

RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT COMPLIANCE POLICY

Brief Description (max 50 words)	This policy brings together the University's approach to recruitment, appointment, and related employment compliance arrangements. Setting the standards, responsibilities and procedures that apply across the key stages of recruitment and appointment, including recruitment planning, fair selection, advertising, shortlisting, interviews, appointment decisions, pre-employment checks, right to work, references, criminal records, and DBS checks.
Version Number	1.1
Document Reference	POD55
Policy Dept	People and Organisational Development (POD)

Equality Impact Assessment	This document has been assessed for equality impact on the protected groups, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This Policy is applicable as outlined in the 'scope' irrespective of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage, or civil partnership.
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Amendment History

Version	Date	Reviewer Name(s)	Summary of changes
1.0		Julie Burton- Chief People Officer & Jo Campbell – Deputy Director of People & OD	Consolidation of former standalone policies into one policy covering Recruitment, DBS, Relocation, Secondments, Data Protection and record keeping.
1.1		Jo Campbell, Deputy Director of People & OD	Changes to reference requirements for roles which work with children or vulnerable adults.

Contents

Introduction.....	6
Scope.....	6
Roles and responsibilities	7
Managers	7
People and Organisational Development (POD) Directorate.....	7
Individuals.....	7
Related Policies	8
SECTION 1: Recruitment.....	8
Recruitment Principles	8
Equality, Diversity, and Fair Selection.....	9
Recruitment Planning and Authorisation	10
Remuneration, Market Forces, and Agile / Campus Working	10
Job Descriptions, Person Specifications, and Advertising.....	11
Shortlisting and Selection	12
Interviews and Assessment	12
Pre-employment Checks.....	13
Right to Work, Visa, and Sponsorship Requirements.....	13
References, Qualifications, and Professional Registration	14
Pre-employment Health Checks and Reasonable Adjustments	15
Internal Candidates.....	15
SECTION 2: DBS Checks, Criminal Records and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders	16
Adherence to Code of Practice	16
When a DBS check is required	17
Levels of DBS check.....	17
Portability of DBS checks.....	18
Initial and ongoing Disclosure requirements.....	18
Transition to Update Service.....	19
Overseas Applicants.....	19

Receiving and assessing the DBS check.....	19
Complete – no convictions or other information	19
Complete – criminal disclosure or other information.....	19
Withdrawal of employment offer.....	20
Spent Convictions	20
Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information	21
Storage and access.....	21
Handling	21
Usage	21
Retention	21
Disposal.....	21
SECTION 3: Engagement of Agency or Casual Workers	22
Engaging Agency of Casual Workers.....	22
SECTION 4: Relocation	22
Relocation Support	22
Eligibility	22
Approval	23
Allowable Expenses.....	23
Categories of support	24
House hunting	24
Buying and selling property to relocate	24
Moving from rented-to-rented accommodation	25
Rented to purchased accommodation	25
Temporary accommodation	25
Travel	25
Maximum Entitlement	26
Recovery	26
Tax And National Insurance	26
SECTION 5: Secondments	26
Secondment Guidelines	26
Internal Secondment	27
Secondments from Other Organisations to the University of Suffolk.....	27

Planning and Approval	28
Communication and performance during secondment.....	28
Backfill Arrangements during Secondments	29
Sickness and Other Absences During Secondment	29
Returning from Secondment.....	29
SECTION 6: Data Protection, Record Keeping and Retention.....	29

Introduction

The University recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. A strategic, professional, and fair approach to recruitment and employment compliance is essential to attracting, appointing, and retaining staff with the skills, experience, behaviours, and potential needed to support the University's work and strategic aims.

This policy brings together the University's approach to recruitment, appointment, and related employment compliance arrangements. It sets out the standards, responsibilities and procedures that apply across the key stages of recruitment and appointment, including recruitment planning, fair selection, advertising, shortlisting, interviews, appointment decisions, pre-employment checks, right to work, references, criminal records, and DBS checks.

It also incorporates related arrangements that may apply in particular circumstances, including relocation support, and secondments. Further supporting information is included in the appendices, including statements on the secure handling of DBS disclosure information, the recruitment of ex-offenders, relocation expenses and secondment planning.

The policy is structured to follow the recruitment and appointment process as far as possible, with related employment compliance arrangements included where they most naturally sit.

Scope

This policy concerns the recruitment and selection of candidates to roles within University of Suffolk and associated employment compliance arrangements.

It applies to:

- University of Suffolk employees
- Job applicants (candidates)
- Secondees where the relevant arrangements apply.

The policy does not replace the Engagement of Occasional Staff Policy, which sets out the appointment arrangements for staff engaged on a casual basis.

Should service or other conditions apply to any part of this policy, this will be detailed in the relevant section of the policy.

This policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment and the University reserves the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

Roles and responsibilities

Managers

Managers play a key role in ensuring that recruitment and related employment processes are fair, consistent, evidence-based and aligned with the needs of the University. They are responsible for identifying the need for a role, seeking appropriate authorisation, contributing to the development of job descriptions and person specifications, shortlisting, interviewing, and making appointment recommendations in line with this policy.

Managers must ensure that recruitment decisions are based on the requirements of the role and the evidence gathered through the recruitment process. They are also responsible for supporting inclusive recruitment practice, considering reasonable adjustments where appropriate, keeping accurate records of decisions, and seeking advice from People and Organisational Development where required.

Where managers are involved in relocation support, secondments, DBS checks or other employment compliance matters, they must ensure that the relevant approvals, checks, and documentation are completed before commitments are made.

