

St Edmundsbury Cathedral



Recruitment Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out St Edmundsbury Cathedral's approach to recruitment and selection. The aims of the policy are to:

- Ensure that St Edmundsbury Cathedral can secure excellent employees and volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Ensure our employee and volunteer demographic reflects the society and community we serve as much as possible.
- Ensure DBS checks are completed where necessary to help Chapter make safer recruitment decisions.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral's recruitment practices follow the Church of England's Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance.

We are committed to treating all our employees, volunteers and applicants equally and fairly and we are committed to ensuring all recruitment and promotion decisions will be fair and open. This policy seeks to ensure that appropriate applicants are chosen for job and volunteer vacancies regardless of sex, race, disability or other personal characteristics. No employee, volunteer, potential employee or potential volunteer shall receive less favourable treatment during recruitment and selection or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment or volunteering that cannot be justified as necessary, on the grounds of their age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation (these are "protected characteristics" as laid out in the Equality Act 2010).

We also recognise the contribution that former or ex-offenders can make as employees and volunteers and welcome applications from them. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The policy applies to internal and external recruitment, including temporary, fixed term or permanent employment contracts and volunteering or placement agreements for any duration.

The development of jobs and volunteer roles

If a need for a new job is identified, the line manager recruiting for a role works with the Chief Operating Officer to create a job description. All new job descriptions are taken through the process of evaluation to assess the job size and content compared to other roles and establish appropriate pay parameters for the role. All new job descriptions are ratified by members of the Management Team. Consideration will be given by managers whether temporary jobs could be offered as secondment opportunities, and the appropriate remuneration for this.

If an opportunity for a new volunteer role is identified, the development of the role, role profile and associated documentation is carried out by the PR, Visits and Volunteer manager. The role profile should then be compared to the volunteering waiting list to identify any potential skill match.

Vacancy advertising

The timetable for advertising and recruitment will be agreed between the Chief Operating Officer and the recruiting line manager to give the best possible outcome.

Wherever possible, job and volunteer vacancies are advertised simultaneously internally and externally. Wherever possible, we notify vacancies in a range of locations, including those which are appropriate for reaching under-represented groups.

All vacancy advertisements include a short statement explaining St Edmundsbury Cathedral's commitment to inclusivity. Copies of the Inclusivity Policy and the Discrimination and Equal Opportunities policy are available on St Edmundsbury Cathedral's website.

We advertise all vacancies with information about St Edmundsbury Cathedral and about our safeguarding expectations. The skills, experiences and competencies of the jobholder or volunteer are also laid out. We include an indicative salary in employment vacancy advertisements, which is agreed and confirmed before the chosen applicant starts in their role.

Applicants for jobs or volunteer roles apply for the position by completing the Cathedral application form and Confidential Declaration Form (where appropriate). CV's, letters etc will not be accepted in place of the Cathedral's application forms, for employee or volunteer roles. If applicants are successful at this stage, we invite them to an interview. For employment interviews, if further information is required (e.g. regarding job specific tests or presentations that will form part of the interview) we provide this prior to interview.

Recruitment and selection

Interviews assess applicants against job or role related criteria only. For job interviews, a question sheet is designed by the recruiting line manager and the Chief Operating Officer, based on the job description and person specification. Job interviews are usually held with a panel of 2-3 people, including the recruiting line manager and the Chief Operating Officer. Following interviews, applicants are notified of the outcome as soon as is reasonably possible by the Chief Operating Officer. Successful applicants are sent offer letters and their induction is arranged by the Chief Operating Officer. Offers of employment are subject to receipt of references and any safeguarding checks required for the role.

Interviews for volunteering positions can be a formal or informal meeting, appropriate and proportionate to the role they are applying for. Once a volunteer has been recruited, a meeting will be arranged to discuss and share the Volunteer Policy, the Volunteer Agreement and the Volunteer Handbook. The volunteer will be asked to sign and return the Volunteer Agreement and abide by its conditions.

We keep selection criteria (job description or role profile and person specification) under review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job or role. Any qualifications or requirements applied to a

job or volunteer role that have or may have the effect of inhibiting applications from certain groups of the population are only retained if they can be justified in terms of the job or role to be done.

Wherever possible, we make efforts to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups. Reasonable adjustments will be made to reduce any disadvantage faced by disabled people in making an application in response to an advertisement.

