



Triumph Learning Trust

Aspiration - Collaboration - Innovation

Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Details

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Scope of Policy	3
3. Responsibilities	3
Board of Trustees.....	3
CEO and Trust HR.....	3
Hiring Managers.....	4
Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)	4
4. Safer Recruitment Policy.....	4
5. Role Determination and Advertising Procedure.....	5
Determining the Role.....	5
Advertising Process.....	5
Information for Applicants.....	6
Application Forms	6
6. Selection Procedure.....	7
Sifting and Shortlisting Applicants	7
Online Searches	8
Self-Disclosure of Offenses	8
References	8
Interviewing and Assessing Applicants	9
Selecting a Candidate.....	11
Reserve Candidates.....	11
7. Onboarding Procedure	12
Pre-Employment Checks.....	12
HR Records.....	13
Single Central Record and School Systems.....	13
8. Induction Procedure	13
9. Contractors Procedure.....	14
10. Appendices.....	15
Appendix 1 – Recruitment Process Flow Charts	16

1. Introduction

Triumph Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers within the Trust to share this commitment.

Robust and rigorous recruitment and selection practices helps deter or reject unsuitable applicants from gaining positions within our schools and helps to ensure that the workforce is fully committed to the safe welfare of children. The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law and DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education. In addition, all safer recruitment practices within the Trust will comply with the Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975 as amended), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and relevant immigration and right to work legislation. We will ensure that people are treated fairly and solely based on their abilities and potential for the role they are applying for.

This policy details how we will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to the recruitment of all roles within the Trust and forms part of our Safer Workforce Cycle strategy:

- Safer Recruitment
- Induction
- Training (Refer to our Training and Education Scheme)
- Supervision and Appraisal (Refer to our Professional Growth and Appraisal Policy)
- Managing Allegations (Refer to our Safeguarding and Disciplinary Policies)
- Determining Future Employment (Refer to our Safeguarding and Disciplinary Policies)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust Safeguarding Policies and the latest edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

3. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for agreeing and monitoring the effectiveness of policies to ensure recruitment at the Trust is in accordance with relevant legislation and ensuring that staff recruitment is as safe as possible, as well as fair and compliant with the relevant legislation.

CEO and Trust HR

The CEO has overall responsibility for ensuring that safer recruitment practices are undertaken in accordance with this policy within all schools in the Trust.

The Trust HR team will monitor recruitment practices and report this to the CEO and Trustees termly to ensure effective scrutiny in achieved and monitor each school's Single Central Record (SCR) to ensure that the necessary vetting checks for employees are carried out.

Trust HR will monitor the performance of recruitment activities more broadly, and provide analysis on:

- How roles are being advertised and whether the adverts are maximising all the opportunities to attract the appropriate candidates.
- Benchmarking the success of any advertising methods used, as well as the overall success of the recruitment process.
- Ensuring that equal opportunities are established and implemented throughout the recruitment process.
- Ensuring that the DPO reviews this policy and that any recruitment data that is kept is in accordance with the Records Management and Retention Policy.

Hiring Managers

The Hiring Manager, typically the Headteacher of the school, is responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the school.
- Appointing an appropriate recruitment panel.
- Ensuring that at least one member of the recruitment panel has undergone safer recruitment training.
- Ensuring that all members of the recruitment panel understand their role, i.e., advisory or decision making.
- Ensuring a member of the Governing Body is on the recruitment panel for a new Headteacher.
- Ensuring that all members of the recruitment panel are familiar with their obligations with regards to safer recruitment, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- Ensuring that the salary of the successful candidate is determined.
- Accommodating the needs of new employees and making reasonable adjustments when necessary.
- Ensuring that they have the skills to carry out effective selection processes, including knowing when and how to request references.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

DSLs are responsible for deciding when it is appropriate or necessary to disclose any safeguarding concerns or allegations as part of a reference, in line with KCSIE, and discussing with the Hiring Manager the suitability of a candidate when a reference has disclosed safeguarding concerns or prior allegations.

