



Recruitment Policy



Statement of APA Procurement and Supply Training (APA) Recruitment Policy

Section 1: Introduction

1.1. About this policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that APA recruit staff in a way that ensures the safeguarding of learners. This policy aims to establish a process of identifying, deterring and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults. It also sets the process of how we monitor employees once they have begun their role and highlights how all new staff will be expected to participate in an induction, which includes safeguarding awareness and training.

APA Training is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace where all individuals are valued and respected. Diversity strengthens our organisation, enriches our collective experiences, and contributes to the safeguarding of learners. This policy sets out to ensure fairness and equality within the recruitment process. It aims to ensure that recruitment practices are safe, robust, and proportionate, and transparent and consistent, while also being aligned to statutory safeguarding and Prevent duties.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all APA learning activities, learning hubs, operations, and activities, and to all APA employees, whether they are permanent, fixed-term, and temporary. This includes associate tutors, assessors, and freelance staff, contractors and agency staff, Directors and senior leaders. It applies across apprenticeship delivery, adult commercial training and to remote, blended, employer-based, and centre-based delivery.

1.3 Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and aligned with relevant legislation and regulation including:

Prevent Duty Guidance
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Working Together to Safeguard Children
Care Act 2014
Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

1.4 Safer Recruitment Principles

APA's safer recruitment approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Safeguarding is embedded at **every stage** of recruitment
- Recruitment decisions are **evidence-based and risk-assessed**
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion are actively promoted
- Professional boundaries and appropriate conduct are essential
- No individual will begin unsupervised work until required checks are completed

1.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Effective safer recruitment relies on clear roles, shared accountability, and consistent oversight at all levels of the organisation. At APA Procurement and Supply Training, safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities within recruitment are clearly defined, understood, and actively monitored to ensure that unsuitable individuals are prevented from working with learners.

Although APA delivers provision primarily to learners aged 18 and over, the organisation recognises that adult learners may still be vulnerable to harm, abuse, exploitation, or radicalisation. All staff involved in recruitment therefore have a responsibility to understand and apply safer recruitment principles in a proportionate, risk-based, and non-discriminatory manner.

Responsibility for safer recruitment does not sit with a single individual. It is a collective responsibility shared by:

Board and Senior Leadership

- Ensure safer recruitment arrangements are effective and monitored
- Receive safeguarding assurance reports

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Oversight of safeguarding and Prevent within recruitment
- Advice on risk assessments and referrals

Recruiting Managers

- Ensure recruitment processes follow this policy
- Participate in safer recruitment training

Interviewer panel members

- At least one panel member must have completed safer recruitment training
- Panel members must understand adult safeguarding and Prevent thresholds

Section 2: Advertising & Shortlisting

2.1. Plan to Recruit

All plans to recruit require prior authorisation from the Directors.

A Job Description will be produced and included in the application pack, all the below must be included in the job description:

- The job content and purpose
- How the job fits into the organisation
- The skills and attributes needed to perform the role effectively
- The key responsibilities applicable to the role, including clear information about Safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities
- The skills, experience, and knowledge for the role broken down into Essential and Desirable requirements

2.2. Advertise the Role

The advertising of the role needs to follow all branding guidelines set out by APA and include the following points as a minimum:

- Every advert for a role that includes work with learners should include a statement about APA's commitment to safeguarding.
- All roles with APA Procurement will require a criminal records check, this must be included in the requirements advertised
- All vacancies need to be advertised in such a way to attract a wide selection of applicants of all backgrounds, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, and religion.
- Clearly state the need for an interview process at which each candidate's CV will be scrutinised.

2.3. Shortlisting Applicants

Where possible two people will shortlist all applicants and this will be against the essential criteria, which will include provision of full employment history including any explanation of gaps. Where the number of applicants remains high, further shortlisting will be measured against the desirable criteria until the shortlist is manageable.

All applicants who APA feel meet the requirements set out in the job advert will be shortlisted and contact will be made within 48 hours of the advert closing.

Any applicants who have been unsuccessful at this stage will be sent an email stating that they have not been successful.

Any concerns or anomalies identified in the shortlisting process will be explored prior to interview.

2.4. References

As part of the vetting checks all applicants who have been shortlisted for interview are required to provide two referees.

As a minimum the referee will be asked about the applicant's suitability to work in a learning environment and to confirm details provided about previous employment.

Section 3: Interview

3.1. Preparing for Interview

Wherever possible, at least two people will make up the interview panel and at least one of these will be the designated chair of the interview. Where it is deemed necessary, APA will include learners/apprentices within the process of recruitment to ensure the applicant can engage with them. All candidates will be made aware of this prior to the interview taking place.

In all circumstances when the candidate will be physically present in any APA premises, they will be supervised at all times.

Ahead of the interview, they will be asked to provide identification and supporting documentation.

All candidates must provide the below:

- Valid Photo ID – Passport/Driving License
- Work Permit – If Applicable
- Certificates of Qualification

3.2. Accessibility Considerations

APA is committed to ensuring that the recruitment process is accessible to all candidates, including those with disabilities. Prior to the interview, all candidates will be asked if they have any access requirements for the interview venue (or for the set up in cases where the interview is remote). Discussions will be held in advance with all candidates who require accommodations to be made. APA will make every effort to ensure a fair and equitable interview experience for all candidates.

