

Introduction

This policy relates to all Catholic Care staff, including permanent, temporary and Care Bank staff and volunteers. Catholic Care is committed to ensuring that all people are treated fairly and without discrimination. We aim for a working environment where workers treat each other with dignity and respect. We aim to develop a working environment where harassment is unacceptable and individuals feel they can bring complaints without fearing prejudice.

We will ensure that there is fair and open access to all of our jobs. We follow fair and safe recruitment and selection procedures. This includes:

- Providing full and fair consideration of applications for jobs
- Standard job descriptions and person specifications
- Training for all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment and selection, including safer recruitment training
- Maintaining records of applicants for identifying and addressing areas of inequality for a period of 6 months
- Completion of monitoring form
- Provision of feedback to unsuccessful candidates
- Making reasonable adjustment to working practices and procedures to reduce barriers to employment and encouraging retention of staff
- Being ready to deal promptly with any complaints from candidates about their treatment during the selection process

We will ensure that “terms and conditions of employment” (see separate document) are applied across the Organisation, including access to training, promotion and any other benefit. We will offer flexible working conditions where possible.

Catholic Care will comply with the Equality Act 2010, E.U Directives and other legislation and will follow the relevant Codes of Practice for employment, premises and service. Also the Equality Act 2010 and our observance of it will ensure that everyone will receive equal and fair treatment.

Catholic Care recognises that staff and volunteers who have particular gender, cultural or religious beliefs may have requirements for dress, prayer and religious holidays. We will strive to create an environment where faith and beliefs are respected and individuals are free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

We will ensure that there is no discrimination in relation to access to employment or training, promotion or benefits on grounds of religion or beliefs.

We will vary or adapt working practices to allow reasonable practice of religion, dress or philosophical belief.

We will investigate and act on complaints of harassment or discrimination.

Catholic Care recognises the discrimination that people face in their lives due to their sexual orientation. We wish to create an environment

where all people can be sure of freedom from unfair treatment because of their sexual orientation.

Catholic Care recognises the importance of eliminating age discrimination and challenging prejudice against age.

To achieve this we will:

- Make the complaints system as accessible and user friendly as possible.
- Have a robust complaints procedure in place
- Monitor complaints and their outcome

Expectations of Staff and Volunteers

We expect all Catholic Care staff and volunteers to work within the Charity's values, treat staff, colleagues, employees and service users the way they want to be treated, to create an attitude of respect and dignity for all, to remember that working as a team depends on trust which has to be built through open and honest communication. Also to challenge and report any behaviour which contravenes the law or this policy.

Catholic Care will comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

General Statement

Catholic Care will seek to comply with these general principals:

- Advertise widely to ensure a maximum number and cross section of potential applicants are able to know about the post.
- Ensuring there is an accurate job description published. This should

clearly state the main duties and responsibilities of the post.

- Ensure that there is an accurate person specification available. This should include:
 - the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role;
 - the competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate;
 - explain how the requirements of the job specification will be tested and assessed during the selection process.
- In addition to the candidates' ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore the candidates' values and their motivation to work.
- Obtain and check comprehensive information from applicants, taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies.
- Obtain independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work and following up any concerns.
- Have a face to face interview that explores the candidate's suitability for the post.
- Verify the successful applicant's identity.
- Verify the successful applicants right to work.
- Verify that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed.
- Check their previous employment history and experience.
- Verify that they have the health and physical capacity for the job.
- Take a disclosure and barring check via the DBS.

Advertising Posts

All posts will be advertised internally and externally where appropriate. All adverts will contain a closing date and interview date and a salary scale as well as an equal opportunities statement.

Application Form

The application form is designed to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. Catholic Care will not accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form because these often only reflect the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

The application form asks for the following information:

- full identifying details of the applicant including current names and current address
- a statement of any academic and/or vocational qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the position for which they are applying with details of the awarding body and date of award;
- a full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training, and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training, and reasons for leaving employment;
- details of referees. One referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer, and normally two referees should be sufficient. The form should make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from

people writing solely in the capacity of friends;

- a statement of the personal qualities, experience, hobbies and interests that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification;
- online applications should be signed by the applicant and brought to the interview, or signed at the time of interview.

