

Central England Quakers

Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Staff Policy and Procedures

1. Scope

This policy and these procedures apply to the appointment of all paid staff and voluntary workers, for example, voluntary wardens. See Definitions, below.

2. Policy

2.1. Equal Opportunities

Central England Area Quaker Meeting (CEAQM) aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee or volunteer is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race; colour; creed*; nationality; ethnic or national origin; religious belief*; sex; marital status; part time working; sexual orientation; disability or age.

*There is an exception where religious belief or affiliation is a requirement for the post.

All information relating to recruitment will be held in line with statutory retention periods and in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).

2.2. Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults

CEAQM is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

CEAQM will obtain criminal record checks for anyone whose work requires regular contact with children and young people, and for those who work with adults in situations which might make them (the adults) vulnerable.

The government agency set up to administer these checks is the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau or CRB).

An Enhanced Disclosure should be applied for where the appointment involves a substantial degree of contact with children including unsupervised activities such as teaching, supervising, training or providing advice/guidance on well-being.

An Enhanced Disclosure may also be needed for those working with adults in situations that include providing health care, personal care (such as washing, dressing, toileting, eating and drinking), social work or community care, and providing assistance to someone because of their age, illness or disability.

If you are uncertain about whether to apply for a check, consult your Safeguarding Verifier

(usually, the Clerk of the Meeting or Branch) or one of the Area Meeting's Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinators. He or she can consult the CCPAS Disclosure Service (CEAQM is a member).

An application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (made via CCPAS) can only be made once the applicant is successful in obtaining the post, but of course s/he cannot start work until a satisfactory check is received.

2.3. References and qualifications

Applicants for employment should be asked to provide the names of two appropriate referees, and these will be taken up once the candidate has been given a provisional job offer. Where qualifications are a requirement for the post, these will also be checked, and candidates should be asked to bring them to interview.

2.4. Permission to work in the UK

We are obliged to check that all paid staff have permission to work in the UK.

3. Procedures for paid employees and voluntary workers

(Note: a similar process may be followed for the appointment of volunteers [see definitions] but care must be taken to ensure that at all stages it is clear that the post is voluntary. No contract can be issued, although an agreement may be produced and signed.)

3.1. Recruitment

3.1.1. The Recruitment Panel

The panel must consist of at least two and preferably three people, and should include the line manager for the post. One member of the panel will take lead responsibility for the process (referred to as the Chair).

All those on the panel will have the right to see every application form and ideally the same panel members will shortlist, interview and make the final appointment decision.

Panel members are to treat any information about candidates and about recruitment processes as confidential and not to be disclosed to other candidates or third parties.

3.1.2. The Job Description and Person Specification

The panel will prepare a **job description**, or review the existing job description. There is a template available for preparing job descriptions.

The **Person Specification** sets out the experience, skills, abilities and qualifications required by the applicant to fulfil the duties of the job as outlined on the job description. The person specification will be used to draw up the criteria against which applicants will be assessed at the short listing and interviewing stages. There is a template available for preparing a person specification.

Criteria contained in a Person Specification should be measurable. They must be based on two types of criteria:

- Essential Criteria – essential requirements for the adequate performance of the job. No candidate should be shortlisted if s/he does not meet the essential criteria. It is therefore critical that you ensure that “essential criteria” really are essential, especially in relation to educational qualifications.
- Desirable Criteria – desirable requirements which are not essential, but which could enhance effective work performance. These are also used for secondary shortlisting when appropriate e.g. to reduce the number of shortlisted candidates.

The Person Specification must indicate the method for assessing requirements:

T - Test

A - Application Form

I - Interview

These criteria must be reviewed each time a job becomes vacant.

3.1.3. Timetable

The Panel will agree a timetable for advertising, a closing date for applications, and dates for shortlisting and interviews.

3.1.4. Advertising Vacancies

Where advertisements are placed will depend on the nature of the post – the level of responsibility entailed and whether it is temporary, or part-time, or likely to attract local people only. The post may be advertised in The Friend, via local churches, through the Job Centre, on the internet and/or in the local or national press, as appropriate.