People and Organisational Development (POD) Directorate

People and Organisational Development (POD) supports the University's recruitment and employment compliance processes. This includes advising managers on recruitment planning, advertising, selection, pre-employment checks, right to work, DBS requirements, reasonable adjustments, relocation support, Sponsorship and visa requirements, secondments, and other related arrangements.

POD is responsible for supporting the consistent application of this policy, maintaining appropriate recruitment and employment records, overseeing relevant pre-employment checks, and ensuring that managers and candidates are advised of the requirements that apply.

POD will also provide advice on legal, procedural, or policy requirements and will support managers where recruitment or employment compliance issues require further consideration.

Individuals

Employees involved in recruitment or related employment processes are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and follow the procedures relevant to their role. This includes applying selection criteria fairly, maintaining confidentiality, completing required training where applicable, keeping appropriate records, and seeking advice where they are unsure of the correct process.

Applicants and candidates are expected to provide accurate and complete information during recruitment and pre-employment processes. This includes information relating to right to work, employment history, qualifications, professional registration, criminal record disclosures where required, health information where relevant, and any other checks required for the role.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

Employees who are seeking or participating in secondments, relocation support or other arrangements covered by this policy are expected to engage with the relevant process in a timely and open way, provide required information, and comply with any conditions or requirements that apply.

Related Policies

The following University of Suffolk policies/guidance are referred to in this policy:

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Agile Working Framework
- Remuneration Policy
- Market Force Supplement Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Engagement of Occasional Staff Policy
- Probation Policy
- Engaging an Agency Guidance
- Engagement of Casual Workers Policy
- Applicant Privacy Notice
- Personal Relationships at Work

SECTION 1: Recruitment

Recruitment Principles

Recruitment and selection activity must be fair, transparent, evidence-based, and consistently applied. Decisions must be based on the requirements of the role, as set out in the job description and person specification, and should take account of candidates' skills, qualifications, experience, behaviours and potential.

Equality of opportunity is integral to the recruitment and selection process. Everyone involved in recruitment must ensure that applicants are treated fairly, and that no applicant is unlawfully discriminated against because of a protected characteristic.

Recruitment processes must comply with relevant legal, regulatory, and procedural requirements, including right to work checks, DBS checks where appropriate, data protection requirements, and any role-specific qualification, registration or pre-employment checks.

Recruitment activity must be well planned, appropriately authorised, properly documented, and conducted in line with this policy.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

Equality, Diversity, and Fair Selection

The University has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that no unlawful discrimination takes place in relation to sex, race (includes nationality or citizenship), disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership, age, religion, or belief.

Equality of opportunity is integral to the recruitment and selection process. Everyone involved in recruitment must ensure that applicants are treated fairly and that decisions are based on the requirements of the role, the published selection criteria, and the evidence provided through the application, assessment, and interview process.

The University of Suffolk is a Disability Confident Employer. This means that disabled candidates may be offered an interview if they meet the minimum essential criteria required for the role, as set out in the person specification. Recruiting managers must identify the minimum essential criteria clearly and apply them consistently. Examples of these could be a qualification, a set of specific skills relevant to the post, registration with a professional body, and level of experience.

Once shortlisting has been completed, POD will advise the recruiting manager of any candidates to be considered under the Disability Confident scheme.

There may be circumstances where it is not practicable or appropriate to interview every disabled applicant who meets the minimum criteria, for example where there is a particularly high number of applications. In these circumstances, the University may select those disabled candidates who best meet the minimum criteria, as it would for non-disabled candidates.

Candidates are invited to let the University know about any adjustments they may need during the recruitment process. Reasonable adjustments may include, for example, adjustments to interview arrangements, assessment methods, room accessibility, lighting, timing, or communication format.

Where a candidate is appointed, a member of the POD team can work with the recruiting manager to consider any reasonable adjustments that may be needed to support employment. This may include changes to working arrangements, equipment, training, or other role-related support. Where support or adaptations required may go beyond reasonable adjustments, advice may be sought through the Access to Work scheme and ultimately a decision may need to be taken as to if appointment can proceed based on the level of adjustment need against the feasibility to provide the adjustment(s). It is good practice to review support for reasonable adjustments on a regular basis, the timing of which should be agreed between the individual and line manager.

Recruitment forms an important part of the University's People Strategy and there may be occasions where positive action is appropriate. Positive action is lawful under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to proportionate steps an employer may take to encourage applications from people who share a protected characteristic and who are under-represented in a particular area of the workforce. Any positive action approach should be discussed with POD before recruitment activity begins.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

Recruitment monitoring information is collected and reviewed by POD at least annually. Monitoring helps the University understand whether recruitment practices are supporting equality of opportunity in practice, not just in principle, and whether any patterns or anomalies need to be addressed. This information is not shared with recruiting managers or selection panels.

Recruitment Planning and Authorisation

The recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against the area's strategic plans and budget has been completed.

Before commencing recruitment, the recruiting manager should consider whether the post is required in its current form, whether the duties, skills or working arrangements have changed, and whether the vacancy presents an opportunity to review how work is organised. This may include considering whether the role should be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, secondment, acting-up, redeployment or other appropriate basis. These options should be discussed with POD to ensure that the proposed approach is appropriate, fair, and consistent with university policy.

Formal authorisation to recruit must be obtained before the recruitment process begins. This should be completed through the relevant approval process in place at the time. Recruitment planning should take account of the University's essential areas of service delivery, the skills and knowledge required to support current and future needs, and the benefits that a diverse workforce can bring. Where appropriate, advice should be sought from POD before progressing recruitment.

