

# SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY



It is RDA's policy that all member groups must take steps to ensure a safer recruitment process when recruiting volunteers.

## Volunteer Application Form

All RDA Volunteers must complete RDA's standard volunteer recruitment form.

These forms must be stored safely and securely by the group.

The details on this form must be stored by the group and must be available in the event of an emergency.

## Recruitment of Staff

Safeguarding during recruitment of paid staff is key to protecting the welfare of those taking part in RDA activities. A Group must ensure candidates are suitably skilled to perform the job. Comprehensive information about the candidate's identity must be sought.

## Age of Coaches

Coaches who are expected to work on their own initiative, holding a **position of trust** with sole charge of a session, must be aged 18 years or older at the time of qualification/certification.

An RDA Coach in Training may be 16 years old, however those who go on to train and then become assessed to become a Group Coach or Coach, which enables them to coach without supervision, must be aged 18 years or older.

## Collection of References

It is RDA's policy that two references for new volunteers and staff must be sought and followed up.

The RDA Volunteer Application Form for new volunteers makes provision for two referees' details to be obtained for volunteers. Anyone in a paid role must supply two work-related referees' details.

All RDA Groups must obtain a follow up reference from each referee and may do so in a number of ways:

- Obtain a written reference (either in hardcopy or via email)
- Obtain a telephone reference (keeping a record of the time and date of the call)
- Use the generic Volunteer Reference Request Form which is available to download from the RDA website:

References received must be kept with the volunteer's completed application form or staff members application/CV, securely stored with the group records.

If a volunteer applying for a role within the group has been known to someone within the group for more than two years, one external reference is sufficient as the second reference may be obtained from the person known to them within the group.

If the potential volunteer is unknown to the group or has been known to the group for less than two years, two references must be sought.

## **RDA and Disclosure Checks**

It is required within RDA that all volunteers and staff, aged 16 years and over, who are involved in RDA sessions, are checked for criminal disclosures. It is also a mandatory requirement that all DBS (England & Wales) and Access NI checks are renewed every 3 years, regardless of how long the volunteer/staff have been with the group. Provided those in Scotland who join the PVG scheme stay in the scheme, there is no need to renew as groups will automatically be informed of any disclosures added onto an individual's account.

Applicants should be informed at the outset of application that an Enhanced Disclosure will be requested from them. This will provide a basis for the applicant to decide whether or not to apply for the role. RDA Member Groups should emphasise that this information will be used only to assess the applicant's suitability for the role insofar as it is relevant, and that they will not be discriminated against unfairly.

See also RDA Disclosures Policy: <https://myrda.org.uk/assets/RDA-Disclosures-Policy.pdf>

## **Volunteers and Employees with Criminal Records:**

If an applicant for a role with an RDA Group is shown to have a criminal record, this does not necessarily bar them from working with the RDA Group. The fact that a person has a criminal record may be irrelevant to the role for which they are applying.

RDA accepts that it is not possible to define a course of action for every possible criminal record that may be disclosed. It is therefore RDA's policy to treat each case individually, taking into account the nature of the offence disclosed and the role for which they have applied.

If an applicant is shown to have a criminal record the following procedure should be followed:

1. The applicant shares the information, as shown on the original disclosure certificate, with the Group's Safeguarding Officer.
2. The applicant agrees to the information being shared with the Group Trustees. If the applicant does not give approval for this information to be shared, s/he cannot be accepted as a volunteer/employee.
3. If it is agreed, between the Trustees and Safeguarding Officer that the information is not a cause for concern the applicant may be accepted as a volunteer/employee.
4. If it is agreed between the Trustees and the Safeguarding Officer that the information is a cause for concern, the applicant will not be accepted as a volunteer/employee.
5. If the applicant disputes the information on the disclosure, the process will be put on hold to allow the information to be checked. If, as a result of this, RDA is not happy with the assurances and new information provided, the volunteer will not be accepted as a volunteer/employee.