This includes taking into account such adjustments to working arrangements or physical features of the workplace as are reasonable to accommodate their needs and be such that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled candidates.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral exists to proclaim the Christian faith, so all employees and volunteers are expected to have or to be able to develop an understanding of the Church of England, its ethos, structures and mission; work comfortably and in sympathy with the worship and mission of the Cathedral and be willing to engage in all aspects of the Cathedral's life. All employees and volunteers are expected to have respect for the purpose of the Cathedral as a Church of England cathedral. Some specific volunteer roles, for example, those which involve assistance in the Cathedral's worship, may require a more formal commitment to the Christian faith.

Records and personal information

For employment positions written records of interviews, reasons for decisions made at each stage of the process and reasons for appointment or non-appointment are kept confidentially by the Chief Operating Officer for 6 months. Records are then disposed of confidentially.

We ask all applicants for paid positions at the interview stage to provide documentary evidence of their right to live and work in the UK, to ensure compliance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. A photocopy of the accepted documentation is taken.

Further information on the principles of handling personal data when dealing with recruitment and selection processes can be found in the Data Protection Policy.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. A person's criminal record, in itself, will not debar that person from being appointed to a post. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. Suitable applicants will not be refused posts because of offences which are not relevant to, and do not place them at, or make them a risk in, the role for which they are applying.

Recruitment process

When we advertise all jobs or volunteer roles, we will:

- Make a copy of this policy accessible to applicants to ensure applicants are clear about how we process applications from ex-offenders;
- Undertake a thorough risk assessment about whether a DBS check is proportionate and relevant to the role concerned;
- Make it clear on the job description or volunteer role description whether the role requires a DBS check and if so, at what level (e.g. standard, enhanced, or enhanced with children's and/or adults' barred list checks);
- Ask *all* applicants to declare any 'unspent' convictions on the job or volunteer application form;
- Ask applicants for jobs or volunteer roles requiring a DBS check to complete a confidential declaration form with their application, to give applicants a chance to disclose any relevant spent or unspent convictions;
- Make a copy of the DBS code of practice available to any applicant who is the subject of a criminal record check submitted to the DBS;
- Ask shortlisted candidates to bring all necessary documents with them to interview in order to carry out a DBS check, if this is required for the job or volunteer role;

Candidates will not be asked to disclose information relating to 'spent' convictions unless the job or volunteer role being recruited for is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Usually these roles involve working closely with children or vulnerable adults, for example, Organist, Discovery Centre Manager and volunteers, Chaplains.

Responding to disclosure of convictions

If an applicant discloses any convictions (spent or unspent) as part of the application process or confidential declaration form, we will not include this information when we are shortlisting applicants for interview. Only once applicants are shortlisted will we consider the information given in the disclosure.

If a shortlisted applicant has disclosed convictions in the application process or on the confidential declaration form, we will invite them for a confidential discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor prior to interview, to ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. We will also take into account existing safeguarding information for anyone shortlisted for employment or volunteer positions.

If an application is offered a position subject to a DBS check, we will invite them for a confidential discussion on the subject of any matter revealed on the DBS certificate (i.e. if the DBS certificate is not clear), before deciding whether to withdraw the conditional offer of employment.

Where appropriate we will refer any matters relating to previous convictions to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor for review.

All cases will be examined on an individual basis, taking the following into consideration:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the position applied for;
- The seriousness of any offence revealed;

- The age of the applicant at the time of the offence(s);
- The length of time since the offence(s) occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour;
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s), and the explanation(s) offered by the person concerned;
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour.

Failure to disclose convictions

Applicants are not obliged to complete the confidential declaration form for jobs or roles requiring a DBS check, but if an applicant fails to complete this form on request, we will not progress the application any further.

If an applicant fails to disclose any convictions which should have been disclosed as part of the application process, this could result in any of the following, depending on the nature of the individual case:

- Their application being terminated;
- Their offer of employment or of a volunteer role being withdrawn;
- Action under our Disciplinary policy and procedure, the outcome of which could be dismissal for employees or a cessation of volunteering for volunteers.

References

We will always take up references for jobs and volunteer roles. We do not accept open references or testimonials and specifically ask referees about matters relating to safeguarding.

All offers of employment and volunteering are subject to two satisfactory references and on eligibility to work in the UK where applicable.

The Chief Operating Officer applies for and verifies all references, which are requested once applicants have indicated acceptance, or prior to interview for roles requiring a DBS check. Employment references ideally come from current and/or previous employers, if applicable. If the information provided is not satisfactory, the offer may be revoked. In some circumstances, we also request medical checks and proof of qualifications.

Approval and appointment

Once the Chief Operating Officer has checked all the information (from the application form and interview and references) for consistency, an offer can be made. This may be conditional on a DBS check depending on the job/role.

Appropriate induction and training will be given to new employees and volunteers.

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