If a manager anticipates difficulties in recruiting to a post, they should contact POD at an early stage for advice on the most appropriate recruitment approach. This may include consideration of advertising options, market factors, selection timescales, or other measures to support a successful appointment.

Remuneration, Market Forces, and Agile / Campus Working

All posts will be advertised in line with the University's pay scales, where applicable, and the Remuneration policy.

A Market Forces Supplement (MFS) may be paid in exceptional circumstances. MFS is an additional temporary payment, in addition to the basic salary of an individual job or specific group of jobs, where market pressures would otherwise prevent the University from being able to recruit or retain employees with a particular skill or group of skills.

Market forces can fluctuate, and market rates of pay go down as well as up. Where an MFS is paid, it will be for a time-limited period and subject to regular reviews. An MFS can be removed where there is no ongoing business rationale for its continuation.

Working arrangements should be considered as part of recruitment planning and should be made clear in the recruitment information wherever possible. The University's Agile Working Framework is designed to support staff to work in the best location for the activity being undertaken, helping to promote flexibility, trust, and effective working.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

At the same time, connection to colleagues, students and campus remains essential. All roles will require a regular on-campus presence, with a minimum average 60% campus attendance. The level and pattern of campus attendance may vary between departments and roles, depending on the nature of the work, operational requirements, service needs, student and colleague interaction, and peak periods of activity.

Recruiting managers should ensure that the working arrangements for the role are clearly understood before advertising and should seek advice from POD where there is uncertainty about pay, market factors, agile working, campus presence, or other role-specific working arrangements.

Job Descriptions, Person Specifications, and Advertising

An advert template and job description in the University's agreed corporate style must be produced or updated before any vacant post is advertised. These documents should be shared with POD as part of the recruitment process.

The job description should accurately reflect the duties, responsibilities, and requirements of the post and include wording that aligns to the University's values and behaviours.

The person specification should set out the essential and desirable criteria for the role including any required qualifications, skills, aptitudes, knowledge, experience, and personal attributes, behaviours, or professional registration. Criteria must be directly related to the requirements of the role and applied consistently to all applicants.

Care should be taken when writing job descriptions, person specifications and adverts to ensure that the wording used is clear, inclusive and does not directly or indirectly discriminate against particular groups of applicants.

Vacancies will usually be advertised via the University's Applicant Tracking System (ATS). Vacancies will be advertised externally except where there is a clear reason for an alternative approach, such as a time-limited or acting-up opportunity, a known internal talent pipeline, a redeployment consideration, or another agreed workforce planning reason.

Requests for internal only advertising should be discussed and agreed with the POD Business Partner, or another senior manager of the POD team before the vacancy is advertised.

POD will oversee and place all vacancy advertisements, except where a recruitment agency is to be used. Adverts will usually be placed on the University's website, LinkedIn page and other relevant platforms, where appropriate. All requests should be discussed with POD and requests for more than one paid-for advert will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be charged to the School or Department.

Vacancies will usually be advertised for a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of four weeks, unless otherwise agreed with POD. Adverts will be clear that applications may be reviewed in advance of the closing date and that adverts may be closed early.

Shortlisting and Selection

Once a vacancy has closed, applications should be reviewed against the criteria set out in the person specification. Shortlisting decisions must be based on the evidence provided by applicants and should be applied fairly and consistently.

The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that applications are reviewed and scored through the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) within 5 days of the vacancy closing, or an acceptable duration of time prior to the agreed interview date.

Shortlisting may involve the whole recruitment panel but must be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the direct line manager. This helps support fair, balanced and evidence-based decision-making and reduces the risk of bias.

Where the University's Disability Confident commitments apply, disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria should be identified and considered in line with the approach set out in the Equality, Diversity and Fair Selection section of this policy.

Applicants who have not been shortlisted for interview will be informed by POD.

Once shortlisting has been completed, the recruiting manager should contact POD to confirm the candidates selected for interview, together with other information such as interview date(s), times, and formats.

Applicants will usually be given one week's notice prior to their interview taking place unless an interview date has already been published on the advert.

Applicants who have not been shortlisted for interview will be informed by POD via the ATS.

Concerns that applications may have been produced by AI should be discussed with POD. It is important that all applications submitted are a true reflection of the candidate in terms of all required education, qualifications, skills, knowledge, experience, and attributes.

Interviews and Assessment

Interviews and any associated assessment methods should be planned in advance and designed to assess candidates fairly against the requirements of the role, as set out in the person specification.

In some instances, it may be necessary to undertake a two-part interview process – where initial screening / selection (sometimes online) takes place for successful candidates to then progress to the final panel interview.

Interview panels should seek to demonstrate diversity where possible (such as gender and age). Where an additional panel member is required, advice should be sought from POD, which holds a list of staff members that have received recruitment and selection training. On occasion it may be beneficial for recruitment panels to include one panel member from a different work area.

The interview should be carried out by a minimum of two people, one of whom should be the recruiting manager. The chair of the interview panel will normally have completed Recruitment & Selection training.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

Interview questions, additional methods of assessment, and the structure of the interview should be consistently applied to all candidates and should be based on the person specification. Questions should be designed to test the candidate's skills, knowledge, experience, and suitability for the role. Values and behaviours should be explored as part of the selection process.

Candidates will be given the opportunity to advise the University of any reasonable adjustments they may need for the interview or assessment process. Reasonable adjustments should be considered and put in place where appropriate.

Pre-employment Checks

All offers of employment are strictly conditional, subject to the satisfactory completion of relevant pre-employment checks. The checks required will depend on the nature of the role and individual circumstances of the candidate and will be outlined in the conditional offer letter.

