

# AGE UK EXETER

## Controlled Document

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## Document Description

Age UK Exeter is committed to recruiting and retaining the best staff to provide services directly to older adults, their carers and families, and to ensure the smooth and effective running of the organisation.

This policy sets out the recruitment process and what applicants can expect at each stage.

## Implementation & Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy please contact the Chief Executive Officer by email on [info@ageukexeter.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukexeter.org.uk)

# Safer Staff Recruitment Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Age UK Exeter is committed to recruiting and retaining the best staff to provide services directly to older adults, their carers and families; and to ensure the smooth and effective running of the organisation.
- 1.2 We take all reasonable steps to ensure that the people that we appoint have the appropriate values, experience, skills and approach to work effectively and safely with our clients. This includes a commitment to safer recruitment processes.
- 1.3 Age UK Exeter, as an employer and service provider, has a part to play in reducing the disadvantages which certain people and groups have experienced, both now and in the past. We also want our staff and volunteers to be truly representative of the community they serve. Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy and Social Inclusion and Diversity guidance.
- 1.4 This policy aims to set out the recruitment process so that applicants understand what is required from them and what they can expect Age UK Exeter to do.

## 2. Advertising Vacancies

- 2.1 Vacancies may be advertised internally where appropriate but substantive posts will normally be advertised externally on Age UK Exeter's website, Indeed, Proud to Care and on Devon County Council's website.
- 2.2 The advertisement and job description will clearly state the closing date for applications and if possible date of interviews.
- 2.3 Advertisements will always indicate whether a DBS check is a requirement of the post.

## 3. Safeguarding

- 3.1 Age UK Exeter works with vulnerable older people and therefore some positions will require checks to be made of the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). The level of checks sought is prescribed by the DBS and Age UK Exeter follows national Age UK guidance and good practice.
- 3.2 DBS checks will be made of the successful candidate only once they have accepted the conditional offer.

## 4. Application

- 4.1 A job description outlining the tasks and salary scale will be available for each position together with a person specification. Job descriptions specify the individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.
- 4.2 Certain posts at Age UK Exeter are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and this will be set out clearly in the application pack. If a post is exempted from the Act, the candidate will be required to declare
  - All unspent convictions and conditional cautions
  - All spent convictions and adult cautions that are not protected (i.e. that are not filtered out) as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2020).
- 4.3 If a declaration is positive, details should be supplied to the panel as requested (normally if the applicant is invited for interview).

- 4.4 Applications should be made by submitting a CV with a covering letter. An application form provided by Age UK Exeter should be used when specified in the advertisement. If required, a paper version of the form can be obtained from our offices at The Sycamores, or it can be downloaded from the website. Candidates are required to identify and explain any gaps in his / her work history.
- 4.5 Applications should be received at The Sycamores by the time and date specified. We regret that applications received after the deadline cannot be considered other than in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the selection panel.

## **5. Shortlisting**

- 5.1 A panel of suitably qualified and experienced people will undertake the shortlisting and interviews. The panel will consist of a minimum of 2 people.
- 5.2 All applications are assessed equally against the same criteria. Applicants are asked on the application form to demonstrate how they meet the required person specification. Candidates who have been selected for interview will be notified by telephone and/or letter.
- 5.3 Any shortlisted candidate who has indicated on the application form that they have a past criminal conviction will be asked to provide the interview panel with brief written details in an envelope marked confidential and for the attention of the chair of the interview panel. This may be explored at interview.
- 5.4 All applicants are asked to complete an Equal Opportunities monitoring form to help inform our recruitment processes. These forms are not viewed by the interviewing panel and are for monitoring processes only.
- 5.5 We regret that in the interests of economy unsuccessful candidates will not be contacted.
- 5.6 We do not routinely offer feedback to applicants who were not invited to interview.

## **6. Interviews**

- 6.1 Interviewees will be given a date, time and venue for the interview, and information about its format. Some positions may require the candidate to do a piece of research or consider a question prior to interview and others may require a practical element to the interview.
- 6.2 The candidates' suitability for the post is explored at interview and scored against the selection criteria from the job description and person specification. An assessment of their suitability to work with adults who may be vulnerable will be included.
- 6.3 Interviews are always conducted on a face to face basis, even if there is only one candidate.
- 6.4 Before the interviews, the panel will agree a set of questions relating to the post that they will ask all candidates, and any additional issues to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application – including any unexplained gaps in employment history.
- 6.5 Competence or value based questions will be used to explore their experience of and approach to dealing with potential safeguarding issues; and their motivation, values, attitudes and boundaries in relation to working with people who may be vulnerable.
- 6.6 If the candidate has declared any past criminal convictions, the panel considers whether they are relevant, and whether they need to explore any issues during the interview.
- 6.7 After all candidates have been interviewed, the panel will score them appropriately and based on this, decide on the most suitable person for the post.

