

# **University Jewish Chaplaincy Safer Recruitment Policy**

## 1. Introduction

University Jewish Chaplaincy are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all service users. We will carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility within the organisation, in line with Safer Recruitment principles. This means that we will:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up, positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others.
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance and standards, responding positively to changing understandings of good safer recruitment practice.
- Produce and disseminate practical guidance on safer recruitment, ensuring that such practice guidance is compatible, and keep it updated.
- Always seek advice from human resources personnel to achieve best possible practice.
- Ensure management staff are trained on safer recruitment practice guidance.
- Introduce systems for monitoring adherence to the University Jewish Chaplaincy's safer recruitment practice guidance and review them regularly.

## 2. The Recruitment Process

Finding and recruiting the right people to work with our service users is a responsibility that UJC take seriously.

Our Safer Recruitment process ensures University Jewish Chaplaincy recruits / appoints safely, the most appropriate people as employees or volunteers. It is a criminal offence for an individual who is barred from working with vulnerable groups to apply for a regulated activity role and it is a criminal offence for an organisation to appoint a barred person to a regulated activity role.

Responsibility for the recruitment of paid posts, on university campuses, is with the CEO, supported by the UJC Rabbinic Head. Responsibility can be delegated but it is important that the person to whom it is delegated is capable, competent and trained in safer recruitment and is also able to keep personal matters confidential.

*Within our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and we expect all staff to share this commitment. Any post which is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; pre-employment checks will be carried out, references will be sought and successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and other relevant checks with statutory bodies.*

We comply with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) code of practice and have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, both of which are available on request.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the University Jewish Chaplaincy Safeguarding Policy. The safeguarding policy must be used in the recruitment process to ensure the applicant is aware of the safeguarding measures employed by University Jewish Chaplaincy.

Safer Recruitment Procedure:

- a) **Job Description / Person Specification:** There is a clear job description which sets out what tasks the applicant will do and what skills are required. The job description or job role will also say whether it is eligible for and requires a criminal records check, and if so the level of the check including overseas

checks. If it is a paid role this must be a formal job description / person specification. If it is a voluntary role, a simple job role may be used. In addition, there will also be a person specification for each role, detailing the expectation of a candidate's suitability for the role, including the responsibility of members of staff to safeguarding and promote the welfare of service users.

- b) **Criteria for selection:** Prior to the recruitment process commencing, the interviewers will agree the shortlisting criteria, using the person specification. Secondly, pre-agree the interview questions based on the post to be used to conduct the interview and the template to be used to capture the interview responses.
- c) **Advertising:** The posts will be advertised, and adverts will clearly state the position and signpost interested parties to a JD which will clearly outline; required skills, knowledge, values and attitudes, expectation qualifications and experience. The job advert will also highlight:

- A link to access the safeguarding policy via the website.
- A statement of commitment to safeguard and promoting welfare of students.
- The need for successful applicant to undertake relevant checks.
- The need to disclose relevant criminal history should applicants be successfully shortlisted.

- d) **Applications:** All candidates will be expected to fully complete a University Jewish Chaplaincy application form, providing an explanation for any gaps in their employment history. The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013 & 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account is clarified and all candidates will be invited to review the status of any prior cautions, convictions or reprimands, and informed should they be successfully shortlisted – they will be required to self-disclose at interview. Further information can be found: <http://hub.unlock.org.uk/contact/>

- e) **Shortlisting:** Candidates will be shortlisted according to the criteria set out in the person specification on review of the application form.

f) **Pre-interview:**

Candidates who are successfully shortlisted will be informed of the documents they will need to provide as evidence at interview. Additionally, they will be sent a 'self-declaration' form. This form will enable candidates to share any information regarding un-spent criminal convictions, reprimands, warnings or cautions at the point of interview. Candidates will be asked to bring the self-disclosure to interview and will provide it to the interviewer.

Online searches on candidates by using search engines such as Google, will be undertaken to explore a brief overview of any potential criminal activity within the public domain.

g) **Interviews:**

- Interviews will be undertaken by at least two people, at least 1 of whom must have completed Safer Recruitment training. The interviewers will check the candidate's suitability by ensuring they:
- Have seen the original qualification certificates and verified the copy.

- Have checked right to work, copied and validated identity documents, including birth certificate.
- Have probed candidate's values and attitudes to working with and supporting students.
- Checked any gaps/ inconsistencies/ clarifications highlighted on the application form.
- Have ensured the self-declaration form has been provided and fully completed.

**h) Decision to appoint:**

Successful candidates will be sent an employment offer letter clearly stating that the position is subject to all pre-appointment checks being completed, including DBS check (or PVG Scheme in Scotland) and satisfactory references.