Pre-employment checks may include, but are not limited to:

- verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK;
- references and checks relating to employment history;
- verification of qualifications, professional registration or other role-specific requirements;
- a pre-employment health questionnaire and, where required, occupational health advice;
- criminal record or Disclosure and Barring Service checks, where these are lawful and relevant to the role; and
- any other checks required for the post or by the University's procedures.

Candidates should not normally commence employment until all required pre-employment checks have been completed satisfactorily. Any exception must be discussed with POD in advance and will depend on the nature of the outstanding checks, the role, the risks involved, and any supervision or restrictions that may be required.

Right to Work, Visa, and Sponsorship Requirements

The University of Suffolk has a legal responsibility to ensure that all our workers and employees have the legal right to live and work in the UK. Right to work checks must be completed in line with current Home Office guidance and University procedures.

Right to work checks must be applied consistently and must not be carried out selectively on the basis of nationality, race, ethnicity, accent, appearance, name or any other irrelevant factor.

All candidates offered employment will be required to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK. The type of evidence required will depend on the individual's circumstances and must be checked using a route permitted by current Home Office guidance. This may include a manual document check, the

Home Office online checking service using a share code, an approved digital identity checking process, the Employer Checking Service, or another route permitted at the time of the check.

Where original documents are checked manually, the University must check that the documents are genuine, valid, belong to the person presenting them, and confirm that the person has the right to undertake the work offered. Copies or records of the check must be retained in line with University procedures.

Where an online right to work check is required, the University must use the official Home Office employer checking service and retain evidence of the check in line with University procedures.

Where a candidate has time-limited permission to work in the UK, any restrictions or expiry dates must be identified and recorded. Follow-up checks must be completed where required.

Some roles may be eligible for sponsorship under the Skilled Worker route, subject to the role, salary, skill level and other requirements set by the Home Office. Where sponsorship may be relevant, advice must be sought from POD before any commitment is made to a candidate.

Where a role is not eligible for sponsorship, candidates may still be able to work in the UK through another visa route. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they have, and continue to have, the right to work in the UK.

Job applications must be assessed using criteria based on the knowledge, skills, experience, and behaviors required for the post. Candidates must not receive less favorable treatment because of their nationality or immigration status, provided they have the legal right to work in the UK and meet the requirements of the role.

References, Qualifications, and Professional Registration

All offers of employment are conditional upon receipt of all satisfactory pre-employment checks including references and verification of any qualifications, professional registration or other role-specific requirements that are essential to the post.

A minimum of two references will be required, one of which must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer. References must cover at least the preceding three-year period.

For roles that work directly with children or vulnerable adults, references will be required to cover five years of employment and from all previous employers where the work involved working with children or vulnerable adults.

There may be occasions where a written reference is also required to be supported / supplemented by a verbal reference. Any gaps in employment must be validated.

Personal professional referees will be required if a candidate is unable to provide 3 years' employment references (e.g., a college/university leaver with no prior work experience, a recent traveler, or somebody who has recently returned from living abroad).

Any gaps in employment must be explored and, where appropriate, validated. Where gaps cannot be verified through reference or other evidence, the candidate will be required to provide a personal statement from their personal email address.

Candidates may be required to provide evidence of academic qualifications, professional qualifications, membership of a professional body, licence to practise, or other registration where these are essential to the role. The University will also check any professional registration stated as essential for the post.

It is for the University to determine whether the references, qualifications, registration checks, and any related information received are satisfactory.

Pre-employment Health Checks and Reasonable Adjustments

All candidates offered employment will be required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. This is used to help determine fitness for work and identify whether any health-related advice, support, or reasonable adjustments may be required before employment begins.

Where a candidate provides information that requires further assessment, they will be referred to the University's Occupational Health provider. The candidate may be asked to complete a pre-employment health assessment and may be invited to attend a pre-employment health consultation before a fit to work certificate can be issued.

Occupational Health advice may include confirmation of fitness for work, recommendations for reasonable adjustments, or other relevant information to support the candidate's employment. POD will advise recruiting managers where adjustments or other support measures need to be considered. Every effort should be made to secure the necessary equipment / accessibility changes as soon as practically possible.

Health information must be treated confidentially and only shared where there is a legitimate need to do so. Recruiting managers should not seek unnecessary medical information and should focus on any advice or adjustments relevant to the role.

Reasonable adjustments should be considered where Occupational Health advice, candidate information, or the recruitment process identifies that support may be needed. Adjustments may include changes to premises, working arrangements, equipment, training, communication methods or other role-related support. POD can advise managers on reasonable adjustments and, where appropriate, support or adaptations available through Access to Work.

Internal Candidates

The same rigor around process and pre-employment checks apply to internal candidates who apply for a role within the university, as to external candidates. Internal candidates are recommended not to resign from their substantive post until all checks are complete and in place. Where an individual who is already employed by the university has already resigned or is under notice when they apply for or are offered another role within the organisation, it will be necessary for all usual pre-employment checks to be

undertaken and be confirmed as satisfactory before a start date can be agreed. Should there be insufficient time for all checks to be undertaken prior to the planned last day of service, continuous service may be broken. The University will not artificially maintain service where an employee has left one role and does not yet have clearance to commence another. This may result in a fresh period of employment commencing which would be subject to the same conditions as external candidates (i.e., probation).

References will be taken for all internal appointments. Where an individual changes jobs to one which has different requirements or responsibilities to the role for which they were originally or most recently employed to undertake, it may be necessary to request references from the same referees (i.e., to cover a 3-year period). For example, if the role originally employed to undertake did not involve working with children but the new role does, there may be information that would not have been disclosed in the original reference request, but which is now relevant to the new role. Or, the new role may be similar to the current role, but the individual may be subject to a performance improvement plan under the Capability policy in the job they are leaving – which would be relevant to a reasonable assessment of suitability to undertake the role.