4. Safer Recruitment Policy

Triumph Learning Trust adopts a comprehensive and systematic approach to Safer Recruitment, our policies and practices are designed to:

- **Deter** unsuitable people from seeking employment or opportunities to volunteer to work with children and young people;
- **Reject** applications from unsuitable people;
- **Prevent** abuse and neglect of children by staff and volunteers;
- **Identify** incidents of abuse and neglect by staff and volunteers;
- **Respond** to concerns in an open and positive way;
- **Manage** allegations in accordance with school/academy procedures.

To achieve this and safeguard children through our safer recruitment practices, the Trust considers the full recruitment cycle in this policy from advertisement to induction process. Safer recruitment must be considered in all of these aspects, as detailed within this policy, to ensure the robust levels of protection required by the Trust.

In conjunction with this this safer recruitment approach, the Trust will ensure that:

- The best possible candidates are recruited for available roles and appointed based on 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; and
- All relevant legislation and guidance is complied with, including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This includes compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Childcare Disqualifications Regulations 2018 and the DBS Code of Practice for handling and retention of criminal record information.

5. Role Determination and Advertising Procedure

Determining the Role

When a role is vacant and is required to be filled, the Hiring Manager will complete a review of the role to determine whether any historical requirements are still needed and ensure the job description meets the future needs of the role when recruited. The Hiring Manager will also ensure that the job description has the correct Safeguarding, Equal Opportunity and Health and Safety statements inserted.

Authorisation for completing a recruitment exercise must be sought from the CFO and CEO before proceeding any further. This is completed through the authorisation process.

Advertising Process

The Hiring Manager will notify the Trust HR Officer within the Shared Services HR Team that recruitment is required for the role and provide the job description and authorisation form.

All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally.

However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates within the Trust, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before external candidates are considered.

All advertising will:

- Be clear about what qualities, qualifications and experience a successful candidate will need to demonstrate;
- Be planned to allow sufficient time for shortlisting and for references to be obtained.

The HR Officer and Hiring Manager will agree the most appropriate advertising media for the role and agree the advert contents. To deter unwanted applicants, all adverts must clearly state the Trust/Schools commitment to safeguarding, the need for DBS disclosures, and provide information in relation to safeguarding policies and practices.

All advertisements for posts will include the following statement:

The Trust is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare. This post is subject to all the relevant pre-employment checks set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, including an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred-list check.

The Trust HR Officer will be responsible for monitoring the advertising process and ensuring that it complies with this policy.

Information for Applicants

All applicants will be provided with:

- A job description outlining the duties of the post;
- A person specification;
- An application form (which may be digital);
- A candidate pack containing description of the school and Trust, relevant to the post being advertised;
- Reference to the safeguarding policies and practices and pre-employment requirements;
- An outline of terms of employment including salary;
- The closing date for receipt of applications.

Application Forms

The Trust will not accept applications in form of a CV and cover letter. The application form must be completed by all applicants for all roles. The application form contains key fields to help the Hiring Manager and interview panel in making safer recruitment decisions. This must include:

- Personal details (current name including previous names/current address/contact details including telephone numbers, email addresses and national insurance number)
- Full history of present and past employment, salary, and reasons for leaving
- Full history since leaving school (education and employment or voluntary work)
- Explanation of any gaps in education and/or employment
- Qualifications and training (awarding body and dates)

- Details of referees (applicants are expected to nominate their current or most recent employer as their first referee, we may ask for a third reference)
- Personal statement to meet person specification
- Teacher status (if applicable)
- Disability and Accessibility
- Source of Vacancy
- Flexible Working
- Current DBS or registered on the Update Service
- Lived or worked outside of the UK since the age of 18
- Equality and Diversity Monitoring
- Submitted a signed declaration on the application confirming that all the information provided is accurate.
- Self-declared form providing information that the applicant is not barred from engaging in regulated activities involving children, and (for relevant posts) that the candidate is not disqualified from working with children subject to the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (Updated 2018), including any household members who live with the applicant from working in relevant settings including schools or academies.