**i) References:**

Candidates must provide five years of their most recent employment/education references. If this period is not met within their two most recent references, further references may be sought to cover this time period.

- The first reference must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer.
- The second reference must be from the next consecutive most recent employer.
- It is not advised to accept references from a personal email, however if the only option is a reference in this way then additional verification must be sought.
- References must confirm the position held by the candidate and the dates within which they were employed. To be acceptable, references should also indicate whether the candidate was subject to any disciplinary action and whether there are any known reasons why the candidate should not work with children / vulnerable adults.
- Candidates will be asked to provide evidence for any gaps in employment/education.
- All references must be received before commencement of employment.
- Ask referees specifically about an individual's suitability to work with vulnerable people. If anything is unclear in the reference, contact the referee to clarify the position.

**j) Criminal record checks**

**DBS checks (or PVG Scheme in Scotland):**

Candidates who are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure, and those in regulated activity will be subject to an Enhanced disclosure. In relation to the DBS process, the following will be implemented:

- Update service: If a candidate produces a DBS check on the update service, the previous role listed, and the level of check must be validated as appropriate for the role they are applying for. The details of the DBS check must be recorded, the update service checked, and the date of the check and outcome recorded in the staff's file
- All candidates who are not on the update service will complete an Enhanced Disclosure and/or Barring Service check as appropriate.
- All new staff are advised to join and pay for the update service if they are not already subscribed. This is an approximate cost of £13 per year and is the responsibility of the employee. This must be completed within 19 days of their DBS application.
- If a candidate has never lived in the UK, once they have all relevant documentation a DBS will be completed.

**PVG Scheme (The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme):**

Candidates in Scotland should join the equivalent level of the PVG scheme instead of a DBS check. Other checks and information declared on self-disclosure or PVG scheme should be treated in the same way as DBS checks.

**Overseas DBS:**

- Overseas checks must be sought if a candidate has lived outside of the UK for 6 months or more over a 5-year period, or 12 months or more over a 10-year period. For further information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>
- If a candidate is coming from overseas who, either has never lived in the UK the person making the appointment and overseas check information is not available from the embassy/high commission etc. or if there are concerns about the reliability of the information provided, the person(s) making the appointment should take extra care when taking up references and checking any previous employment record. In such cases, additional references should be sought and at least one reference from a previous employer should be contacted by telephone as well as by letter. Ensure all Home Office checks have been carried out.

**Information declared on self-disclosure / DBS certificate:**

When the original DBS or overseas check is seen and there is information disclosed within it, the following steps must be taken:

The Disclosure DBS Risk Assessment form must be completed to establish if the candidate is suitable.

**k) Proof of Right to Work**

Proof of right to work in the UK needs to be checked for all employees and volunteers. The two documents which should be checked are:

- Passport
- Visa

UK, EEA and EU citizens have a right to work in the UK. All other countries will require an appropriate visa. If the individual does not have the right to work in the UK then they cannot be employed.

**l) Commencement of employment:**

The decision to appoint to voluntary or paid work must be made only by the CEO who has responsibility for appointments. The start date or appointment will not be confirmed until the relevant criminal record check is received and examined.

Successful candidates will be required to undertake the University Jewish Chaplaincy induction training, which guides them through the company's policies and procedures, and the regular updates provided.

All new staff will be subject to a 6-month probation period with regular reviews. Probation periods may be extended if necessary, and completion of probationary period will be confirmed in writing.

**m) On-going culture of vigilance**

Staff files, the Single Central Staff Record and DBS's are kept up to date for all staff and volunteers:

- All staff will be expected to participate and complete the ongoing suitability checks provided.
- It is the individual's responsibility to inform University Jewish Chaplaincy if there are any changes to their circumstances in between reviews.

- All DBS checks are subject to a regular review (at least every 3 years) and are kept current. Staff who are subscribed to the DBS update service will be reviewed via the DBS updates website. The proof of ongoing suitability will be stored in the relevant staff file.

Supervision and regular review: All paid posts will be subject to management, supervision and appraisal.

n) **Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service**

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) places a duty on organisations where people work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity to make a referral to the DBS in certain circumstances to protect vulnerable people from harm. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that referrals to the DBS are made when appropriate including when an individual has been dismissed or removed from working / volunteering with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity (or would or may have removed such a person if the person had not left or resigned etc.) because the person has:

- a) Been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence (e.g. a serious sexual or violent offence); or
- b) Engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults, (i.e. an action or inaction (neglect) that has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm as defined under the SVGA); or
- c) Satisfied the harm test in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults, (i.e. there has been no relevant conduct (i.e. no action or inaction) but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult still exists as defined under the SVGA).

Approved by Board of Trustees – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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