

Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

Swift is committed to ensuring all Learners, Employees and Employers are safeguarded during their working or learning relationship with our organisation.

It is essential that everyone at Swift is recruited with safeguarding in mind, so that they share Swift's safeguarding values and receive the right messages about our safeguarding approach and culture.

Swift understands the importance of operating a robust safer recruitment and selection process to deter and prevent people who might be unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service requirements.

Swift is a responsible employer and ensures that it engages staff and associates in a way that is compliant with the Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation, and in particular that which exempts people with specific convictions from applying for or holding a particular job role where there is an acknowledged risk associated with access to young people or vulnerable adults.

All applicants and potential Swift employees go through the same recruitment process, which includes the completion of our robust application pack along with submitting their CV. Employees go through right to work eligibility and identity checks, along with enhanced DBS checks prior to joining the company, with any identified risks assessed and managed swiftly.

Should a prospective employee or candidate give false or untrue information, this would result in an immediate withdrawal of the offer of employment. Failure to disclose or the provision of a false statement of disclosure by a potential employee or an employee in post may result in disciplinary action, and possible dismissal of the employee, or termination of the associate's agreement.

As part of Swift's safer recruitment process, an online search will be also carried out for all candidates by our DDSL (unless it is the DDSL who is recruiting, then the task will move to the DSL), on social media sites, YouTube, Google. All shortlisted candidates will be informed of this search.

The search will go back 3 years from the date of application.

There are 2 main reasons for these online checks:

1. To safeguard our Learners, Employers and Employees.
2. To maintain a positive reputation for the organisation and all who are involved with Swift.

We will use the following criteria when carrying out searches for ALL candidates:

- Evidence of offensive or inappropriate behaviour, jokes, or language
- Discriminatory comments
- Inappropriate photos
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Any content that would suggest the candidate may not be suitable to work with children

All findings are recorded and discussed with the individual.

Reporting Concerns

In the event of a Swift employee having suspicions regarding the contact of another employee, or an individual engaged on business for Swift with a young person or vulnerable adult, they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as they have concerns. This is in order to minimise any potential risk and allow the timely investigation into the concerns to take place.

Training

All staff, including senior leaders and Governors, and associates working at Swift are required to provide evidence that they have met the mandatory requirement to complete Level 1 safeguarding training during the induction process. Those with Deputy/Designated Safeguarding Officer responsibilities will need to complete additional training relevant to their role.

Governance at Swift

Swift's Governor and Managing Director and business owner have overall responsibility for ensuring those involved in the recruitment of staff have appropriate safer recruitment training, including at least one member of the senior management team to have face to face safer recruitment training.

Our Governors guide and support the senior leadership team, ensuring as an organisation, human rights and equality are accurately represented and all processes are fair, transparent and consistent for all.

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Policy. Monitoring will include assessing how this policy is working in practice, reviewing this annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection decision is of prime importance as the vehicle for obtaining the best possible person-to-job fit that will, when aggregated, contribute significantly towards the Company's effectiveness.

The Recruitment & Selection procedure will:

- be fair and consistent;
- be non-discriminatory on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, age, religion or belief, or disability.
- conform to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 legislation, along with all other statutory regulations and agreed best practice.

Establishing a recruitment need

Once a need for recruitment has been identified, the recruiting manager must firstly consider whether the role could be performed within existing resources in the Company. Following this, approval should be gained from the Managing Director.

The Recruitment Process

Swift has a robust recruitment process in place which maintains and protects our safeguarding duty, culture and beliefs, along with the reputation of the organisation.

The emphasis on safeguarding throughout the process is designed to deter any individual from applying who may have ulterior reasons for working within the education sector.

To assess the most effective means of obtaining suitable candidates, the following options should be considered:

- ✓ Internal advert within the Company
- ✓ Examination of previous applications, or those held on file with the relevant Line Manager
- ✓ External advert on job sites/social media (where appropriate)
- ✓ External advert in the appropriate technical / professional Journal
- ✓ For some posts, the use of a recruitment agency (with SLT approval)

The Advert

For an advertisement to be appropriate it must contain as much information as possible to ensure the correct audience is targeted and reduce unsuitable applications, while remaining as cost-effective as possible.