The Trust reserves the right to request evidence of previous employment if there are concerns that information provided during the recruitment process may be misleading or inaccurate.

Any false information given is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or in certain circumstances referred to the police, Disclosures and Barring Service or the Teaching Regulation Agency.

If an employee is found to have provided misleading or false information during the recruitment process, this may result in formal disciplinary action in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary action.

6. Selection Procedure

Sifting and Shortlisting Applicants

The Trust HR Officer will share the applications received with the Hiring Manager.

The shortlisting panel should contain the Hiring Manager and at least one other person. One person on the shortlisting panel must be safer recruitment trained through a recognised course. The shortlisting panel does not have to be the same as the interview panel but that is recommended.

The panel will agree criteria based on the person specification against which applications will be evaluated, using an objective scoring system. Essential criteria for the post should be considered as pass/fail requirements in the shortlisting process. The overall job requirements will then be broken down into assessment criteria and then scored between 1 and 5 where 5 is excellent demonstration and 1 is no demonstration.

Shortlisting should consider safer recruitment practices and be vigilant to:

- any inconsistencies;
- application forms that have not been completed fully;
- any gaps in the applicant's employment history or other information that needs to be explored.

These criteria does not mean that a candidate must not be shortlisted, but due consideration should be made to the risk and attempts should be made to understand these concerns.

Once a shortlist has been determined, these should be communicated to the Trust HR Officer who will arrange the interviews and assessments with the candidates shortlisted.

Online Searches

The Trust HR Officer will undertake online searches on all shortlisted candidates as part of our safer recruitment due diligence in line with ICO guidance on vetting potential employees. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Online searches are in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. By signing the application form, candidates are acknowledging that such searches will be conducted as part of our shortlisting process.

The Trust will be careful not to discount prospective employees as a result of online activity unless there is evidence that the individual has engaged in conduct or holds beliefs that are incompatible with the requirement to safeguard children; or that would damage the reputation of the Trust. For example, it is unlikely to be necessary to discount candidates due to one-off comments posted or behaviour reported or depicted in the past, particularly from when the candidate was a child, or isolated 'likes' for organisations or views which could be considered extreme or curious in some way, unless there is other evidence of wider involvement in extreme or harmful activity or views which would be likely to place children at risk or bring the reputation of the school into disrepute.

The Trust HR Officer will notify the interview panel prior to any interview if any information has been identified of concern.

Self-Disclosure of Offenses

Shortlisted candidates will have the opportunity to self-disclose any offenses to the interview panel, with the aim to:

- Deter unsuitable people from applying for the post;
- Ensure applicants understand the information that may be revealed in a DBS check and are thus aware that the prospective employer is entitled to see that information;
- Give applicants an opportunity to be open, honest and demonstrate their integrity by bringing any relevant information to the prospective employer's attention in a confidential way at an early stage so that, if necessary, it can be discussed with the candidate at interview or beforehand.

References

Two professional references will be sought by the Trust HR Officer in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. These will be requested before the interview if we have

permission from the candidate to do so. Where the candidate's most recent employment is a school, one reference must be obtained from the Headteacher or equivalent senior manager. References will always be obtained, scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily, before an appointment is confirmed. Requests for references will always be addressed directly to the referee.

References should confirm, in writing:

- The referee's relationship to the candidate.
- Details of the candidate's current post, performance and conduct.
- Whether the candidate has been subject to capability procedures and the outcome.
- Whether the candidate has been subject to disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children, including where the sanction has expired, and the outcome.
- Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns about the candidate relating to the safety and welfare of children.
- Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, the Trust will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children).
- The candidate's suitability for the post with explicit reference to the job description and person specification.

