



## **Safer Recruitment Policy**

## RATIFICATION

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<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	<i>SHASSAN</i>
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Acumen Care Services (Acumen) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. To achieve this commitment, we will ensure the continuous development, improvement and review of robust safeguarding processes and procedures that continuously promote a culture of vigilance in respect of safeguarding within our organization.

This policy sets out the minimum requirements of Acumen's recruitment process, taking in dueconsideration of the statutory guidance that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies.
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and adults at risk.
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and adults at risk.

This policy applies to the recruitment of all posts i.e. permanent, fixed term, temporary, voluntary, and agency staff.

All appointing managers, interview panel members and members of the HR/Recruitment team will be briefed on this policy before engaging with the recruitment process.

This policy may be amended, withdrawn, suspended, or departed from at the discretion of the business. While it does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and is entirely non-contractual, all employees are required to adhere to the policy and any failure to comply with any aspect of the policy may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

This policy will be available on the company's internal system, or a hard copy can be requested from the HR team.

## **Equality and Diversity**

Acumen is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all our employees. The implementation of this policy will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of gender, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, religion, culture, sexual orientation, marital status or caring responsibility or trade union membership.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone with a physical or mental impairment or an impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities. Acumen will not discriminate against any applicant that discloses a disability and will make any reasonable adjustments required for an interview or employment.

All advertisement text, recruitment material and the wider recruitment process will be monitored by the Recruitment team to ensure compliance with equality and diversity principles and legislation.

## THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

### Planning the Recruitment Process

Planning is essential before moving forward with the recruitment process for any role. A clearly defined **Job Description** will be in place which specifies the key responsibilities of the post holder and the individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the individuals s/he is responsible for or comes into contact with.

As part of the Job Description, a clearly defined **Person Specification** will be included to detail the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role, and to describe the skills and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate. This will include the ability for the staff member to work in a way that promotes the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and will confirm the company's commitment to safeguarding.

*"Acumen Care Services is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. We are committed to ensuring we provide a safe and secure environment for the individuals we support, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".*

In addition, it will also include background information on the organisation to provide insight into the business. It will also explain that if the applicant is shortlisted, any relevant issues arising from his or her references will be taken up at interview and it will detail how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

The recruitment process will be planned in advance, identifying who should be involved, assigning responsibilities and setting aside sufficient time for the work needed at each stage of the process, so that safeguards are appropriately addressed.

All the other material that will form part of the candidate information pack should be ready and up-to-date and outline clearly the extent of the relationships, contact and responsibility the successful candidate will have with the individuals they will support.

For roles that are new to the structure, that is not a backfill of a current position, these must be approved in advance by the Director of Services and Finance Director prior to advertising.

### **Inviting Applicants**

All vacancies will be advertised internally to ensure visibility of all opportunities across Acumen. If deemed appropriate to advertise externally, the appropriate advertising channels will be identified to attract a diverse and high calibre pipeline of suitable candidates.

All external recruitment adverts will include the following statement which would confirm the company's commitment to safeguarding.

*"Acumen Care Services is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. All applicants will be subject to a Safer Recruitment process and all appointments are subject to receipt of a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure, satisfactory reference checks and any other suitability checks deemed essential for this role. We are committed to ensuring we provide a safe and secure environment for the individuals we support, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment."*

Each advert will specify the top line responsibilities for the role, the qualifications required, along with the key skills, experience, and qualities we are looking for in prospective applicants which align to the Job Description.

All adverts will indicate a closing date for applications. We reserve the right to close a vacancy earlier than the date stated, should circumstances change for any reason.

All external applicants will complete an initial online application process on the Acumen's website to express an interest in the role. Applications received will be streamline through to the company ATS (Applicant Tracking System) for initial review by the Recruitment team.

All external applicants will receive an automated response to confirm receipt of their online application.

The Recruitment team will be responsible for ensuring prospective applicants are supplied with an Application Pack which will consist of the following:

- A copy of the Job Description, including the Person Specification for the role in question.
- An Application Form incorporating all key regulatory requirements to ensure a common set of core data, and explanatory notes about completing the form.

