

Oxford Professional Education

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Staffing Policy (Incorporating Safer Recruitment)

The most important resource of the Oxford Professional Education (OxPE) is its staff and consultants, from trainers to administrators and all those who contribute in other ways, either directly or indirectly, to the objectives of the organisation.

Such staff / consultants may be full or part-time and may be permanent or on short-term contracts. Our aim is that all types and categories of staff / consultants should be treated, and feel treated, as members of the team on which OxPE is dependent on for its and their future. This document sets out OxPE's staffing policy.

To survive and be successful the organisation depends upon a staff /consultant that is not only of a high quality but is willing to learn and be flexible, accepting opportunities offered by new methods of working and taking up new duties as required.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of OxPE's staffing policy is to:

- Recruit and retain employees / consultants of the highest quality and motivation in order to fulfil OxPE's aspiration to be a leading professional qualification company
- Ensure that employees / consultants receive the necessary opportunities and incentives to develop relevant skills and realise their full potential as productive members of the organisation
- Provide employment conditions and practices that both enable the development of the company and respect the rights and dignity of individuals, and provide safe and healthy working environments
- Encourage the development of working practices and procedures that recognise the creativity, skill and commitment of individuals and ensure that these abilities are employed in the best and most efficient manner to further the objectives of OxPE.

Equality of Opportunity

Equality of opportunity is central to the ethos of an educational institution. OxPE is not only required by law to avoid discrimination on the grounds of gender and ethnic origin, but also to avoid discriminating based on a member's religion, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. The provisions of the OxPE's

policy on Equality of Opportunity apply to all aspects of staffing policy, including recruitment, remuneration, promotion, career development, and the working environment.

Safety

The systematic care of the health and safety of its staff is an essential objective of OxPE's staff policy. To this end it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure compliance with relevant safety legislation and to promote safe working practices in all aspects. Safety is an individual as well as a corporate responsibility and OxPE expects its staff to adhere to the Safety Policy and to recognise their legal responsibilities to care for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and all who may be affected by their activities. OxPE seeks to encourage staff participation in the formulation and implementation of safe working practices and through training activities.

Remuneration

The remuneration policies of OxPE will aim to:

- Attract and retain high quality staff / consultants, committed to the OxPE's objectives
- Encourage high performance, flexibility of working practices and the acquisition of relevant skills
- Meet the requirements of the Equal Pay Act and other relevant legislation, and of the OxPE's policy on Equality of Opportunity
- Provide fair rewards to individuals in relation to other staff of the company working in broadly similar jobs and at similar levels of performance
- Differentially reward those who contribute most to the objectives of their department and OxPE.

Appraisal and Pay Rises

Appraisals for employees are held annually in November / December each year where annual pay rises are agreed for implementation in the following January. Pay rises are dependent on personal performance and the business performance. For new staff, an appraisal will be held approximately three months after start date where initial progress will be discussed.

Appraisals and pay rises are held periodically for consultant trainers.

Conditions of Service

The contractual terms relating to an appointment, including hours of work, holidays, sick pay and superannuation, will be those common to the relevant category of staff, except in the case of personal contracts, and contained in the Employee Handbook.

Recruitment

OxPE will follow recruitment processes which will enable it to recruit the best staff / consultants with the skills it needs. Selection for all posts will be based on job and person specifications to ensure the best match of applicants' abilities with the organisation's needs. Salaries on appointment will normally be set depending on the individual's experience and budget available.

OxPE have a Safer recruitment approach to recruitment to prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with 16-18 year olds and vulnerable adults by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with these groups, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.

At least one of the person who conducts an interview for OxPE will be fully aware of OxPE's responsibilities within this Safer Recruitment Policy and have up to date Safeguarding Training.

OxPE will manage concerns/allegations, against staff (including volunteers) that might indicate they would pose a risk of harm to 16-18-year olds or vulnerable adults including referral to the designated officer at the Local authority.

OxPE will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

For lecturing staff and consultants, a variety of personal and professional attributes will be considered including;

- Preferably a teaching qualification
- Preferably an academic qualification in the subject taught or a professional qualification in the subject taught
- Wide practical experience in the subject of the teaching
- Empathy towards the students
- Ability to impart knowledge to others in an effective manner
- Membership of relevant institute

This part of the policy describes in detail those checks that are or may be required for any individual working in any capacity at or visiting the college.

OxPE will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and interview information.

Whether a check for any prohibition, direction, sanction, or restriction is required will depend on the role that is being offered and duties involved.

Although there will be minimal cases when our staff/team members engage in regulated activity the following will apply if they do: -

In summary, a person will be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising 16-18-year old's or
- Will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in a college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with 16-18-year old's
- Engage in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with 16-18 year old's who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check will also be appropriate. This would include contractors who would have the opportunity for contact 16-18-year old's and who work under a temporary or occasional contract.

OxPE may choose to carry out an enhanced DBS check, without barred list information, in certain other circumstances for example, Volunteers.

In addition to obtaining any DBS certificate as described above, any member of staff who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.

For those engaged in management roles an additional check is required to ensure they are not prohibited.

Where OxPE allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is risk assessed.

OxPE will not appoint a person who is prohibited to a role that involves teaching work.

OxPE will not appoint a person who is prohibited to a role that involves OxPE management.

By virtue of the Conditions of Funding in respect of funding received from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, before employing a person to carry out teaching work in relation to teaching 16-18-year old's OxPE will take reasonable steps to establish whether that person is subject to a prohibition order.

Teaching work covers: planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

OxPE will renew staff involved regulated activity's DBS check every 3 years to ensure truly accurate records. OxPE will review DBS checks of staff not involved in regulated activity and take a view whether to renew based on individual job roles.

Offer of Employment

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff OxPE will:

- Verify a candidate's identity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity);
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;

A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role. As part of recruitment OxPE will:

- Verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then OxPE will follow advice on the GOV.UK website.
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks where the individual will be or is engaging in regulated activity, OxPE will confirm on the DBS application that they have the right to barred list information.
- Receive qualifications and complete appropriate induction after appointment

References

References will always be obtained from the candidate's current employer.

Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving should be obtained from the organisation at which they were employed.

OxPE will scrutinise references and seek to resolve any concerns satisfactorily, before the appointment is confirmed, including for any internal candidate. Obtaining references before interview, allows any concerns to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. They will always be requested directly from the referee and preferably from a senior person with appropriate authority.

OxPE will not rely on open references, for example in the form of 'to whom it may concern' testimonials, nor should they only rely on information provided by the candidate as part of the application process without verifying that the information is correct.

Where electronic references are received, OxPE will ensure they originate from a legitimate source. Funding agreements require OPEG to have robust record keeping procedures in place. OxPE do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil the duty of maintaining the single central record. If OxPE choose to retain a copy, it will not be retained for longer than six months.

Allegations

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer is dealt with quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

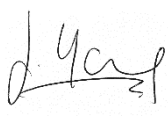
OxPE will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation resurfaces after a period.

OxPE have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse.

All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

It is expected that 80 per cent of cases should be resolved within one month, 90 per cent within three months, and all but the most exceptional cases should be completed within 12 months.

Signed: 

Date: January 2023