Candidates will be expected to nominate their current employer as their first referee to secure the most recent information about the candidate's employment history, work performance and suitability for the post that is being recruited to.

Where any doubts exist, the Trust will contact the referee by phone to ensure they wrote the received written reference. Contact information should be obtained independently of any details provided by the candidate.

The Trust HR Officer will raise any concerns regarding references to the Hiring Manager.

For EYFS schools

In addition to the above, we must ensure that:

- References must be obtained prior to employment, ensuring only suitable individuals are recruited.
- New starters must not commence work until all required checks are satisfactorily completed.
- At least two professional references must be received before the new employee starts.

Interviewing and Assessing Applicants

The Interview Panel will be made up of the Hiring Manager and at least one other person. One member of the panel must be safer recruitment trained through a recognised course.

The same panel must interview all candidates.

The panel must agree the format of the assessment, which as a minimum must include a face-to-face interview. The details of the assessments must be communicated to the candidates prior to the interview.

The interview will consist of an agreed framework of structured questions to be put to all candidates based upon criteria in the person specification. Candidates will always be required to:

- explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment; and
- explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel

As well as exploring candidates' skills, attributes to perform the role and relevant experience, every interview will include at least two value-based questions designed to explore the candidate's suitability for the role in relation to the safeguarding criteria in the person specification. These questions should also ensure that the interview addresses the candidate's motivation, reasons for being interested in joining the school, and attitude towards working with children.

Opportunities to observe candidates' interactions with pupils/students can be very informative in assessing their suitability for the role but the interview panel will need to agree how other parts of the process in addition to the face-to-face interview will be assessed and scored, what weighting will be given to those scores and how the panel will receive feedback from pupils/students and other staff involved in the process.

The Trust will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the particular needs of any person who has notified the Hiring Manager of their disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

During the assessment process, the interview panel must be watchful of candidates displaying the following characteristics:

- No understanding or appreciation of children's needs;
- Expressing that they want the role to meet their needs at the expense of children;
- Using inappropriate language in relation to children;
- Expressing extreme views or views that do not support safeguarding practices;
- Displaying unclear boundaries with children;
- Providing vague answers when asked their experience and being unable to explain gaps in their employment.

It is important to confirm the identity of the candidate whilst at the interview and take copies of identification documents which will be needed for the DBS check. The following documents should be requested from each candidate whilst at the interview:

- The person's identity - this should be photographic (Current Valid passport, driving license);
- Utility/Phone Bill (no more than 3 months old);
- Checking the applicants name from the birth certificate (original) and/or marriage certificate, original deed poll certificate (if changed birth name);

- The person's right to work in the UK (Passport, Biometric Residence Permit, Share Code);
- The person's qualifications - these should be relevant to role the applicant has applied for and ensure that the relevant qualifications are recorded on the DfE Qualifications Tracker;
- Documentation confirming their NI number;
- Original qualification certificates referred to in their application form;
- Most recent original DBS certificate (if they have one) to be seen in person and must not be copied/stored, only the outcome should be recorded on file.

All notes taken at the interview and part of the decision-making process will be retained by the School Operations Manager for a period of 6 months. These will be added to the successful candidate's personnel file. Feedback for all shortlisted candidates can be given where requested.

Selecting a Candidate

The successful candidate should be offered the role verbally once the whole interview process has concluded and the scores have been agreed by a member of the interview panel.

Following verbal acceptance, a conditional offer letter will be issued by the Trust HR Officer, subject to the following:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- Verification of candidate's identity and DOB
- Enhanced DBS and Barred List checks where appropriate
- Medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional status
- Verification of Qualified Teacher Status
- UK residence or permission to work in the UK

The Hiring Manager will communicate the details of the successful candidate to Trust HR through the appropriate Recruitment Authorisation Form.

All the conditions must be closely checked to ensure that they can all be attributed to the same person. Once all references and checks have been completed in the onboarding process, then a contract will be issued to the successful candidate by the Trust HR Officer.