## **7. Offer of Appointment**

- 7.1 An offer of appointment will be made as soon as possible after the interview, either verbally or by letter, and is made subject to receiving references that are satisfactory to Age UK Exeter, a DBS check, where appropriate, and verification checks.
- 7.2 Following successful DBS checks and references a formal contract of employment will be sent outlining the terms and conditions, which includes notification of the probationary period.
- 7.3 Unsuccessful candidates will be advised as soon as possible, either by telephone or by letter. They will be offered informal feedback on their interview if they would like it.

## **8. References and pre-employment checks**

- 8.1 References are sought only for the successful applicant after the conditional offer of appointment has been made (either verbally or by letter) and accepted.
- 8.2 At least one of the referees must be the current or most recent employer. References or testimonials provided by the candidate, or open references (e.g. 'to whom it may concern') are not accepted. Please ask for guidance if you're unsure who to include.
- 8.3 Reference requests include a copy of the job description and person specification.
- 8.4 Where a 'factual only' reference is received, or the reference is incomplete or vague, the line manager will follow up with a phone call to the referee for further clarification. Any issues of concern or discrepancies with information provided by the candidate will be discussed with the candidate and resolved before the formal offer of employment is confirmed.
- 8.5 Any formal offer of employment will be subject to confirmation of the candidate's identity and right to work in the UK. Where relevant, the candidate will also be asked to verify their qualifications. Original documents, not copies, must be viewed.
- 8.6 All checks are confirmed in writing and copies retained on the personnel file. The DBS certificate is not copied, but the disclosure number is recorded, together with the date, the level of disclosure obtained and any relevant information if the disclosure is positive.

## **9. Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy**

- 9.1 As an organisation using the Disclosure and barring service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability to undertake regulated activity, Age UK Exeter complies with DBS guidance in order to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- 9.2 Age UK Exeter is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers and users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- 9.3 This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- 9.4 We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- 9.5 A Disclosure is only requested after an assessment has indicated that the role falls within DBS guidelines. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all job adverts, application forms and

recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

- 9.6 Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover marked for the attention of the chair of the interview panel and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process and only if the candidate is shortlisted for interview.
- 9.7 At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 9.8 Unless the nature of the position allows Age UK Exeter to disclose spent convictions which are not protected we only ask about “unspent” convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- 9.9 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- 10. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from being appointed.**
- 10.1 The decision will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the applicant’s offences. A small subgroup, to include the Chief Executive Officer and at least one trustee, will be designated by the Board of Trustees to review any positive disclosures and decide if the offer of employment is withdrawn. Judgement will be made with regard to the nature of the conviction, how long ago it happened, and the role the person will be taking up and how open and honest they were in disclosure. We are obliged to inform our insurance company of any unspent criminal convictions that are disclosed during this process

## **11. Retention of Applications**

- 11.1 Unsuccessful applications and notes / scores will be held for a period of six months in case of a subsequent query about the process; after which they will be destroyed.

## **12 Induction**

- 12.1 A focused induction is planned for all new staff, and includes an introduction to Age UK Exeter’s policies, including the Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- 12.2 If the role includes ‘front line’ work with older people and / or their carers or the moderating of online content, the recruit will complete the appropriate local Safeguarding Adults Board training course (Alerter and/or Practitioner level) at the earliest opportunity. The recruit will also complete in-house training for Safeguarding Adults. A record of all training attended is maintained.

## **Revision History**

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Other Comments</b>
29.2.16	New policy to Standards Committee	Recommended to Board of Trustees for approval
8.3.16	New policy to Board. Approved	Next review is due March 2018

5.3.18	Routine review by Standards Committee No changes.	Recommended to Board of Trustees for approval.
13.3.18	Approved by the Board of Trustees	Next review due March 2020
16.3.21	Routine review by Standards Committee Changes to contacts for AUKE	
20.1.2022	Amendments made following professional advice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under Application, two bullet points about spent convictions added</li> <li>• Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders section, wording slightly changed re disclosing convictions</li> <li>• Wording amended re being obliged to inform insurers</li> <li>• The Applications section amended to show that our preferred method is via CV with completed application forms only in exceptional circumstances.</li> </ul>	Approved by board of Trustees 10 February 2022.  Next review due January 2024