

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

Portland Training is committed to safer recruitment and to safeguarding learners, including vulnerable adults. This policy sets out the organisation's approach to the recruitment, selection and vetting of all staff, contractors and volunteers to ensure that individuals appointed are suitable to work in an education and training environment.

The majority of activity at Portland Training involves learners aged 19 and over and is non-regulated activity. However, Portland Training recognises that learners may be vulnerable due to a range of factors and that safer recruitment remains a key part of its safeguarding arrangements.

This policy reflects relevant employment legislation, safeguarding responsibilities and recognised best practice, and supports the expectations of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework that safeguarding arrangements are effective and embedded in organisational practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the recruitment of all:

- Teaching and assessing staff
- Support and operational staff
- Contractors and volunteers

All recruitment decisions are made with safeguarding and learner welfare as a priority.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Decisions concerning the need to recruit staff are delegated to the Managing Director in consultation with the Senior Management Team (SMT). Recruitment decisions will take account of organisational need, financial circumstances and safeguarding considerations.

Remuneration for posts will be determined in accordance with the organisation's Pay Policy.

At least one member of any recruitment panel will have completed recognised safer recruitment training.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Portland Training is committed to equality of opportunity and will not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Recruitment processes are designed to be fair, transparent and inclusive. Job advertisements will use inclusive language and be provided in accessible formats where required.

5. Advertising Vacancies

5.1 Advertising Strategy

Vacancies may be advertised nationally, locally or internally depending on the nature of the role and organisational need.

Internal advertising may be used for acting or temporary responsibilities or where appropriate to organisational circumstances.

5.2 Content of Advertisements

All advertisements will include:

- The key duties and responsibilities of the role
- Whether the post is permanent or fixed-term
- The closing date for applications

Advertisements will include the following statement:

“Portland Training is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners. All appointments are subject to safer recruitment checks, including DBS, references, and may be subject to an online search, in line with statutory guidance and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions apply). We value equality, diversity, and inclusion, and expect all staff to share this commitment.”

6. Applications

Applicants are required to complete an application form and submit a curriculum vitae (CV). Application forms are used to ensure that employment history is fully recorded and that gaps in employment can be explored.

7. Selection Process

7.1 Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be carried out against agreed essential and desirable criteria for the role. Decisions will be recorded to ensure transparency and consistency.

7.2 Interviews

Candidates invited to interview will be asked to bring:

- Proof of identity (e.g. passport or driving licence)

- Proof of address
- Evidence of relevant qualifications where required
- Proof of right to work in the UK

Interviews will explore:

- Skills and experience relevant to the role
- Employment history, including any gaps
- Attitudes towards safeguarding and professional conduct

Core questions will be consistent for all candidates.

8. Pre-Employment Checks

8.1 DBS Checks

Most roles at Portland Training fall within **non-regulated activity**. DBS checks are undertaken where appropriate to the role and level of contact with learners.

- Basic or Enhanced DBS checks are carried out based on a role-specific risk assessment
- Barred list checks are only undertaken where a role meets the legal definition of regulated activity
- DBS certificate information is recorded; copies are not retained

8.2 References

A minimum of two references will be obtained, one of which should be the most recent employer where possible. References will be sought directly and will specifically address the individual's suitability to work with learners.

8.3 Right to Work

All successful candidates must provide evidence of their right to work in the UK. Overseas candidates must provide a valid work permit where applicable.

8.4 Online Searches

Portland Training may carry out proportionate online searches as part of the recruitment process. Any information identified will be assessed for relevance to the role, considered in line with safeguarding expectations and recorded where appropriate.

9. Conditional Offers and Appointment

All offers of employment are conditional upon the satisfactory completion of required pre-employment checks.

Employment can commence whilst checks are been completed and recorded but delivery and learner facing staff will not be able to commence their role until all checks are completed and would therefore continue the induction and onboarding process.

Portland Training reserves the right to withdraw an offer or terminate employment where:

- Information has been withheld or falsified
- DBS disclosures raise concerns that were not declared
- Safeguarding risks are identified

10. Single Central Record

Portland Training maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) which records:

- Identity checks
- Right to work checks
- DBS information
- Qualifications where required
- References

The SCR is reviewed regularly to ensure accuracy and completeness.

11. Criminal Convictions

Portland Training adheres to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants are required to disclose unspent convictions where relevant. All disclosures are treated confidentially and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Failure to disclose relevant information may result in withdrawal of an offer or dismissal.

12. Record Retention

Recruitment records, including interview notes, references and pre-employment checks, are retained in line with data protection requirements.

- Interview records are retained for six months
- DBS certificate information is recorded but copies are not retained

13. Related Policies

Safeguarding and Prevent Policy