

Safe recruitment and selection procedures

Sport relies on thousands of well-motivated staff and volunteers without whom most clubs, activities and events would not exist. Safe recruitment and selection procedures help to ensure a safe workforce by deterring and screening out unsuitable individuals.

This briefing outlines the key steps in a safe recruitment process

Effective recruitment and selection procedures benefit everyone:

- Staff and volunteers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Parents/carers are assured that measures are taken to recruit only suitable people to work with children
- Organisations reduce the risk to their reputation.

The same procedures should be adopted whether staff is paid or unpaid, full or part-time.

Key safe recruitment steps for each post:

Job Role/Job Description

- Describes the full range of tasks, duties and responsibilities of the role and helps everyone to understand the extent and nature of the role

Person Specification

- Describes the type of skills, experience and attributes required for this role (e.g. specific experience, sports or other qualifications, and other requirements, such effective communication with children).

Job/Role Advert

- Involves advertising or promoting paid jobs or volunteer roles to attract the widest response and demonstrate an open recruitment process. This could be through: the club or sport's newsletters or notice boards (including online); in local papers; local newsagents; church bulletins; etc. Indicate that the post involves working with children, and (if appropriate) that a criminal records check¹ will be undertaken.

Application Form

- Require all applicants to complete an application form. Many sports governing bodies (NGBs), County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) and Local Authorities (LAs) have developed standard application forms that include all relevant questions – affiliated clubs or organisations should use these. A copy of this form should be retained by the local club/organisation to inform a subsequent interview/meeting with the candidate and identify any gaps in the employment/volunteering history.
- For eligible posts this form should include (or link to) a section allowing the individual to self-declare relevant convictions or information and give their consent for a criminal records check to be undertaken. Further information, CPSU has developed Self-declaration Template for sport. The form should state that failure to disclose information may result in their exclusion from the club, organisation or event. It should capture relevant information about the person's experience, qualifications and employment history (paid and voluntary).

1 A criminal records check may be undertaken using any of the following organisations – Disclosure and Barring Scheme - DBS (formally CRB) (England & Wales), AccessNI (Northern Ireland), Disclosure Scotland (Scotland) or Garda Central Vetting Unit (Republic of Ireland). Note that the Garda Central Vetting Unit will only disclose conviction information. Guidance about which roles or posts are eligible for a criminal records check can be found at the relevant organisation's website.



Written References

- Obtain at least two written references, preferably including their last employer (paid role) or deployer (voluntary role). Include someone who can comment on the applicant's previous work with children. Ideally, references should be sought on all short-listed candidates and obtained before interview. Ideally referees should be contacted directly e.g. by phone. Information about reference questions can be found on CPSU website and Safe Network website.
- Guidance should clarify where responsibility for this task lies (e.g. at local/club level or at NGB/organisational level).
- Take care to ensure that information from all sources is provided to those with responsibility for making a decision on the individual's suitability for the role.

Risk Assess Information

- Establish a case management group or other system to risk assess information returned from any of the above sources – do not employ or deploy the individual until this is complete. Risk assessments of any concerning information arising during the recruitment process should be undertaken by an appropriately experienced/trained individual, for example chaired by the person with lead safeguarding responsibilities. Visit the CPSU website for further information about Risk Assessment training.

Interview

- Ensure staff or volunteers undertake an interview or have a meeting with at least two representatives of the organisation².
- Check out any gaps in the application form and ensure the applicant has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required to adhere to the safeguarding policy.
- You may want to explore the applicant's attitude to power, authority and discipline, and ask for a response to a problem faced in your club/organisation to assess their commitment to promoting good practice and their ability to communicate with children and young people

Identity and Qualification Checks

- Take steps to confirm the candidate's identity (e.g. request photographic identification), qualifications, experience and right to work in the UK. Clarify any apparent gaps in employment.

Criminal Records Checks

- The organisation should have and follow clear guidelines to establish which roles are eligible for criminal records checks, and ensure that applicants for eligible posts are required to comply. Information about previous criminal convictions or other concerns should be risk assessed as above. Further information visit the DBS website, alternatively CPSU have developed DBS FAQs.

Probationary/Trial Period

- Set a probationary/trial period (usually 6 months) and review the post holder's performance against the job description after this time.
- Ensure all appointments are made by the Executive Committee and not by any individual member/s of the organisation/club.

Induction

- Ensure that all new recruits go through an induction process as soon as possible (this introduces them to all important aspects of their new environment) so that they are familiar with the club/organisation or event's safeguarding policies and procedures and the responsibilities of the post.



SPÓRT
ÉIREANN
EITIC

SPORT
IRELAND
ETHICS

- Require new recruits to be familiar with and sign up to the club/organisation's constitution and rules and any guidelines, codes of conduct, regulations and policies of that club, sport or event.
- Require all new recruits to register as a member of the club if not already a member.
- Establish what training would be useful/required for the new recruit, based on their role and experience. Ensure that all new recruits have either recently undertaken adequate safeguarding training (if appropriate in line with any relevant NGB requirements) or now do so as soon as possible and no later than six months after taking up their post.