Advertisements should include a brief job description, salary, and hours along with where to apply, the closing date and a statement that CEQ takes safeguarding seriously and whether a DBS check will be required.

3.1.5. Information for Applicants

All applicants must be given

- An Application Form (applications via CVs are possible, but short-listing is easier if all applications are on an application form)
- The Job Description and Person Specification
- Information about CEAQM and the local meeting or branch that is appropriate to the post (leaflet, Annual report, map, etc.)
- Information about disclosure if required.

3.2. Selection

3.2.1. Shortlisting

The Chair will check all of the applications against the essential requirements of the post as in the Person Specification. Only those that meet the essential criteria will go ahead to interview. However, a copy of all of the applications submitted will be available for the Panel to check.

The Panel will meet to prepare a short-list from the applications received.

- Short-listing will be done by using the person specification's essential criteria to assess each candidate. Candidates who do not meet essential criteria will be eliminated.
- The desirable criteria will be applied if necessary to reduce the number of shortlisted candidates. It is advisable to shortlist no more than 5 or 6 candidates.
- Outcomes of short-listing must be recorded for all candidates.

At this meeting, the Panel will agree the questions to be asked of the candidates, and the tests or activities that may be used for assessment (see 3.2.3). Any questions arising from the details supplied on an application form (e.g. gaps in employment history or inconsistencies in the references) should be identified as extra questions for that specific candidate.

The panel must not ask questions about current and future personal and family circumstances. Candidates must not be asked questions which contravene the Equalities Act 2010. Guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

3.2.2. Prior to interview

The Chair will notify the shortlisted and unsuccessful candidates. Those invited for interview will be sent the date and time and location of the interview.

The shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring any evidence of qualifications required and to prepare for any presentation or test that will be used in the interview. Candidates will also be required to show verification of identification and evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. They should be asked whether they require any specific equipment or special arrangements. If required, they will be asked to disclose any details of criminal records.

3.2.3. The Selection Process

Interviews

Candidates' eligibility to work in the UK will be checked, along with the candidates' original certificates/qualifications, by the panel on the day of the interviews.

If application forms have been received by email, they may lack a signature. The Chair should ensure that these application forms are signed at the time of interview.

The interview panel should normally consist of the same members who shortlisted.

The venue of the interview should be accessible to people with disabilities.

Tests

Candidates will be required to undergo a test or selection activity related to the job available. This could include undertaking a task, joining in a task with existing staff members, writing something appropriate, or a group selection activity.

3.2.4. After the Selection Process

The same interview panel will be required to assess the suitability of each candidate based on the job description and being mindful of safeguarding guidelines.

The Panel will collate the comments of the members to determine the appointee and where possible a reserve candidate. The reasons for rejection of unsuccessful applicants must be clearly recorded and held for six months. The reason for appointment should also be recorded and held.

All candidates must be informed as promptly as possible, whether or not they have been successful.

References will be taken up at this stage¹.

Offers of appointment will be subject to the receipt of at least two satisfactory references and of a satisfactory DBS check, where required, or the job offer may be withdrawn.

In the event of a less than satisfactory reference, a candidate may be called in for discussion or a second interview.

The Chair will be responsible for providing verbal feedback to unsuccessful applicants if requested. Reasons for rejection will be clearly recorded and held for six months. Successful candidates will not receive feedback.

Unsuccessful applicants who are dissatisfied may appeal to the Clerk to CEAQM's Trustees within five working days of receiving the written outcome. The appeal should be in writing outlining the grounds for the appeal. The Clerk will convene a panel of three people not previously involved. This will usually include at least two Trustees. The panel will meet within five working days of receiving the appeal and the decision will be final.

All information will be held in line with the Data Protection Act and the [CEAQM's Data Protection Policy](#).

3.3. Appointment

3.3.1. Letter of appointment

The letter of appointment will state that the appointment is conditional on the receipt of satisfactory references and, where appropriate, a satisfactory DBS check.

All permanent appointments should be made on the basis of a six months probationary period. For fixed or short-term appointments a shorter probationary period may be given.

¹ Young people and people who have not been in employment for some time may find it difficult to identify referees, and this should be taken into account.