3.3. Interview

All candidates will be asked the same questions during an interview in order to ensure that they are all treated fairly.

These questions will include checks on understanding of and commitment to safeguarding best practice and Prevent Duty. They will also investigate prior employment and ensure that any gaps are satisfactorily accounted for.

Notes will be made during the interview; this will form the evidence which will be used to assess each candidate after the interviews have been completed.

At all points during the interview process, candidates will be expected to showcase the following:

- Establish and maintain professional boundaries and professional integrity
- Establish and maintain relationships with learners who may be vulnerable adults
- That they are able to take appropriate action to safeguard learners and will exercise professional curiosity to understand when responses may be required.

Section 4: Offers and Vetting

4.1. Conditional Offer and Identity Checks

All offers are conditional on

- Receipt of references from last 2 employers
- Enhanced DBS Check
- Right to work in the UK being established

References will be sought to clarify information provided by the successful candidate, including specific questions relating to their suitability to work with vulnerable adults and their knowledge and adherence of safeguarding procedures.

Given that APA operates in a regulated environment, the expectation will be that all successful candidates who will be interacting with learners will complete and provide a clear enhanced DBS check. In line with all schools and colleges, APA carry out pre-employment checks on the successful candidate to give an additional layer of security and reassurance. This includes a check on all teaching and other relevant qualifications to confirm eligibility to work in the set role.

4.2. References

References are requested prior to appointment. Referees are asked specifically about:

Suitability to work in an education/training environment
Professional conduct
Any safeguarding concerns

References are verified and followed up where necessary. If a reference expresses concerns, is incomplete or vague, APA will contact the referee directly to address

these issues. A written record of any telephone conversations will be kept on file.

It is illegal for an employer to knowingly employ somebody to work in the education sector whilst they are on the barred list. Vetting that returns with information stating that any candidate is on the barred list will be removed from the process and the police will be notified.

4.3. Employment Risk Assessments

If the successful candidate has not been barred from working with vulnerable adults but the checks have raised concerns (for example if they have a criminal record), APA will carry out a risk assessment to ascertain whether the candidate is suitable to work in a learning environment. This will be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The DSL will discuss all disclosures that have appeared on the vetting and barring check with the successful candidate in order to support the risk assessment process.

All final decisions will be objective, rational and easy to understand. All notes written regarding this process will be kept secure and disposed of in any instance where the offer of employment is withdrawn.

As part of this risk assessment process, the DSL will consider the below points when making a final decision:

- The nature of the offence and its seriousness
- The relevance of the offence to other staff, volunteers, learners and their families
- The length of time since the offence took place
- The length of the sentence
- Whether the offence was an isolated incident or part of a pattern or history of offending
- The circumstances which led to the offence being committed
- Whether these circumstances have changed and if so whether these changes increase or reduce the likelihood of similar offences happening in future
- The level of remorse expressed by the applicant and/or any efforts to change
- Any legal constraints relevant to the role, such as for example if the person has lost their driving licence.

4.4 Single Central Record

APA maintains a Single Central Record of all staff and relevant individuals. When appointed, the successful candidate will be added to this record, which will confirm:

Identity verification

Right to work checks
DBS and barred list checks
References
Qualification checks

The Single Central Record will be maintained in a secure place that is accessible only to the DSL and Senior Managers and will be regularly audited. It will be made available for inspection by regulators on request.

Section 5: Induction

5.1. Induction & Probation

All new members of staff will be inducted into APA, irrespective of experience. The purpose of the induction is to introduce the new staff member to the rest of the team and give them a chance to familiarise themselves with the company values, ethics, policies and procedures, including those related to preventing discrimination. There will be a specific focus on safeguarding and Prevent duties which be explicit about what behaviour is expected from every APA staff member. This will include:

Safeguarding and Prevent training
Review of Code Conduct and Behaviour standards
Familiarisation of policies including safeguarding, health and safety, digital safety and whistleblowing.

5.2. Training and Development Opportunities

APA Training provides ongoing training and development opportunities for all employees, with a particular focus on topics related to safeguarding, diversity, and inclusion. Training on Safeguarding and Prevent is mandatory and will be subject to regular updates

Additionally, employees are encouraged to participate in further training sessions and workshops to enhance their skills and knowledge with a more in depth focus on key areas of concern and currency.

5.3. Probationary Period

All appointments are subject to a probationary period of 6 months. This is to determine the suitability of appointees within the business and how their own skills, knowledge, attitudes, and performance have been demonstrated. Priority will be given to assessment during this period of personal conduct, learner interaction, safeguarding awareness and practice and the exercise of professional curiosity.

Probation periods can be extended for up to a further 6 months, subject to changes in legislation.

5.4. Confirmation of Appointment

Upon completion of the probation period, the appointment will be confirmed as permanent.

Section 6: Policy Review

6.1. Continued Monitoring and Evaluation

APA regularly reviews its recruitment processes to ensure they are safe, effective, fair, and free from bias. We review recruitment data, solicit feedback from candidates and recruitment partners, and make adjustments as needed to improve our practices.

APA has clear procedures in place for reporting any concerns or incidents related to safeguarding, discrimination, or other issues that may arise during the recruitment process. Candidates are given the opportunity to speak with a designated representative who will handle their report with confidentiality and sensitivity. This may include any concerns about staff, including any low level concerns. The right to escalate to external agencies where required will be set out.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Approved by the Senior Management Team APA.

Last reviewed September 2025