- A Self Disclosure Form to be submitted by the applicant at interview in a sealed envelope, marked 'confidential'.
- A Safeguarding Statement to confirm that the company are committed to safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk, with an outline of the selection process for the role and confirming that applicants will be subject to a Safer Recruitment process including disclosure of criminal records and other vetting checks. If selected for interview, this stage will include questions in relation to safeguarding.
- A reference proforma for information for the applicant, which would be utilised in the situation where a conditional offer is made.

All prospective applicants must complete an Application Form in full prior to being interviewed. Acumen will not accept a Curriculum Vitae in place of an Application Form for any post. If applicants are unable to complete their Application Form electronically, they will also be able to request a hard copy application pack should they wish.

The Application Form will include:

- Full identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address, date of birth and National Insurance Number A full history, in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education or training, and part time and voluntary work as well as full-time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment, education or training, and reasons for leaving employment.
- If a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults, even on a voluntary basis, full details of employment should be provided, including reasons as to why the employment or position ended.
- A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees or Acumen.
- Details of a minimum of two referees, including a reference from the person's current or most recent employer, and as far as is possible references/suitability letters will be sought from all previous paid or voluntary employment working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults The form will make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends. A suitable period of work should be accounted for, in this instance a minimum of five years. It will make clear that Acumen may, where appropriate for the specific recruitment process, seek references on short-listed candidates who are applying for roles prior to interview where feasible to do so, and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications. The Application Form will include a request of

consent from the candidate to do so.

- Confirmation that if the applicant is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, his or her current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any for which the penalty is time expired (that is where a warning could no longer be taken into account in any new disciplinary hearing for example) and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If the applicant is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues.
- It will detail that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, as well as possible referral to the police.
- Details of any academic and/or vocational qualifications which the person considers relevant for the position, with details of the awarding body and date of award.
- A statement from the applicant around the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to his or her suitability for the post advertised and how/he meets the Person Specification.
- Applicants for teaching posts should also be asked whether s/he has Qualified Teacher status (QTS) and whether s/he is registered with the GTCW, as well as any relevant restrictions.

Supporting guidance on completing the Application Form will be included to ensure applicants are aware of their responsibilities which should include what information is being requested and why, how the information will be used, and that all information will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

### **Self-Disclosure Form**

Applicants will be required to complete a Self-Disclosure Form which will ask applicants for information on information such as:

- Whether they have ever been known to any relevant department or Police as being a risk or potential risk to children or vulnerable adults.

- Whether they have ever been the subject of any investigation by any organisation or body due to concerns about their behavior towards children or vulnerable adults.
- Whether they have ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behavior towards children or vulnerable adults.
- If they have any unspent or spent convictions.
- Confirmation of declaration.

The Self Disclosure Form will include an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared. It will confirm that where appropriate, the successful applicant will be required to provide a DBS check at the appropriate level for the post.

All internal applicants should submit an internal application form in order to be considered for interview. The internal application form should include one internal reference from a manager in their service who can support their application. In order for internal candidates to apply for an internal role, they should have completed their probation successfully, have been in their current role for a minimum of six months and not have any live sanctions on their file. Any exceptions to this should be signed off by their Manager and Director of Service.

### **Shortlisting Prospective Candidates**

At least two people should be involved in shortlisting the applicant for the position by reviewing their Application Form in line with the requirements of the role as detailed in the Job Description/Person Specification. One of those shortlisted should ideally be part of the interview panel for the role.

All applications should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned for completion. Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified by the scrutiny should be noted so that they can be taken up prior to the interview taking place. As well as reasons for obvious gaps in employment, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to temporary work, also need to be explored and verified.



All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the Person Specification without exception or variation.

If a short-listed applicant claims to have specific qualification or previous experience that is particularly relevant to the post for which s/he is applying that will not be verified by a reference, it should be endeavored that facts are verified before interview so that any discrepancy can be explored at interview.

## **References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee. Employers should not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern".

References should be received in writing. Written records of any verbal conversations should also be noted.

The timing of when references should be sought will be established prior to initiating recruitment for the vacancy. References may be sought prior to interview, provided candidates provide consent via the Application Form. Where any issues of concern are raised, these can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview where appropriate. Reference can be sought after interview once a conditional offer has been made. We should ensure that references are received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed.