New employees should be provided with a **Contract of Employment** and an employee handbook, and advised about their eligibility to join the **Pension Scheme** and a union.

3.3.2. Induction

The line manager should arrange induction for the new employee.

4. **Employing People with Criminal Convictions Policy Statement**

CEAQM aims to promote equality of opportunity for all applicants who have the right mix of talent, skills, and potential to make a contribution to our organisation.

As part of this commitment, CEAQM welcomes applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds, and we will consider applications for employment and promotion opportunities from candidates who have a criminal conviction.

All applicants will be assessed in relation to the selection criteria identified on the Person Specification for the post. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from employment.

A candidate's criminal record will only be taken into account, for recruitment purposes if this is appropriate, having regard to the nature of the position, and the circumstances and background of the offences. The following information will be taken into account: the nature of the post, the relevance to the post, seriousness of the offence, length of time since it occurred, whether there is a pattern of offending behaviour, and the age of applicant when the offence was committed, and the circumstances and any explanations offered.

Candidates who declare a criminal conviction will be given an opportunity, if selected for interview, to discuss the matter further.

Any matters revealed in Disclosure information will be discussed with a candidate, before a final decision is reached. However, the CEAQM reserves the right to make a decision whether to withdraw the offer of employment, based on the information available.

Candidates will be advised to use the Disclosure and Barring Service's Appeals Procedure if they believe the information in a Disclosure is incorrect.

All information obtained through the Disclosure Scheme will be treated confidentially and will only be revealed to those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

5. **Adjustments to Working Conditions for Disabled Workers**

CEAQM must ensure that where necessary, reasonable adjustments are made for employees with disabilities. CEAQM will support employees' needs through 'Access to Work' and will make adjustments as appropriate. The adequacy of adjustments shall be reviewed on initial employment, in conjunction with the annual appraisal process and where an employee notifies CEAQM of any new disability or of any change to an existing disability that may affect the adequacy of the

adjustments made. This may be done through consultation with Disability Employment Adviser at Jobcentre Plus and the employee.

6. Definitions

Employee: an employee is here defined as someone paid a wage or salary for work that they undertake. It excludes people who undertake work on a self-employed basis or contractors taken on to undertake a specific task (e.g. builders, plumbers, etc.).

Voluntary Worker: Voluntary workers are not paid a wage, because of an exemption under the National Minimum Wage 1998 (section 44). The exemption is designed to allow people who genuinely wish to work for a charity or voluntary organisation without profit to do so without fear of qualifying for the national minimum wage.

Voluntary workers are entitled to core employment rights including the right to:

- A minimum period of paid holiday (annual leave).
- Minimum length of rest breaks.
- Not work more than 48 hours on average per week or to opt out of this right if they choose.
- Protection against unlawful discrimination.
- Protection for 'whistleblowing' (reporting wrongdoing in the workplace)

The contract you have agreed with your voluntary worker may specify additional rights, in which case these will also apply to your particular arrangement.

Please note that the law does not allow for any middle ground between a 'voluntary worker' who does not receive a wage and an employee who must receive a wage at minimum wage levels or above. If you pay any wage, then legally it must be at least at National Minimum Wage levels, but CEAQM expects that all employees will be paid at or above the Living Wage set by the Living Wage Foundation (www.livingwage.org.uk/).

Volunteer: a volunteer undertakes work on a voluntary basis because they want to – there is no contract obliging them to do so. He or she does not have a contract of employment (but may have a volunteer agreement) and is not paid for the work they want to do. For the purposes of this policy, "volunteer" refers to people appointed in line with CEAQM's Volunteer Policy who may be Members or Attenders, as well as members of the general public. Some wardens may be volunteers.

Members and Attenders undertaking tasks for the Area or Local Meeting as part of their Quaker service, usually having been appointed through the Quaker Nominations procedure, are not covered by this policy and procedures.

7. Related documents

Volunteer Policy

Job description template

Person specification template

Application form

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Data Protection Policy

Contract of Employment (Terms and Conditions of Employment)

Pension Scheme

Recruitment, selection and appointment of staff	Prepared by Gill Coffin
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