Where sponsorship applies, eligibility for sponsorship in the new role must be checked. There is no guarantee that sponsorship in a different role can be maintained/supported, which may affect the ability to be employed on an ongoing basis.

Occupational Health clearance will be required for internal candidates changing roles, and if necessary, a referral may need to be made to ensure that the new role is suitable and that any required adjustments are known and understood before commencement in post occurs. Every effort should be made to secure the necessary equipment / accessibility changes as soon as practically possible.

A change of job role may result in a new or a different DBS check requirement.

It is important that the suitability of the conditional offer is fully explored (via all required pre-employment checks) before final recruitment decisions are made.

SECTION 2: DBS Checks, Criminal Records and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Adherence to Code of Practice

University of Suffolk is a registered body with the DBS and is therefore authorised to request information regarding potential employees' criminal records. In doing so, we are obliged to adhere to a strict Code of Practice and to produce guidance notes on our Disclosure practice to ensure compliance. This means that any information received from a disclosure is used fairly and confidentially and is held securely and not held for longer than is necessary.

The Academic Registrar is the Lead Counter-signatory and so has overall responsibility for the proper use of the DBS disclosure scheme by the University in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice. The Lead Counter-signatory appoints Counter-signatories who ensure the scheme is operated within the Code of Practice in the context of both staff recruitment and student admissions.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

For all job vacancies at the University, applicants are required to declare any unspent convictions as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. In most circumstances, applicants are not required to declare spent convictions. However, for a limited number of posts, University of Suffolk will seek a disclosure relating to potential employees' criminal records from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The University actively promotes equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including applicants with criminal records. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from working with the University. This will depend on the nature of the role, the nature, and circumstances of the offence, and whether the information disclosed is relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the post.

Where a role is eligible for a DBS check, this will be made clear in the recruitment information.

When a DBS check is required

At the outset of recruitment to an existing or new role, the recruiting manager must determine whether a DBS check is required and, if so, the appropriate level of check. This must be done by referring to current DBS guidance, including the online eligibility tool: <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>. Advice should be sought from POD where required.

Existing roles that become vacant and are to be re-filled must be reviewed to determine whether any changes in duties or responsibilities have affected the DBS requirements of the role.

The outcome of the DBS eligibility assessment must be made clear in the recruitment literature relating to the post.

If using a recruitment agency, the agency will be made aware that any job offer will be subject to a DBS Disclosure (and the level of disclosure) and will be provided with a copy of this policy to pass on to candidates who have expressed an interest in the role.

Levels of DBS check

It is unlawful to request a DBS check at a higher level than is permitted for the role. Each role must therefore be assessed lawfully and objectively using current DBS guidance. Further information is available from the DBS Code of Practice and explanatory guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

The following levels of DBS check may apply:

- **Basic check:** shows unspent convictions and conditional cautions. The University does not normally carry out basic DBS checks.
- **Standard check:** shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, and final warnings.
- **Enhanced check:** shows the same information as a standard check, plus any information held by local police that is considered relevant to the role.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

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- **Enhanced check with barred list check:** shows the same information as an enhanced check and, where the role is eligible, includes a check of the Adults' Barred List, the Children's Barred List, or both, depending on the nature of the role.

Portability of DBS checks

The University cannot accept DBS certificates which have been previously issued from another employer or volunteer organisation. Where an applicant is signed up to the DBS Update Service, the University may only use the applicant's online check where it is at exactly the same level and type as the check required for the role.

Initial and ongoing Disclosure requirements

If it is a condition of employment that a DBS check is required, this will occur as part of the pre-employment check process. Employment cannot commence until all pre-employment checks are complete including receipt of a DBS check acceptable to the University.

The successful candidate will receive a conditional offer of employment, stating if a DBS check is required and at what level. The applicants' details will be entered to the online DBS check portal/system, and they will be sent a link to complete an online form and provide proof of their identity as instructed. Identity can be verified at a Post Office, online over video link, or in person to the POD team at the University.

Whilst there is no legal requirement for re-checks to be undertaken to a specified timeframe, DBS status for those not on the update service will normally be re-checked a minimum of every three years, unless changes to the role, requirements, or circumstances mean a check is needed sooner or is no longer required. Some roles – for example those that require an enhanced check and are on the update service will be revisited annually.

After the initial (or during the transition period, the repeat) DBS check is undertaken, thereafter, subscription to the DBS online update service is a mandatory requirement for eligible roles, except where the need for a check is solely in connection with a research project which then ends or for an activity which is not-ongoing.

Once a DBS certificate has been accepted by the University, anyone in a role that requires a DBS check must register with the DBS Update Service within the relevant timeframe and keep that registration active for as long as they remain in such a role. The individual is responsible for paying the annual Update Service fee, which the University will reimburse.

All staff are contractually required to disclose immediately any change in their personal circumstances including any convictions or cautions which may apply during the course of their employment as well as any occurrences (in their professional or personal life) which may be relevant to their employed role – for example any matter which is considered by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or any matter outside of their employment with University of Suffolk which is subsequently referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Transition to Update Service

Transition arrangements to the DBS Update Service will apply and priority transference to the Update Service for existing staff will take place over a three-year period, commencing with those whose most recent DBS check occurred the longest period of time ago.

Overseas Applicants

For overseas applicants, and UK applicants who have spent time overseas (the period for which must be covered by a check) the University's online screening provider will carry out checks in the applicant's country of residence or in the country in which the applicant lived or worked.

