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**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 attract and secure high calibre 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.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral will follow the Church of England’s Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance, which includes Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks are completed where necessary.

We are committed to treating all employees, volunteers, and applicants equally and fairly and will ensure that all recruitment and promotion decisions are open and fair. 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, following safer recruitment guidance.

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

St Edmundsbury Cathedral exists to proclaim the Christian faith, where there is a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for a role the applicant must be a communicant member of the Church of England or a church in communion with it. For all other roles applicants are expected to be understanding and sympathetic of the Church of England’s ethos, structures, and mission.

**Recruitment of Staff**

**Job Descriptions**

All Job descriptions will be agreed with the relevant line manager and Chief Operating Officer. When creating a job description, we will evaluate the job size and content to establish the appropriate Terms and Conditions. Consideration will be given as to whether the role should be a secondment opportunity or employed on a temporary, fixed term or permanent contact.

All job descriptions will state what the Key Responsibilities for the roles are and will include the required Person Specifications. Terms and Conditions of the role will show an indicative salary, which will be agreed and confirmed upon employment.

All job descriptions state that we are an Inclusive Church and warmly welcome applications from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates who are currently under-represented on the team. Copies of the Inclusivity Policy and the Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy are available on St Edmundsbury Cathedral’s website.

All job descriptions highlight the importance of Safeguarding in the Cathedral and states that “All staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all children and adults who may be vulnerable, who are involved with and/or visit the Cathedral. This will include adherence to all safeguarding policies and procedures, following good practice in relation to their own behaviour and conduct and

undertaking any safeguarding duties commensurate with their specific role.” It is also compulsory for all staff and volunteers to carry out the Basic Awareness Safeguarding Training.

Job descriptions include the Cathedral’s core Values of Faith, Welcome, Compassion and Confidence. They state how these values influence the running of the Cathedral and the work it does within the community and emphasises the importance of all staff and volunteers upholding these values.

**Vacancy Advertising**

Wherever possible, staff vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally, in a range of locations, ensuring that we reach under-represented groups.

In exceptional circumstances, an executive decision may be made not to advertise a role internally and or externally. For example, if the role in question is a short-term time-limited position, or if there is an urgent need for the role to be filled, for which the business case must be made. This will be determined on the advice of the relevant line manager and agreed only on the authority of the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with The Dean.

Where discretion is exercised the individual recruited for the role will be required to undergo the normal application procedure highlighted below, with all safer recruitment processes being followed as usual.

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

**Recruitment and Selection**

All applicants are required to complete the Cathedral application form along with the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. CV’s, may be included, but, will not be accepted in place of the Cathedral’s application form.

Particular care will be taken when shortlisting candidates for interview to ensure that decisions are justifiable and are on non-discriminatory grounds.

If applicants are successful at this stage, they will be invited to an interview, to be assessed against the job description and criteria only.

Interview questions will be agreed 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 depending on the role and may include presentations and or other competency-based tests.

The panel conducting recruitment interviews will ensure that any additional questions which may be asked are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. No assumptions will be made on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Wherever possible, we will identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the needs of disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups. Reasonable adjustments will be made to reduce any disadvantage faced by disabled people in applying for roles.

Following interviews, applicants will be notified of the outcome as soon as is reasonably possible. Successful applicants will be sent an offer letter, followed by a contract of employment. In some circumstances, we may also request medical checks and proof of qualifications.

Offers of employment are subject to any safeguarding checks required for the role and receipt of two satisfactory written references. If the safeguarding checks and or references provided are not satisfactory then the offer may be revoked. Once these have been obtained their induction and training will be arranged by the Human Resources and Safeguarding Administrator.

Adjustments to working arrangements or physical features of the workplace as are reasonable to accommodate their needs will be implemented prior to their start date so that they are not placed at a disadvantage compared with non-disabled employees.

**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 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.

**Right to Work in the UK and Illegal Working**

It is against the law for the Cathedral to employ a person who does not have permission to live and work in the UK. The Cathedral will not employ an individual unless they have a legal right to work in the UK.

All offers of employment will be subject to the individual providing the required original documents confirming their right to work. The requirement to prove a legal right to work in the UK will apply to every person who is offered employment with the Cathedral, regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

If an applicant is not able to prove a legal right to work in the UK, then they will be advised to contact the Citizens Advice Bureau for further advice. In these circumstances, the employment offer will be put on hold while further checks are made.

In the event that an individual has time-limited permission to live and work in the UK, they must provide evidence of their renewed right to live and work in the UK at the expiry of the current permission.

If it becomes evident to the Cathedral during the course of an employee's employment that they do not have the right to work in the UK, the Cathedral will, following an investigation into the circumstances and having established that the employee does not have the right to work in the UK, terminate the employee's contract of employment.

**Recruitment of Volunteers**

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 Visitor Experience Manager with the exception of Chapter and the committees of Chapter which will be carried out by the Chief Operating Officer and Nominations Committee.

Wherever possible, we will identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the needs of disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups. Reasonable adjustments will be made to reduce any disadvantage faced by disabled people in applying for roles.

Applicants applying for a position are required to complete the Cathedral Volunteer Application Form along with the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. CV’s may be included but will not be accepted in place of the Cathedral’s Application Form.

Interviews for volunteering positions can be a formal or informal meeting, as appropriate and proportionate to the role for which they are applying.

Offers of volunteering are subject to any safeguarding checks required for the role and receipt of two satisfactory written references. If the safeguarding checks and or references provided are not satisfactory then the offer may be revoked. Once these have been obtained 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 terms and conditions.

Once a volunteer has been recruited, they must carry out the appropriate safeguarding training which will be arranged by the Human Resources and Safeguarding Administrator, before commencing volunteering.

For Chapter and Committees of Chapter the Chief Operating Officer will arrange the appropriate induction and training.

**Recruitment of Ex-offenders for Employed Staff and Volunteers**

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 jobs roles, we will:

* Make a copy of this policy accessible to applicants to ensure they 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, Learning Manager and 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 invest them for a confidential discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer prior to interview, to ensure than 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.

**March 2024**