This includes the required:

- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Abilities
- ✓ Experience
- ✓ Attitude and behaviours

Alongside these requirements, all adverts will contain to what extent the role will involve contact with children and young people and any regulated activity relevant to children.

All Swift adverts will contain:

- ✓ Our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people,
- ✓ A clear message that safeguarding checks will be undertaken,
- ✓ The safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification,
- ✓ Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

External adverts to be submitted to a senior Director for approval before being placed. Use of external recruitment agencies is only permitted with Senior Director approval and authorisation of costings.

Applications received are subject to GDPR regulations and should be treated in strict confidence, e.g., secure filing and limited sharing with appropriate colleagues involved in the recruitment process. For this purpose, a GDPR consent and information form is part of the application pack sent out to all candidates.

Application Pack

The Swift Application pack advises applicants that that it is an offence to apply for a role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. The pack also contains links to our child protection policy and practices, along with our policy covering the employment of ex-offenders which are held on our website.

Swift requires all applicants to provide:

- ✓ personal details: current and former names,
- ✓ current address,
- ✓ national insurance number,
- ✓ details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving,
- ✓ full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment,
- ✓ qualifications, the awarding body and date of award,
- ✓ details of referees/references and
- ✓ a statement of the personal qualities and experience they believe are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification,

Alongside the application pack, an anonymous Equality and Diversity questionnaire is requested.

Shortlisting

All candidates who have been shortlisted, should be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, to include:

- if they have a criminal history
- if they are included on the children's barred list
- if they are prohibited from teaching
- if they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school
- information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted
- if they are known to the police and children's local authority social care
- if they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- any relevant overseas information.

This information is not requested in the application pack so as not to influence the shortlisting process. A wet signature is required at this point to confirm the form is a true representation.

The purpose of the declaration is to give candidates the opportunity to share relevant information which will be discussed at interview and in preparation for DBS checks.

Shortlisting will be carried out by at least 2 people, but in particular, both the safer recruitment trained member of staff, and the recruiting manager.

The shortlisting staff will look for inconsistencies and gaps in employment, and the reasons for these, and also explore any potential concerns identified.

Employment history and collecting references.

Swift understands the importance of seeking references, this allows us to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions.

References are obtained before interview, where possible, for any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

Swift will:

- ✓ not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern,
- ✓ not rely on applicants to obtain their reference,
- ✓ ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect of any disciplinary investigations) ,
- ✓ obtain verification of the individual's most recent, relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed,
- ✓ secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then a reference from their current employer will be secured,
- ✓ always verify any information with the person who provided the reference,
- ✓ ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source,
- ✓ contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided,
- ✓ compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate,
- ✓ establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post, and,
- ✓ ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

Providing References.

When asked to provide references, we will ensure the information provided confirms:

- ✓ whether we are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children
- ✓ provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold but excluding information about concerns/allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.
- ✓ It will be provided in a timely manner and not hold up proceedings.

Selection

Swift will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post.

A list of structured questions will be identified ahead of any interview, along with a range of competency-based questions.

Questions asked include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working in the sector,
- exploring their skills and examples of experience relevant to the role, and,
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

The interview process is the Organisations' opportunity to explore potential areas of concern and to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.

Information that may lead to concerns about a candidate's suitability could be:

- the implication that adults and children are equal,
- a lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- inappropriate idealisation of children
- inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children,
- indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Swift will consider information raised regarding past disciplinary action or allegations in individual cases.

Pre-Appointment checks, vetting and regulated activity.

Swift understands its legal obligations in relation to pre-employment checks when appointing individuals to engage in regulated activity relating to children and records all recruitment requirements in our Single Central Register.

The purpose of these checks is to help identify whether a person may be unsuitable to work with children (and in some cases is legally prohibited from working with children and/or working as a teacher).

The checks are a part of the wider Swift safeguarding regime and will continue following appointment.

All offers of employment here at Swift are deemed **conditional** until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks.

For more senior posts psychometric testing, presentations to the interview panel on a chosen topic and/or a series of individual interviews on various topics may be included. At least two people should be involved in short listing and sit on the Interview Panel, one of which must have taken part in safer recruitment training.