Reserve Candidates

Candidates which were not successful but met the required standard to be employed within the Trust may be kept on a reserve list for a period of 12 months. Candidates on the reserve list have completed the safer recruitment process up to the point of selection and are there based on fair and open competition.

Roles which subsequently become vacant may be offered directly to a reserve candidate without requiring a new advertising campaign.

The Hiring Manager should notify the Trust HR Officer of any candidates suitable for the reserve list.

7. Onboarding Procedure

Pre-Employment Checks

As part of our safer recruitment onboarding process the following must be completed before a candidate starts employment with the Trust:

- Verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address;
- The receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the Trust considers to be satisfactory;
- Criminal Declaration Form;
- Driver Declaration and Authorisation Form;
- Declaration of Pecuniary Interest;

Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in Regulated Activity). If the applicant has registered with the DBS Update service, HR can check this rather than carrying out a new DBS check if given permission by the candidate. The Trust cannot accept a DBS certificate from another provider if it is neither part of the Update Service nor an enhanced check, if a member of staff is transferring from another school within the Trust, a new DBS will not be needed to be carried out; DBS certificates must not be stored in the new starters HR file, only record the DBS certificate on the Single Central Record (SCR).

- Obtain a separate Barred List check if an individual will start work in Regulated Activity before the DBS certificate is available, and complete a safeguarding risk assessment;
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK. All right to work checks will be conducted in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and Home Office Right to Work statutory guidance.
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, are subject to additional criminal record checks for overseas applicants; and
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teacher Services' system will be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

In addition:

- Schools must ensure that a candidate to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order, the Trust will use the Teacher Services portal to verify prohibition orders, EEA sanctions (where historically applicable) and section 128 checks for all members of the Senior Leadership Team, Trustees, Governors and individuals undertaking management responsibilities; and
- Independent schools, including academies and free schools, must check that a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the

Secretary of State;

Where a DBS check has not been completed in time, the Hiring Manager may complete a safeguarding risk assessment to allow the candidate to start employment. The risk assessment must be approved by the CEO before the candidate starts employment with the Trust and saved in their HR file.

Where a candidate has been found to be on any barring list or the DBS check shows that they have been disqualified from working with children and/or the candidate has provided false information, or there are serious concerns about the candidate's suitability to work with children, the facts must be reported to the police and/or the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

If a DBS check shows that a candidate has a previous conviction, but one that does not bar them from working with children, the Hiring Manager, in consultation with the Headteacher (if not the Hiring Manager) and CEO, will make the final decision as to whether to offer the job or not. The consultation and decision will be logged and retained in a sealed envelope on the candidate's file.

DBS certificates must not be stored in the new starters HR file only record, the DBS certificate on the SCR.

HR Records

The Trust HR Officer will setup the HR file for the successful candidate and ensure that the relevant evidence of safer recruitment is stored. Retention of the HR files are in the Records Management and Retention Policy.

Single Central Record and School Systems

The School Operations Manager will add the successful candidate to the school SCR and ensure all fields are completed evidencing the safer recruitment practices.

The School Operations Manager will ensure that the successful candidate is added to the required local systems in each school, including all relating to safeguarding.

The Trust HR Officer will add all Shared Services new employees to the central SCR and ensure they are added to the required systems, including all relating to safeguarding, they will also oversee the SCR to maintain compliance and conduct termly audits.

8. Induction Procedure

All new members of staff must have an induction into the school and Trust which gives them the required safeguarding information. School inductions should be completed by either the Line Manager or School Operations Manager. Shared Services inductions should be completed by the Line Manager.