Acumen will require a minimum of two satisfactory references in order to ascertain suitability to work with Acumen, which should include the current or most recent employer (where applicable, school/college/university). If any individual has had multiple job roles, a suitable period of work should be accounted for, in this instance a minimum of five years.

References will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends. Acumen may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications. If the applicant is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, his or her current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any for which the penalty is time expired (that is where a warning could no longer be taken into account in any new disciplinary hearing for example) and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child

protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Verification should be obtained, so far as reasonably practicable, of the reason why the employment or position ended. If the applicant is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues.

Providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, as well as possible referral to the police.

Where deemed necessary, previous employers who have not been specifically named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify a reason for leaving or any anomalies or discrepancies that have been identified. A detailed written note will be kept of such actions.

All requests for references should seek objective, verifiable information, and not subjective opinion via the company Reference Proforma. A copy of the Job description and Person specification for the post for which the person is applying should be included with all requests, and every request should ask:

- for details of the referee's relationship with the candidate, for example, whether they had a working relationship and, if so, what this relationship was
- the duration the referee has known the candidate, and in what capacity
- whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job in question,
- for specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post, and how the candidate has demonstrated that they meet the person specification
- whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children, and, if not, for specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.

Requests for references should remind the referee that:

- they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission
- relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

In addition to the above, requests addressed to a candidate's current or previous employer in work with children should also seek:

- confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary, and sickness record
- specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct

- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to, where the disciplinary sanctions are current
- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people or vulnerable adults, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired, and the outcome of those procedures
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relates to the safety and welfare of children or young people or vulnerable adults or behavior towards said individuals, and the outcome of those concerns, such as whether the allegations or concerns were investigated, whether a conclusion was reached, and how the matter was resolved.

On receipt, references should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee should be contacted and asked to provide written answers or clarification, as appropriate. The information given should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided by the referee about the candidate and their previous employment, is consistent with the information provided by the candidate on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily, are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

All references will be verified by a person who is occupationally qualified, and this process will be fully documented and signed.

### **The Selection/Interview Process**

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require at least one face to face interview. Video interviewing can be utilised but only as a first stage selection stage. Candidates should always be met with face to face.

Managers are required to provide ample time when notifying the Recruitment team of their chosen interview date to allow adequate time to arrange the interview.

The Recruitment team will provide the interview panel with an interview pack in advance which will contain the relevant Application Form and any relevant accompanying information, the interview questions, and an Offer Outcome Form.

#### Inviting Candidates to Interview

The candidate will be provided with an invitation to attend the interview with all essential logistical information, time and place, directions to the venue, membership of the interview panel, as well as reminding candidates how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore including suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.

The invitation should also stress that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly to ensure the person is who he or she claims to be, and that they will be required to bring their Self Disclosure Form with them in a sealed envelope marked 'Confidential', which will confirm their consent for a DBS check to be carried out if they are successful and a conditional offer is made.

Consequently, all candidates should be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements, i.e. either a current driving license or passport including a photograph, or a full birth certificate, plus a document such as a utility bill or financial statement that shows the candidate's current name and address, and where appropriate, change of name documentation.

Candidates should also be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his or her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

#### The Interview Process

All interviews must be conducted by two or more interviewers, one of which will be trained in Safer Recruitment. Although the maximum number for the panel interview is not stipulated, care should be taken that the candidates are not intimidated by the size of the panel in order that the necessary rapport between the candidate and the Safer Recruitment Policy 2021. Page 12

interview panel can be maintained.

The interview panel will comprise of those people best able to assess the knowledge, skills, and attributes required for a particular post. The panel should, where possible, always include the Manager to whom the appointed person will be responsible to.

The members of the panel should:

- reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing and;
- consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those and;
- agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification.

