

Safer Recruitment

Introduction

Cambridge Equine Assisted Learning (CEAL) is committed to safeguarding and will always recruit all personnel in line with government guidelines, relevant legislation and any appropriate Regulatory Authorities' guidance and best practice.

CEAL's Safer Recruitment policy and procedures are designed to ensure that all staff (paid or unpaid) are suitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk. CEAL is committed to ensuring that safe recruitment decisions are made in order to identify any candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children, young people and the vulnerable client groups with whom we work.

CEAL will follow and fully implement the procedures described in the publication 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

Aims and objectives

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse learners or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of the recruitment policy are to ensure that

- the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - 2023 (KCSiE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- CEAL meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Staff involved in the recruitment and selection of process are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

CEAL will ensure that all those wishing to work as facilitators or volunteers or for those who have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults, undergo an Enhanced

DBS check before their appointment is confirmed. All job offers are made subject to satisfactory DBS checks, and references.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the CEAL Proprietor to ensure that CEAL has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of facilitators and volunteers and that these are monitored and reviewed at least annually.

It is the responsibility of CEAL manager to operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who are invited to work at the centre.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

CEAL operates a separate 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' Policy.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

However, anyone who is barred from work with children is committing an offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work constituting Regulated Activity. It is also an offence for an employer knowingly to offer work in a regulated position, or to procure work in a regulated position for an individual who is disqualified from working with children, or fail to remove such an individual from such work.

There have been changes to the filtering of youth convictions, reprimands and warnings and these may no longer be included in DBS checks.

Distribution

CEAL's Safer Recruitment policy will be circulated to all personnel who recruit other staff and will be made available to applicants.

Relevant Legislation

CEAL's policy is designed to comply with the legislation including not not limited to:

- Equality Act 2010
- Data protection Act 2018, ICO Code of Practice and UK GDPR
- DBS Code of Practice

Equality Act 2010

CEAL will not discriminate against any job applicant or existing workers on the grounds of:

age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Data Protection

CEAL will only ask applicants for relevant information during the recruitment process. CEAL will treat people fairly and openly, taking a risk assessment approach to the use, storage and disposal of personal data both held and disposed of.

Advertising and Interviewing

Vacant posts will be advertised to encourage qualified applicants to apply.

Advertisements will make it clear that CEAL operates a safer recruitment process.

Documents will be treated confidentially in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

There is a job description and person specification for all job roles including facilitators and new applicants will apply on a standard form prior to selection and Interview.

Application forms will include the applicant's:

- current and former names
- address
- National Insurance number
- full employment history
- details of qualifications, including awarding body and dates
- details of referees (one should be the applicant's current or most recent employer)

Short-listed applicants will be asked to complete the relevant criminal records declaration form details of any convictions, current or spent.

Throughout the process CEAL will scrutinise applicants to deter or prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying.

Staff involved on interview panels will have appropriate safer recruitment training and interviews will be held face to face based on the role description. If necessary interviews can be held via video call.

References

References should be taken up before the applicant is invited for interview wherever possible.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory. One of the references must be from the applicant's

current or most recent employer. If the current / most recent employment does / did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. The referee should not be a relative.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised so that they do not support terrorism or any form of extremism.

References may be obtained via post or email but will not be accepted by phone.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status

All applicants invited to attend an interview will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines. CEAL does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Pre-appointment and Vetting Checks

Appointments will only be confirmed subject to:

- a satisfactory confirmation of ID
- satisfactory DBS check at the appropriate level
- satisfactory written references, with a follow up by telephone if relevant to the post
- a check of essential and original qualifications
- satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment history
- confirmation of Right to Work in the UK for paid staff
- fitness to work as relevant to the role
- other background checks that may be necessary.

If vetting checks raise concerns

- If references, vetting, disclosure and barring checks reveal concerns about a person's history, CEAL will assess whether or not they are suitable to work with children and young people.
- CEAL may need to put any formal offer of an appointment on hold to ensure all information is considered thoroughly.
- **If necessary, CEAL will pass on information to the relevant authorities, such as the criminal records agency, professional bodies or police.**

Probationary Period

All staff/volunteers are employed initially on a 3 months probationary period. If any concerns regarding suitability are raised during this period the information will be considered to ascertain if employment should be continued.

All staff/volunteers will have a review at the end of this 3 month period and, if necessary, the probationary period can be extended or employment terminated.

Induction and Training

CEAL has an ongoing commitment to children, young people and adults at risk and will provide inductions to explain policies and procedures, codes of conduct, how to report concern and whistleblowing. Staff will have appropriate training to ensure prompt and effective responses to safeguarding concerns and supervision to ensure an open safeguarding culture and that all staff understand their duty of care. Staff should have the confidence to promote safer practice and to challenge and report unsafe or poor practice.

Anyone who enrolls for the CEAL facilitator training undergoes an Enhanced DBS check on enrolment. This is one of the conditions of registering for the qualification and means that DBS checks are done in advance of the training.

All facilitators and volunteers will be required to attend training which covers CEAL's code of Conduct, policies and procedures including safeguarding.

The professional designation 'CEAL Certified Facilitator' means that the person has already undergone a DBS check and has successfully completed their facilitator training and gained a level 3 qualification.

The professional designation 'CEAL Advanced Facilitator' means that the person has had a DBS check and completed the Level 4 Certificate in Facilitating Equine Assisted Learning which includes a specially written unit at level 3 'Safeguarding in Equine Assisted Learning'.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

Criminal records disclosure policy

Disability discrimination policy

Recruitment of ex-offenders

Safeguarding

Child Protection

Data Protection

Proprietor's Signature:	Sophie Keene
Adopted on:	17th April 2023
Last reviewed on:	11th April 2025
Next Review date:	11th April 2026