Receiving and assessing the DBS check

Complete – no convictions or other information

The individual subject to the DBS check and the POD team will receive electronic notification that the result of the check is available, and the individual will receive the hard copy of the DBS certificate in the post to their home address.

Where the online DBS status is 'complete', the POD team will make an initial assessment of the content of the online check. If the check contains no evidence of convictions (or any other related information), the line manager will be advised of a clear outcome.

Where the online DBS system advises to 'wait to view applicant certificate', the POD team will contact the applicant or member of staff to request that they bring in the original hard copy DBS certificate they have received for further review.

Complete – criminal disclosure or other information

If the outcome of the DBS check confirms a criminal disclosure (or any other related information), the POD People Business Partner in conjunction with the relevant Executive member will make an initial assessment of whether the information provided has relevance to the post.

If there is clearly no relevance to the nature of the job, the candidate will be sent a letter confirming their appointment.

However, if the DBS check reveals a conviction the applicant has failed to declare, or a declared conviction which is directly relevant to the post applied for, this could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Suitability for employment in light of the DBS outcome may vary according to the nature of the job and the details and circumstances of the conviction(s). An open, honest, and well-structured discussion should normally occur to fully assess the risk associated with the conviction in relation to the nature of the job.

The University will take the following factors into account:

- Does the post involve one-to-one (or the scope for one-to-one) contact with children or other vulnerable groups of people?
- What level of supervision would there be, or would the role be undertaken unsupervised?
- Would the nature of the job present opportunities to re-offend in the workplace?
- Is there a potential transferable risk to others (i.e., to young people or vulnerable adults)?
- Would there be direct responsibility for finance or other items of value in the role?

In relation to the nature of the offence(s) committed, or other relevant matters that are revealed, the following issues, as a minimum, would be taken into account:

1. The seriousness of the offence(s) and its relevance to the safety (or transferable risk) of others with whom the individual would come into contact in the workplace or in the course of normal duties.
2. The length of time since the offence(s) occurred.
3. The number of offences committed (i.e., is there a pattern of offending or is the conviction a one-off?)
4. The circumstances surrounding the offence(s) and the explanation(s) offered.
5. How circumstances have changed since the offence and whether this demonstrates reduced likelihood of re-offending (and as such ongoing risk)
6. The degree of remorse, or otherwise, expressed and motivation to change.

Full and thorough consideration of all the above points will be made in order to come to a decision as to whether the appointment is confirmed, or the offer withdrawn. All staff involved in making this decision will have received appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders. An assessment of risk may be recorded.

Withdrawal of employment offer

If the decision is not to appoint, the applicant will receive a letter formally withdrawing the offer and confirmation of the reasons why this action was taken by the University.

Spent Convictions

The guidelines on the Disclosure Process also contain information and advice about the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, whereby conviction for some criminal offences can be regarded as 'spent' after a specified period of time. Once a conviction is 'spent', the applicant is not obliged to reveal its existence in most circumstances and can answer 'no' to the question "do you have a criminal record?"

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

on an application form, unless the position is subject to a DBS check, or the organisation is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. The NHS is exempt and therefore for joint University / NHS appointments advice should be sought from the POD team. It is an offence for anyone who has access to criminal records to disclose information about spent convictions unless officially authorised to do so.

Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information

Storage and access

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal file. After the DBS check is complete, only the outcome and reference number are recorded and kept securely and privately. Thereafter access will be made via the DBS Update Service where applicable/necessary.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. University of Suffolk maintains a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection rights and human rights of the individual subject before doing so.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, the University of Suffolk will ensure that any Disclosure information where held is immediately deleted.

However, notwithstanding the above, we will keep a secure record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was

requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

SECTION 3: Engagement of Agency or Casual Workers

Engaging Agency of Casual Workers

The engagement of agency or casual workers does not fall within the scope of this policy.

In these circumstances please refer to the following as appropriate:

- Engaging an Agency Process
- Engagement of Casual Workers Policy

SECTION 4: Relocation

Relocation Support

The University may provide financial support to help newly appointed staff relocate their home in order to take up a post with the University. Relocation support is discretionary and must be agreed in advance with POD before any expenses are incurred.

Eligibility

Eligibility is restricted to academic staff and professional services staff at Band 5 or above. Consideration may also be given to other posts that have been difficult to recruit to, for example where one or more recruitment attempts have been unsuccessful.

These arrangements apply to staff taking up a new appointment if:

- the post is permanent or fixed term for three or more years;.
- the individual's existing home is more than 75 miles from the new base for employment (UoS)
- the individual's new home is within 45 miles of the new base for employment; and
- the relocation is necessary to enable the employee to take up the post.

Existing University employees may also be eligible for relocation support where their role is relocated to a new base.

Where two members of a single household take up appointments with the University at or around the same time, relocation support will only apply once.

Approval

Claims must be submitted through EBIS, itemising the expenses being claimed and including original receipts and, where appropriate, estimates. Finance will check that the required receipts have been provided and that the expenses claimed fall within HMRC criteria. Claims will then be approved through EBIS by POD, within their authorised limit.

Claimants who are uncertain about the arrangements, or whose circumstances may require alternative arrangements, should seek advice from POD before incurring expenses.

Normally, all expenses incurred under the relocation policy must be submitted for reimbursement within the first year of employment and claimed as soon as possible after they are incurred. Where claims will not be complete within the first year of appointment, this should be notified to the Chief People Officer or Deputy Director of People & OD who will assess the reasonableness of any extension request. If the reason for delay is unreasonable or without merit, claims submitted after the first year of employment may not be supported.

