



Safer Recruitment Policy

Document Owner and Approval

The COO is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this policy document is reviewed in line with Gateways' policy review schedule.

This policy was most recently reviewed and approved by the Chair of Trustees and the CEO on 31/01/2026.

Version History Log

Version	Description of Change	Date policy reviewed	Author
1	Initial issue	11/04/2024	Josh Gershuny
2	Updated in line with KCSIE 2025	31/01/2026	Jemma Sager
3	Reviewed in line with KCSIE 2026	19/08/2026	Jemma Sager

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1. Principles

Recruitment plays a pivotal role in the continued success and development of Gateways. It enables the organisation to attract, recruit and retain the best candidates and Staff with the necessary skills and experience to help the organisation thrive.

Gateways is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of staff/trainees/volunteers and contractors are conducted in a manner that is equitable, fair and transparent as well as promoting equality of opportunity.

Gateways is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its students and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. We expect all staff to share this commitment. Child protection and safeguarding considerations are included at every stage of the recruitment process, consistent with statutory guidance provided by the government. All statutory guidance used in the creation of this policy will be listed in full.

This policy and its contents are applicable to recruitment across both the educational and charity parts of the organisation.

2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that Gateways meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- Ensure the identification of the person best suited to the role based on the candidate's abilities, qualifications, attitude, experience and merit as measured against the job description.
- Ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner that complies with current employment legislation and to ensure that all candidates are considered equally and consistently.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE September 2025), Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Keep our students safe by helping to deter, reject and identify people who may be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

Staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the details in this policy.

3. Statutory Guidance

This policy has been drawn together in conjunction with the following statutory guidance:

- The Charities Act 2011
- Child Care Act 2006
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Gateways Safeguarding Policy 2025
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2016
- Gateways Staff Handbook
- Gateways Privacy Notice
- Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012
- The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015
- Gateways Whistleblowing Policy

4. Safer Recruitment Training

At least one member of any recruitment panel will have successfully received up to date, accredited training in safer recruitment procedures.

5. Planning for Recruitment

Where the proposed recruitment activity concerns a senior leader or deputy post the CEO or COO will draw together and confirm the advert with the Trustees.

Before any recruitment activity for roles of a lower grade the director of education, in conjunction with the CEO, the hiring manager will draw together, review and confirm both the job description and person specification, being sure to make sure that the documentation is an accurate reflection of the proposed role.

The CEO will make a determination as to whether a role is to be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, temporary or any other basis, taking into account any advice received.

6. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

All applicants for employment opportunities at Gateways will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history as well as their suitability for the role being applied for.

Prospective candidates will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following documents.

- Job description and person specification;
- The Gateways Safeguarding Policy;
- The Gateways Safer Recruitment Policy (this document);
- A timeline for the recruitment process;
- An application form.

All prospective candidates must complete, in full, an application form. CVs on their own are not accepted.

6.1 Advertising Vacancies

It will be normal practice for all vacancies to be advertised on the Gateways website unless there is a good reason not to do so. Advertisements may be made either internally (for example on noticeboards or via email to all staff) or externally (such as via an education jobs website), depending on the type of vacancy and the current nature of the recruitment market. When advertising externally, Gateways will ensure that staff are aware and able to apply should they wish to do so.

Senior leadership roles, such as CEO, Director of Education and Chief Operating Officer will also be advertised unless there is good reason not to do so. The vacancy will be advertised in such a manner as the Trustees see appropriate taking into consideration the best way of reaching the target audience and the level of exposure the advert will receive.

Adverts will include a safeguarding statement, highlight Gateways' commitment to the safeguarding of children and young people to deter any unsuitable candidates, an equal opportunities statement and a statement regarding the declaration of convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended), along with the necessary information needed to attract suitable candidates to the post and the organisation.

6.2 Shortlisting Candidates

Gateways will conduct a shortlisting exercise by reviewing all application forms received to determine which applicants will be invited to interview. The shortlisting exercise will be conducted by two members of staff and should be as diverse as possible. It is recommended that these individuals are also involved in the interview process.

During the shortlisting process, all candidates will be assessed equally against the same criteria, without exception or variation. All candidates will be carefully scrutinised, with particular care paid to any gaps in employment; repeated and/or regular/frequent changes in employment; and anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the form. Any such concerns will be taken up with the candidate at interview and will be satisfactorily resolved before any firm offer of employment is made.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a formal interview at which their skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. They may also be invited to do a skills-based task. All shortlisted candidates will be tested at interview about their suitability to work with children.

As part of the shortlisting process Gateways will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which the organisation may want to explore with an applicant at interview. This forms part of the organisation's wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working within an education environment.

As part of the shortlisting process, Gateways may have an initial screening telephone call to explore any gaps in employment or any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters. Alternatively, this may be done at interview.

6.3 Artificial Intelligence

Gateways does not use artificial intelligence software as a decision-making tool at any stage of the recruitment process, including in respect of external and internal applications and promotion proposals.

7. The Interview Process

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacancy and may include a variety of methods including but not limited to an interview, skills based tasks and/or presentation. Gateways will, where possible, conduct all interviews in a face-to-face method (which could be via remote methods using video conferencing software, such as Zoom or Teams, if face-to-face is not practical). Telephone interviews may be used at an earlier stage.

The recruiting manager is responsible for compiling relevant competency-based interview questions. All interview questions asked must be relevant (and seen to be relevant) to the job being applied for.

7.1 Conducting the Interview

To ensure fairness, each candidate should receive the same interview experience, the only exception being where reasonable adjustments have been agreed. The panel will be assessing the candidate, and the candidate will be assessing Gateways as a potential employer.

It is therefore recommended that the candidates be aware of the following at the beginning of the interview:

- What the selection process and methods are;
- How they will be assessed;
- That they will be given the opportunity to ask questions;
- How they will find out a selection outcome.
- The interviewing panel should also:
 - Ensure that each candidate is greeted and escorted to and from the interview room;
 - Ensure that the room is appropriate for interviewing (free of interruptions, comfortable etc.)
 - Ensure that arrangements are in place for candidates with a disability. Due diligence is necessary to ensure that any additional needs are accommodated at the interview;
 - Give all interviewees a comparable amount of time;
 - Supplement their understanding of the candidate's responses by the use of probing questions.
- All candidates who are invited to interview will be asked to bring original evidence of their identity, address, right to work in the UK, relevant qualifications

7.2 Selection Tests

It is recommended that a selection test is used in addition to interviews. This will provide the selection panel with additional information on the suitability of candidates for the role. Selection tests can often be designed to assimilate certain aspects of the role and test how the candidates perform in those scenarios.



Examples can be in-tray exercises, presentation skills or an observation (list not exhaustive).

These exercises must be designed so the candidates can be scored against the criteria in the job description and can be used alongside the interview to assess the candidate's suitability for the role.

8. The Decision to Appoint

The decision to appoint is based on an amalgamation of the individual interview scoring sheets and any selection testing results. These scores should be noted on a candidate comparison form.

The overall highest-scoring candidate should be offered the post, providing the minimum acceptable standards have been met.

If there are two or more candidates who are closely matched in scoring following the selection stage, the recruiting manager may decide to carry out an additional stage of the selection process such as a second interview. The panel members of a second stage interview can and should be different to the first stage interview, however, any additional interviews should be consistent for all candidates.

If none of the candidates are considered suitable, thought should be given to reviewing the advert/shortlisting/interview process and/or the Job Description itself and if necessary, the post should be re-opened on the open market.