An induction into the Trust/school must cover the following:

- Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct and general information regarding expected conduct in the

Trust;

- Identification of designated safeguarding leads within their workplace, and any deputies;
- School Handbook
- Mandatory training courses required by the Trust/school, including safeguarding and prevent duty, health and safety, GDPR, and cyber security;
- Where to find copies of all Trust policies and procedures;
- Their ID access card and equipment, including signing the IT usage policy;
- Information regarding their probation dates (where applicable);
- Providing support in a manner appropriate for the role which they have been appointed to;
- Provide an opportunity for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities.

For some staff it is recommended that a mentor is given to them to help them settle into the Trust. This can also be requested by the new employee.

Support for the induction process can be sought from the Trust HR Officer. Depending on to support needed this may be given by our outsourced HR provider.

9. Contractors Procedure

The Trust will ensure that any contractors who are onsite when children are present have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.

Schools will ensure that contractors and their employees for whom appropriate DBS checks have not been undertaken are always supervised if they are going to have contact with children.

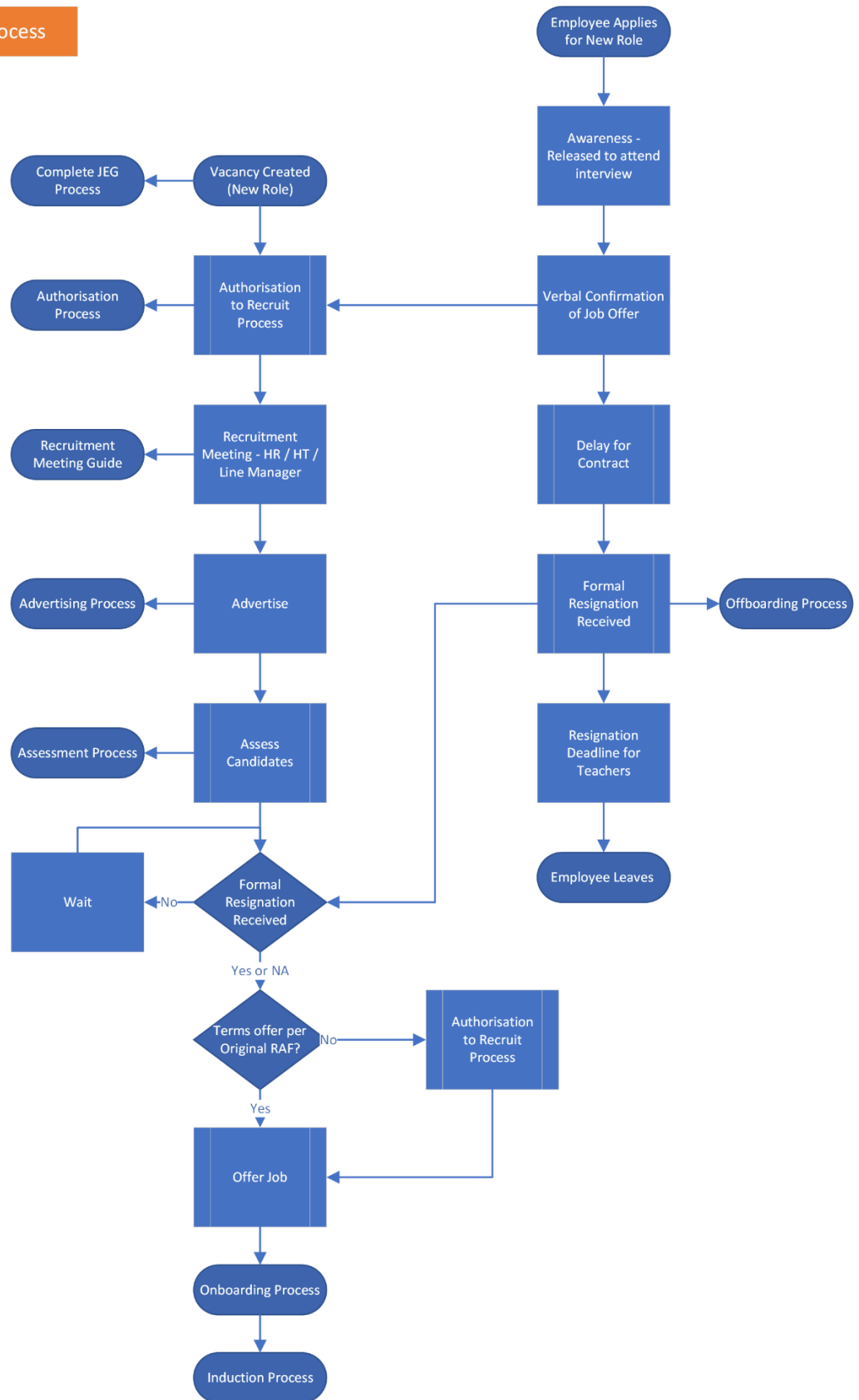
10. Appendices

Appendix 1

Recruitment Process Flow Charts

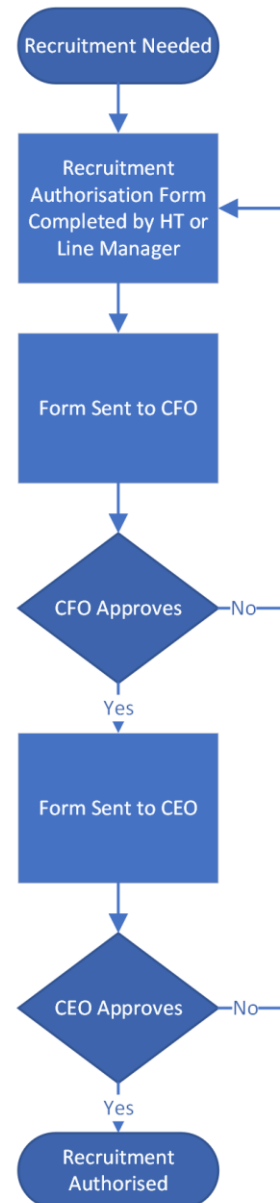
Appendix 1 – Recruitment Process Flow Charts