Swift will:

- ✓ **verify a candidate's identity:** to ensure that the person is who they claim to be.
 - This includes:
 - Checking and name changes, by checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available.
 - Carrying out an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children). When using the DBS update service, the original physical certificate will still be required to be seen,
 - Verifying the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. In order to do this, we will ask relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether the candidate has the physical and mental capacity for the specific role,
 - Verifying the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals.
 - Making any further checks considered appropriate if the person has lived or worked outside the UK,
 - Verifying professional qualifications, as appropriate by accessing The Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

Someone who is engaging in regulated activity with children, as a result of their work, is someone who will:

- be responsible, on a regular basis, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children,
- be working on a regular basis in a specified establishment or in connection with the purposes of that establishment, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children,
- engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

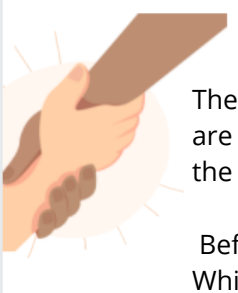
All Swift employees take part in an Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. This check provides information where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity relating to children, and allows an additional check to be made, about whether the person appears on the children's barred list, along with a check of the Police National Computer records plus additional information held by the police. The check can also include information as to whether a candidate/employee, is subject to a section 128 direction.

DBS Update Service

Anyone can join the DBS Update Service; this must be done at the point that an application for a new DBS check is made.

Subscription to the service enables future status checks to be carried out by employers to confirm that no new information has been added to the check since its issue.


Swift encourages all staff to join the Update Service to provide a more flexible and cost-effective approach.



The Update Service provides more portability of a DBS check across employers. The online checks are free and will identify whether there has been any change to the information recorded, since the initial certificate was issued.

Before carrying out an Update Service check, Swift will obtain consent from the individual. Whilst carrying out the check, Swift will check that the DBS certificate matches the individual's identity, examine the original certificate to ensure that it is valid for employment with the children's workforce, and ensure that the level of the check is appropriate to the job they are applying for.


Prohibitions and Restrictions



Swift will carry out checks on those staff who have a teacher qualification, to ensure they are not prohibited from working with children. These will be carried out via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). The purpose of these checks is to ensure a person has not been prohibited from carrying out teaching work.

Swift will NOT appoint someone to a role that involves teaching work who is prohibited from doing so.

Recording: Our Single Central Register




Swift maintains a Single Central Register (SCR) of all checks carried out on employee's pre-employment. The SCR is kept in our Intranet system, in a secure location, with 'need to know' access.

The SCR documents checks made, with dates, certificates and information including:

- Identity Check,
- An enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided,
- A prohibition from teaching check,
- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK,
- A check of professional qualifications, where required, with copies of certificates taken,
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

These details will be removed from the SCR should an employee leave Swift.

Document Retention




Swift will not keep copies of DBS certificates; however, the certificate number and date of check will be stored on the SCR.

All other documents that verify a candidate's identity will be stored in their personal HR file.

Candidates who have lived and/worked outside the UK

Swift will ensure that individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK undergo the same checks as all other staff employed at Swift.

Swift will obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.



In addition, we will make any further checks as appropriate to ensure any relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered.

Where applicable Swift will:

- Make criminal records checks for overseas applicants. For further information, Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK;
- Obtain a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority (usually the Department/Ministry of Education) in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked to confirm that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. For this purpose, applicants will be advised of the contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland, which can be found on the Regulated Professions database.

These checks will be in addition to the information gathered via pre-employment checks, and will also be enhanced by a risk assessment should this be required.

Swift does not, as usual practice, engage with agencies, supply staff, or volunteers, but understands its responsibility should this arise.

Swift engages with visiting speakers and has good processes and practices in place to ensure safeguarding is upheld.

For each visiting speaker, a risk assessment is completed, DBS information recorded, and the visitor is never left unattended within our premises.

All visitors are required to wear both their ID lanyard, and a Swift visitor lanyard and must sign in and out on our visitor record.

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Management Team will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Policy. Monitoring will include assessing how this policy is working in practice, reviewing this annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Version: 3

Board Approval:

Managing Director Name: Gregory Morrall

Gregory Morrall

Signature:

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Reviewed by: Jayne Hipkiss