Allowable Expenses

HMRC determines the expenses that may be claimed: A full list of claimable expenses can be found on the government website via this link <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/relocation-expenses-480-appendix-7>

As a general rule the claimable expenses are limited to:

- House hunting
- Selling and Buying Property to new location
- Moving from rented-to-rented accommodation
- Rented to purchased accommodation
- Temporary accommodation whilst seeking permanent residence
- Travel expenses

The following requirements apply to claims for relocation support:

- 1) The cost of moving furniture and household effects is claimable based on the lowest of three estimates.
- 2) The cost of temporary accommodation is normally claimable for up to three months while the employee seeks more permanent housing in the area. Any cost beyond three months is at the discretion of the Chief People Officer or Deputy Director of People and Organisational Development and should be requested in advance.

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

- 3) The cost of storing furniture and household effects is normally claimable for up to three months. Any cost beyond three months is at the discretion of the Chief People Officer or Deputy Director of People and Organisational Development and should be requested in advance.
- 4) The cost of up to four return journeys, and reasonable overnight hotel accommodation, from the existing base to the new base may be claimed for the purposes of house hunting, house move and/or orientation to the new area. These journeys may be undertaken by the staff member and/or their family. Mileage expenses will be refunded at the current HMRC rate. Where possible, the cheapest reasonable mode of transport should be selected.

Categories of support

House hunting

We will reimburse reasonable travelling expenses and accommodation costs incurred by you to cover visits to the area for house-hunting purposes.

Buying and selling property to relocate

We will contribute towards the following relocation costs reasonably incurred by you in selling one property to purchasing another:

We will not contribute towards the costs of purchasing a new property unless you are selling your existing property to purchase another.

The following may be claimed within the relocation limit:

- Your estate agency, auctioneer and advertising fees associated with selling your existing property.
- The legal and conveyancing fees associated with selling your existing property.
- A contribution towards any mortgage redemption penalty payable as a result of early redemption of the mortgage loan in relation to your existing property.
- Any charges for disconnection of public utilities and white goods (such as washing machines) serving your existing property and connection of public utilities and white goods serving your new property
- The legal and conveyancing fees (including survey, Land Registry, search, and mortgage arrangement fees) associated with the purchase of your new property.
- The stamp duty incurred in connection with the purchase of your new property. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/stamp-duty-land-tax/residential-property-rates>

- The costs of moving your furniture, domestic goods, and personal possessions from your existing property to your new property, including insurance taken out to cover goods in transit. You should obtain three quotations from different removal companies and use the cheapest unless you have a valid reason not to do so.

Moving from rented-to-rented accommodation

If you are moving from rented accommodation and intend to rent permanently in the new location, we will contribute towards the following costs reasonably incurred by you:

- Any charges for disconnection and subsequent reconnection of public utilities and white goods serving the existing and the new properties.
- Administration costs of letting agents (including check-out fees, penalty clauses and lease arrangement fees).
- Possible overlap in rental payments.
- The costs of moving furniture, domestic goods, and personal possessions, including insurance taken out to cover goods in transit. You should obtain three quotations from different removal companies and use the cheapest unless you have a valid reason not to do so.

Rented to purchased accommodation

If you live in rented accommodation but intend to purchase a property in your new work location, we will contribute towards the costs covered under '*Moving from rented to rented accommodation*' set out above.

Temporary accommodation

If you are renting out your existing property, before or while trying to, sell it any rental income received on the rented-out property must be offset against the cost of temporary accommodation. The difference only will be covered by this scheme.

The cost of temporary accommodation is normally for up to 3 months while seeking more permanent housing in the area; any cost beyond 3 months is at the discretion of the Chief People Officer or Deputy Director of People & OD.

Travel

Where travel necessitates rail travel or flights, these should be economy class and timed to achieve best value, as far as is reasonably possible.

Maximum Entitlement

Payments made to eligible staff will be subject to an overall cash limit of 12.5% of gross salary (as at the time of starting employment) to a maximum limit of £5,000.

HM Revenue & Customs has set a time limit on relocation. Relocation must be completed before the end of the tax year (5 April) after the one in which the employee takes up their new position. The University reserves the right to reject any claims submitted after this date. If however the claim is submitted and accepted after this period, it will be subject to tax which is payable by the individual.

Recovery

Claimants who leave their employment voluntarily within three years of the relevant appointment date shall be required to reimburse monies received through these arrangements as follows:

- During the first year: repayment in full;
- During the second year: repayment at 50%; and
- During the third year: repayment at 25%.

Repayment may be made from the final salary payment. Where this would cause financial hardship, an alternative repayment schedule should be agreed with the Chief People Officer or Deputy Director of People and Organisational Development.

Tax And National Insurance

At time of writing, the benefits set out above are paid free of tax and National Insurance up to the maximum limit of £5000, where they fall within the provisions prescribed by the HMRC. Should these exemptions change, recipients will be responsible for any emerging tax and/or NI obligations. Should the University of Suffolk agree to reimburse any expenses outside of the prescribed list, tax and National Insurance will be deducted.

SECTION 5: Secondments

Secondment Guidelines

From time to time, where it is in the interests of University of Suffolk to do so, the University will facilitate secondments to or from other organisations, or between University of Suffolk Schools/departments. A secondment is a temporary transfer to another role or activity, either full-time or part-time, within the University or to / from another organisation.

Secondments can provide significant benefits for the employee, the University and, where relevant, partner organisations. For employees they may offer an opportunity to develop new skills, gain new experiences, work in a different setting, and understand University of Suffolk and their part in it from

Recruitment and Employment Compliance Policy

Version: 1.1

Issued: August 2026

Review due: August 2030

another perspective. For the University, secondments can support continuing professional development, develop, or strengthen partnership working, help resource short-to-medium-term projects, and enable returning employees to bring back knowledge, networks, experiences, and skills that enhance their own performance and that of others.