Recruitment Process

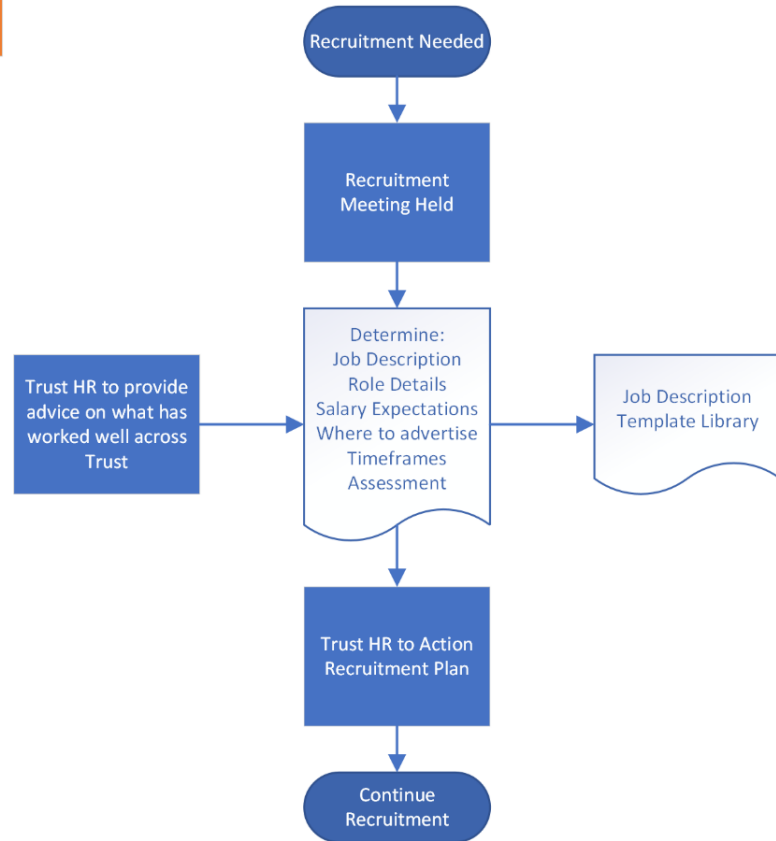


Authorisation Process

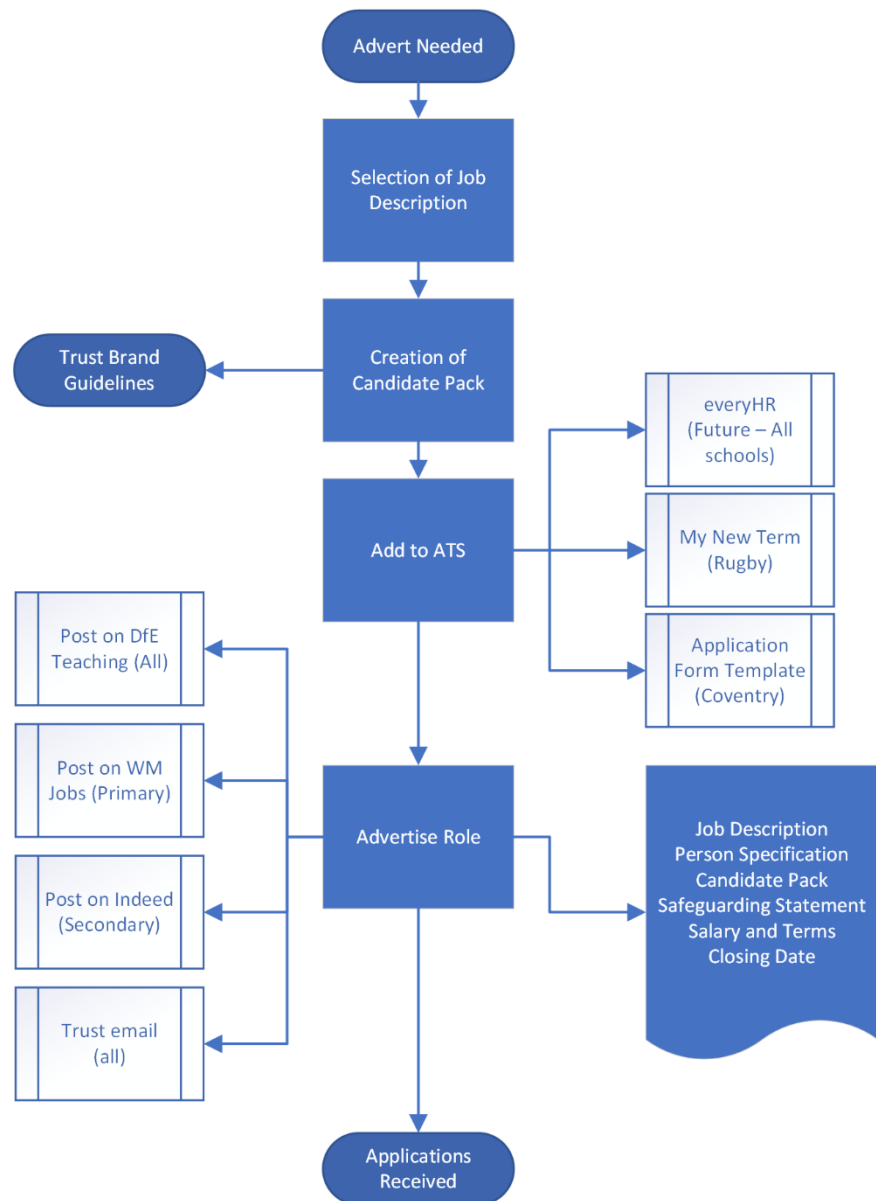
Managed
through HR
System



Recruitment Meeting



Advertising Process



Assessment Process

