:

- They should be checked to ensure all questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago or an allegation determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are less likely to cause concern than more serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time should give cause for concern.

Interviewing

All interviews (whether face-to-face, over the telephone or via zoom) will be conducted with minimum two staff members present (usually the Department Head & General Manager, using a standardised list of questions. Having a minimum of two staff means a panel conduct this important process. This also allows one person to observe and ask question whilst the other makes notes. The note taker can, of course, ask questions if they feel a specific answer by the candidate requires further clarification.

The members of the interview panel should:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment.
- Meet before the interview to agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and to prepare a list of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post.
- Identify any issues they wish to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application form and in the references.
- Notes of the applicant's interview answers should be collated by chair of the panel and stored (by HR).
- At least one of the panel should have completed Safer Recruitment training.

Induction

All new staff will have one or more inductions on commencement to provide them with key aspects on the business structure, health & safety matters including fire drills, protocols and processes in place, roles and responsibilities, orientation of building, performance standards, personal development, salary, working hours, holiday entitlement, confidentiality, safeguarding, CPD, E&D etc. An induction form process is followed to ensure all steps are completed and signed off by specific staff involved in this procedure. Part of the induction process also includes signposting to a staff file on a portal to complete an online induction, reading policies and the handbook and signing a declaration to confirm it has been completed. New staff are also assigned a mentor to support them during the first few months. Please refer to Debut's flow chart for clarification on the induction process and elements included.

Data Protection

Debut are responsible in all aspects of data protection and understand candidates are trusting them with their information when they apply for jobs, complete forms and provide third party details for references. All information is kept safe and secure. Any unsuccessful candidate's information is shredded or deleted and not held on file.

Responsibility and Authority

The organisation has ultimate responsibility for learner protection and will ensure that the arrangements for safer recruitment are effective, robust and reviewed on a regular basis. As such three senior members of staff have been designated as Safer Recruitment Personnel.

The designated personnel overseeing safer recruitment are:

Charlotte McHiggins
Head of Teaching, Learning & Assessment/Centre Manager Wickford
01268 560552
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Linda Edwards
General Manager & Designated Safeguarding Lead
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Policy Revision

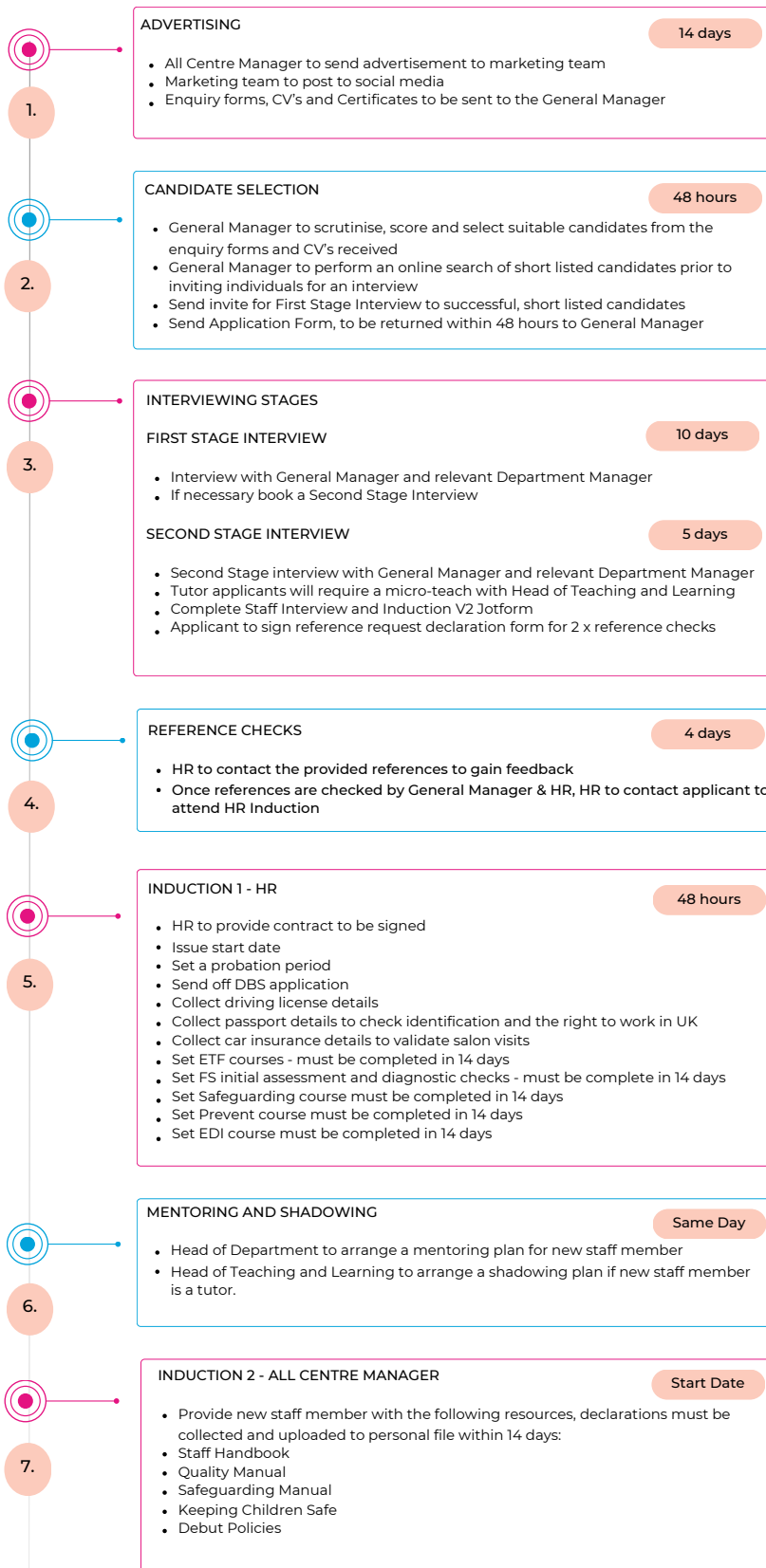
Please refer to Debut's linked policies below for additional information regarding Safer Recruiting Standards:

Code of Conduct – Staff Policy
Communications Policy
Counselling Policy
Confidential & Disclosure Policy
Data Protection & Privacy Policy
Equal Opportunities & Inclusion Policy
Freedom of Information Policy
Induction Procedure – Staff Policy
Learner Safeguarding & Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
Mentoring – Staff Policy
Meetings Policy
Prevent Duty Policy
Review & Appraisal – Staff Policy
Staff CPD/Personal Development Training Policy
Teaching & Learning Policy
Staff Confidentiality Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy

Policy Revision

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SAFER RECRUITMENT FLOW CHART



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General Manager



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