The arrangements for each secondment must be agreed in advance and should be clear to all parties before the secondment begins.

The University will not usually support the secondment of staff to other organisations during their first year of service.

Internal Secondment

Internal secondments may be arranged to facilitate short-term project work, temporary assignment to another team or role, development opportunities, or other organisational needs.

Where an employee is seconded to another role within the University, they will usually be aligned to the terms and conditions of the post to which they are seconded. The substantive post of a seconded employee will be protected unless it is not practical to do so. Where this is the case, it must be made clear at the outset.

Managers considering seconding staff to alternative roles must discuss with their People Business Partner before progressing such arrangements.

Employees seeking secondment to another organisation must seek the support of their line manager prior to making any formal applications or committing to any arrangements. In considering such requests, line managers will take into consideration the likely benefits and costs to the University.

During a secondment, the seconded employee (seconded) continues to be employed by and paid by the University. The host employer reimburses the University for relevant costs, including pay (plus relevant on-costs and VAT) and expenses. The University and the host employer will need to agree arrangements for: performance management (including performance review, disciplinary procedures), booking and recording holidays, absence reporting.

This model helps the employee retain a strong relationship with the University and usually protects continuity of service and pension arrangements. It also provides clarity that the individual remains employed by the University.

However, it requires effective communication between the University and the host employer and may involve invoicing, VAT, or other financial arrangements.

Secondments from Other Organisations to the University of Suffolk

In acting as the host to a seconded, the arrangements described above for external secondments generally apply, but in reverse.

Where the University acts as host to a secondee from another organisation, the arrangements described above will generally apply in reverse. The appropriate model and terms must be agreed in advance with the secondee's substantive employer and relevant University managers.

Planning and Approval

Secondments require careful planning and clear communication. Before any secondment is agreed, managers should consider and document:

- the purpose of the secondment;
- the expected benefits of the secondment;
- the expected start date and duration;
- whether the secondment is full-time or part-time and, if part-time, the proposed hours;
- how performance will be managed during the secondment;
- how the employee will keep in touch with their substantive School, Directorate or employer;
- what arrangements are needed to cover the employee's substantive role during the secondment;
- how annual leave, sickness absence and other absences will be reported and managed;
- what liaison arrangements are needed between the University and any host organisation;
- who will pay the employee's salary and how any invoicing or expenses arrangements will operate; and
- any contractual, insurance, health and safety, equality, data protection, system access or other compliance requirements.

Communication and performance during secondment

It is important that managers keep in touch with seconded employees during their absence. This will help with addressing problems at an early stage and will facilitate the return at the end of the secondment. Similarly, seconded employees should take steps to keep in touch with their colleagues and manager during their absence.

In the unlikely event of a problem emerging during the secondment, host organisations must notify the relevant University of Suffolk manager. If formal performance management procedures are necessary, these must be managed by the University of Suffolk.

Backfill Arrangements during Secondments

Managers must consider any backfill arrangements prior to secondments being agreed, taking into account workload, business continuity and service needs. Approval for backfill will be through the normal post release process.

Sickness and Other Absences During Secondment

The arrangements for paying staff who are absent during the secondment due to maternity/adoption/paternity leave or long-term sickness may vary according to the terms of the secondment. However, the normal practice of the University of Suffolk is described here.

Where the University of Suffolk hosts a secondee from another organisation, the University will continue to pay¹ for the first three months of any maternity/adoption/paternity leave or sickness absence or until the end of the scheduled secondment, whichever is sooner. The substantive employer will be responsible for all payment thereafter.

In the case of a secondment to another organisation, University of Suffolk will normally expect the host organisation to continue paying (for) the secondee for the first three months of any maternity/adoption/paternity leave or sickness absence or until the end of the scheduled secondment, whichever is sooner. Thereafter, if the secondee remains absent, University of Suffolk will become responsible for any payment.

Returning from Secondment

It is important for managers to support employees returning from secondment to reintegrate them into their substantive role, School, or Directorate. This may include updating the employee on staff changes, reporting lines, team priorities, and any relevant changes in systems, processes or working arrangements.

New objectives should be agreed where appropriate, and any support needed to help the employee return effectively should be discussed.

SECTION 6: Data Protection, Record Keeping and Retention

The University will process personal data collected during recruitment and related employment compliance processes in accordance with data protection legislation and the University's data protection policies and privacy notices.

¹ Here "pay" means the rate appropriate in the circumstances and, as a minimum, in accordance with the secondee's substantive terms and conditions of employment and based on their rate of pay during the secondment.

Personal data contained in applications for employment must only be used for appropriate recruitment and employment purposes. This may include shortlisting, assessment, interview arrangements, pre-employment checks, appointment decisions and, for successful candidates, establishing an employment record.

Recruitment information must not be retained for longer than necessary. Recruitment records will normally be shredded and/or deleted from electronic systems after eight months, except where they relate to successful candidates, in which case relevant information will be retained on the employee's personal file during employment and in line with the University's document retention policy.

Candidates have the right to request access to certain information held about them. Any such requests must be referred to the Data Protection Officer.

Equal opportunities monitoring information submitted by candidates is not made available to recruiting managers or panel members. POD uses this information to identify candidates to be considered under the Disability Confident Employer Scheme and to collate and report anonymised recruitment outcomes in order to monitor recruitment practice and equality of opportunity.

Further information is available in the University's Applicant Privacy Notice.