

PACE Northwest – Safer Recruitment Policy

Approved by: Board of Directors

Policy owner: HR & Compliance Manager

Effective date: 29 August 2025

Next review due: Annually (or sooner if law/guidance changes)

1. Purpose

PACE Northwest is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our safer recruitment procedures ensure that all staff, contractors and volunteers are suitable to work in a training environment and do not present a risk to learners.

This policy ensures compliance with UK legislation and statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)*.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, governors/directors, agency staff, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and volunteers engaged by PACE Northwest.
- All recruitment and selection activity, including apprenticeships, fixed-term, casual, and freelance appointments.

3. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy is underpinned by:

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- **Education Act 2002** (safeguarding duty)
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

- **Equality Act 2010** (fair, non-discriminatory recruitment)
- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975)**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR**
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** (Prevent duty)
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework

4. Policy statement

PACE Northwest will:

- Ensure that safeguarding is embedded in every stage of the recruitment process.
- Carry out rigorous pre-employment checks to verify identity, qualifications, experience and suitability.
- Use fair, transparent and non-discriminatory recruitment processes.
- Train all staff involved in recruitment in safer recruitment principles.
- Maintain accurate records to demonstrate compliance.

5. Recruitment procedures

5.1 Advertising and application

- All job adverts will state our safeguarding commitment and requirement for DBS checks.
- Applicants must complete a full application form (CVs alone are not accepted).
- Gaps in employment or education history must be explained and verified.

5.2 Shortlisting

- Applications assessed against role criteria.
- At least two trained panel members must participate in shortlisting.
- Any anomalies or safeguarding concerns are flagged for interview.

5.3 Interviews

- At least one panel member must have completed **Safer Recruitment Training**.
- Interviews explore: motivation to work with learners; values and attitudes towards safeguarding; ability to support inclusion and EDI.
- Identity and qualification documents verified at interview.

5.4 Pre-employment checks (no appointment confirmed until all completed)

- **Enhanced DBS with barred-list check** for all regulated activity roles.
- **Right to work in the UK** (original documentation required).
- **Identity verification** (photo ID, proof of address).
- **Two references** from recent employers/education providers, verified by phone/email.
- **Employment history** checked and explained.
- **Qualifications** verified with awarding body where relevant.
- **Overseas checks** where applicant has lived/worked outside the UK for 3+ months in the last 5 years.
- **Medical fitness declaration** (to ensure capacity to perform the role).
- **Prohibition from teaching / Section 128 checks** where applicable.

5.5 Conditional offer

- Offers of employment are conditional upon satisfactory completion of the above checks.
- Any unsatisfactory or concerning result will be risk assessed by the DSL, HR and senior leadership.

5.6 Induction

- All new staff must complete induction, including safeguarding and Prevent training, code of conduct, health & safety and confidentiality.

6. Agency staff, contractors and volunteers

- Agencies must provide written confirmation that appropriate checks have been carried out, including an Enhanced DBS.
- Contractors working regularly or in sensitive areas must be DBS checked.
- Volunteers undergo risk assessment; those engaged in regulated activity require Enhanced DBS clearance.

7. Single Central Record (SCR)

PACE Northwest maintains a **Single Central Record** of pre-employment checks for all staff, governors, agency staff and others engaged in regulated activity. This is monitored by the HR Manager and reviewed regularly by the DSL and Board.

8. Training

- At least one member of any recruitment panel must hold up-to-date Safer Recruitment Training.
- All staff receive safeguarding training at induction and annually thereafter.

9. Confidentiality and data protection

- Applicant information is handled in line with **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.
- Only staff involved in recruitment will access candidate information.
- Data will be retained only as long as necessary.

10. Monitoring and review

- Recruitment activity monitored by HR and reported to the Board annually.
- Trends (e.g., equal opportunities data, recruitment outcomes) analysed to ensure fairness.
- Policy reviewed annually or after significant legislative change.

11. Concerns and whistleblowing

- Any safeguarding concerns about staff must be reported immediately to the DSL or HR Manager at **becs@pace-com.org**.
- Concerns about the recruitment process can also be raised confidentially via the Whistleblowing Policy.

12. Related policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Safeguarding/Recruitment contact: becs@pace-com.org

Version control: v1.0 (29 Aug 2025)