All candidates will be asked the same set of core questions for the given role for fairness and consistency. Interviewers should be clear what they are looking for in an ideal response for each question, aligned to expectations on the Job Description, and they should score the candidate in line with this. All answers should be captured factually, and notes should be taken in pen. If any additional questions are asked, interviewers should make a note of these and include the response in their notes. A candidate's response to a question about an issue will determine whether and how that is followed up. Questions should be competency focused, and ensure they ask a candidate to relate how/he has responded to, or dealt with, an actual situation. There will be a clear scoring matrix in place, with a clear pass/fail mark.

When deemed appropriate, it is encouraged to involve the individuals we support in the recruitment process to get their view on the suitability of the candidate or observe candidates' interaction with them as an additional selection method to standard interview. This could include showing candidates around the home/school and/or meet with the staff and the individuals we support. If doing so, all involved should be given a clear explanation of the process and there should be clear scoring criteria in place to make an assessment of the candidate.

Internal candidates will be subject to the same selection process as external candidates.

Safeguarding questions will be included within the question set that will be issued to the interview panel members. These must be asked at interview to identify how aware applicants are of safeguarding practices, to set the agenda for any future training needs (if their application is successful) and to help in determining their suitability for the post that they have applied for.

Candidates should always demonstrate that they:

- Have high degree of resilience.
- Seek to help the individuals they support, rather than helping themselves through individuals.
- Are self-aware and should be able to see how their behavior impacts on the individuals they support.
- Have courage to act in challenging situations.
- Are open to sharing information.

The interview panel should also ensure the candidate can:

- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment.
- Explain satisfactorily any reasons for leaving.
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the recruiting panel.
- Declare whether they have been involved in any formal conduct related processes in any previous roles
- Declare whether they have been involved in any safeguarding concerns, either personally or professionally
- Demonstrate their capability and commitment to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and adults at risk.

If references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate should also be asked at interview if there is anything/he wishes to declare or discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to his or her referees.

Candidates will be requested to bring the following original documents to the interview. Copies are not acceptable.

- Either a current driving license or passport including a photograph, or a full birth certificate
- A document such as a utility bill or financial statement that shows the candidate's current name and address, and where appropriate, change of name documentation.
- Documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his or her relevant qualifications must be obtained from

- the awarding body.
- Their Self Disclosure Form

The interview panel must ensure all documentation is checked, copied, and verified and forwarded to the Recruitment team post interview.

If the candidate has been successful, the interview panel should open the sealed Self Disclosure Form, review contents, and submit to the Recruitment team. A risk assessment should be carried out if deemed appropriate at this stage. For unsuccessful candidates, the Self Disclosure Form should remain sealed and discarded in confidential waste.

### **Following the Interview**

Following the interview, it is the responsibility of the interviewers to complete and return the interview pack, which will include interview notes that are fully completed and scored, all candidate's documentation, the Self Disclosure Form, and a completed Interview Outcome Form. If the interview paperwork is not completed thoroughly, including all the necessary documentation highlighted above, then the candidate cannot move forward in the process until this has been completed, collated, and checked by the Recruitment team.

For unsuccessful candidates, the Interview Outcome Form should be completed appropriately to reflect this. Feedback should be given to the Recruitment team to feed back to the candidate.

The Recruitment team will confirm the outcome of the interview to the candidate within a reasonable timescale and provide detailed feedback on the interview if requested by the candidate.

A verbal conditional offer will be relayed to the candidate by the Recruitment team which will confirm the full details of the offer including the job title, the location of the role, salary, hours, annual leave entitlement and any additional benefits they are entitled to.

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate should be conditional upon:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references.
- verification of the candidate's identity (if that could not be verified straight after the interview);
- confirmation of the right to work in the United Kingdom.

- a satisfactory DBS check.
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness.
- verification of qualifications (if not verified after the interview);
- satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

For teaching posts:

- verification of professional status where required e.g. GTCW registration, QTS status (unless properly exempted), National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH);
- verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- confirmation there are no prohibition orders relating to the candidate

The HR team will create and maintain an Employee File Checklist for each candidate offered to ensure that all the required checks have been completed.

A written offer of employment will be sent to the successful candidate by the Recruitment team setting out the Terms and Conditions of the conditional offer. All contracts are to be verified and signed by the HR team before being issued to the appointee. This offer will also include all relevant new starter paperwork.