Information Pack to Candidates

The pack includes a copy of:

- guidance notes
- the application form
- the job description
- person specification
- policy statement on recruitment of ex offenders, available on the Catholic Care website's recruitment section
- Equal opportunities form, available on the Catholic Care website's recruitment section
- Equality and Diversity Policy, available on the Catholic Care website's recruitment section
- Safe Recruitment and Selection Policy, available on the Catholic Care website's recruitment section
- GDPR Privacy Notice Employment

Checking and Short Listing

All applications should be checked to ensure that they are fully and properly completed; that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Any gaps in employment history must be accounted for and confirmed in writing. Verification must also be obtained for periods of self-employment.

At least two staff should take part in this process.

All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

References

Catholic Care acknowledges the purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They are always sought and must be obtained directly from the referee. Catholic Care will not rely on references provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern".

References are sought on candidates once a conditional offer has been made.

All requests for references should seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion.

Information requested:

- the referee's relationship with the candidate, e.g. did they have a working relationship: if so what; how long has the referee known the candidate, and in what capacity?
- whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job in question, and for specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post, and how they have demonstrated that they meet the person specification;
- whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work, and, if not, for specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.

The reference request reminds the referee that:

- they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate and does not contain any false information or omission;
- relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant;
- confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary, and sick record;
- specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct;
- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to in which the disciplinary sanction is current.

On receipt references should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily, wherever possible. In all cases a referee will be telephoned by either the Service Manager or Registered Manager for verification purposes. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee should be telephoned by the Registered Manager or Service Manager and asked to clarify their answers or amplification as appropriate. The information given should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and their previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.

Interviews

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, ascertain their values and explore their suitability to work. The

selection process as a matter of good practice should always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

Invitation to Interview

In addition to the arrangements for interviews - time and place, directions to the venue - the invitation should remind candidates about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore in relation to the position being applied for.

The invitation will stress that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly to ensure the person is who they claim to be, and will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS procedure, if appropriate.

Candidates will be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

Interview Panel

They should be appropriately trained and meet before the interviews to:

- reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;
- consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those;
- agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification.

Where possible the Interview Panel should contain at least three people and, wherever possible, these should not be all of the same sex, and some should have backgrounds reflecting the needs of the post.

Wherever possible our service users are included in the interview process, through contributing to the interview questions, formulating the person specification and meeting the candidates.

The Panel cannot agree in advance a list of questions for each candidate that they will not deviate from, but they can agree a set of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post, and the issues they will explore with each candidate based on the information provided in the candidate's application and references. A candidate's response to a question about an issue will determine whether and how that is followed up.

Scope of the Interview

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the Interview Panel should also explore:

- the candidate's attitude toward work;
- the candidate's values;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate;
- ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for an Enhanced DBS check.
- Ask the candidate for proof of identification and relevant qualifications.

Conditional Offer of Appointment - Pre Appointment Checks

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
- proof of right to work in the United Kingdom (applicable to all new starters regardless of place of birth);
- verification of the candidate's identity, if not verified at interview;
- a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure;
- verification of qualifications (if not verified at the interview);
- will be subject to a satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

Appointment

When HR receive all the relevant documentation, the appointment is to be ratified by the Director. A start date can then be agreed and a contract issued at the latest on the day the employee starts work.

Post Appointment Induction

Catholic Care provides an induction programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the Charity's values, policies and procedures;
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged;
- confirm the conduct expected of workers by Catholic Care;
- provide opportunities for new members of staff and volunteers to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities;
- safeguarding training

- supervision training

Evaluation

Catholic Care will evaluate both the recruitment process and induction arrangements in order to allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed.

Personnel Files

All successful applicants will have a personnel file kept at Head Office to which they may have access on request. This will include a full and comprehensive record of the interview.

Resignation Procedure

When someone resigns from their employment with Catholic Care (including retiring), a formal written resignation letter is to be addressed and sent to the Director of Catholic Care with a copy to Service Managers / Line Managers.

Verbal resignations are not the accepted method.

Once a letter of resignation has been received this will be acknowledge by the Director. The HR Administrator will liaise with the Finance Department regarding any outstanding payroll matters such as holiday pay accrued, etc.

Using Agency Staff

Catholic Care can occasionally utilise agency personnel as a means of covering an emergency shortfall. In these circumstances the recruitment procedure, as detailed in this policy, will apply.

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