All offered candidates must then sign and return all new starter paperwork as soon as possible to ensure pre-employment checks can be initiated and completed prior to their start date.

### **Pre-Appointment (Vetting) Checks**

All candidates will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

Prior to starting, the Employee File Checklist must be checked and signed by the HR team and then forwarded for review by the Manager.

### **References**

All outstanding references must be obtained, if not possible to do so prior to interview. Full details of references required are included earlier in this policy.



Where a candidate does not fulfil the reference criteria, they will not proceed with starting in their role and the conditional offer will be withdrawn.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check**

For all appointments, an enhanced DBS check, which includes barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. In summary, a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis in a school for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children or vulnerable adults; or
- Will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or home where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children or vulnerable adults;
- Engage in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children or vulnerable adults who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate will still be deemed essential. This would include contractors who would have the opportunity for contact with children and who work under a temporary or occasional contract.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions at Acumen. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any role.

If applicants have spent time overseas, we will endeavor to obtain as much information as possible in relation to their criminal record. If this is not possible, a risk assessment must be completed, and additional references should be sought.

At conditional offer stage, the Self Disclosure Form should be reviewed, and a risk assessment should be completed. This should then be reviewed in line with the DBS certificate once received to identify any discrepancies and further risk assessment completed again where appropriate to ensure the candidate meets the pre-employment checks process.

If a candidate has registered with the DBS update service, we can undertake a check of an employee's certificate (with their consent) to see if any new information has come to light  
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since the DBS certificate's issue. We would only have to seek a new disclosure and barring check if the system informs us that something has changed.

Before using the Update Service, we would:

- obtain consent from the applicant to do so;
- confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity; and
- examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced including barred list information

Acumen will undertake this check on a minimum of a three yearly basis. Employees of Acumen are aware of their obligation to inform their line manager or the HR team of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place. If there is a change to the DBS status, this will be assessed in line with the Conduct Policy.

### **Medical Questionnaires**

All candidates joining Acumen Care Services will be required to complete a Medical Questionnaire after a verbal offer of employment has been made.

The HR team will be responsible for reviewing the medical questionnaire and making recommendations as to whether a referral to the Company Occupational Health team is required. Should this be deemed necessary, the Doctor's advice will inform any next steps (e.g. a full assessment or no further action).

No candidate should start with Acumen unless their medical questionnaire has been appropriately reviewed and approved. Where a risk assessment is deemed appropriate, this will be conducted thoroughly and consistently, fully documented and signed by the relevant Manager as per the company process.

### **Additional Checks - Education**

All teachers with Qualified Teacher Status in Wales are required to register with the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW). Acumen must check with the GTCW whether teachers applying for positions in the company are registered with the Council.

If a teacher is registered this means:

- they have QTS. Anyone appointed or engaged to teach must either have QTS or come within one of the exceptions set out in the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (Wales) Regulations 1999;

- they have paid the annual GTCW registration fee.
- they are not included on a barred or prohibited list.
- they have not failed the probation period.
- they have not been removed from the register because of a restriction imposed by the GTCW or any other General Teaching Council.
- they have been deemed suitable for registration having undergone a DBS check and satisfied Returning to Teaching criteria (if applicable).

The only teachers with QTS who are exempted from the requirement to be registered with GTCW are:

- teachers employed only to provide part-time education to persons over compulsory school age
- those providing full-time education only to persons who have attained the age of 19 years
- those providing both such part-time and full-time education.

Those exempted from the requirement to hold QTS are:

- trainee teachers undertaking teaching practice
- teachers working towards QTS through an employment-based program
- teachers trained overseas but subject to time limitations
- unqualified teachers (e.g. instructors), where the school has been unable to find a qualified teacher with the necessary skills and expertise.

These exceptions do not apply to candidates for Head of Education and Deputy Head of Education posts; they must have QTS.

Teachers who have trained overseas are currently exempt from the requirement to be registered with the GTCW or hold QTS, although their employment is subject to time limitations (as detailed in the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (Wales) Regulations 1999). However, a teacher from the European Economic Area (EEA) may be awarded QTS on application, or an overseas-trained teacher may go on to be awarded QTS by following the Graduate Teacher Program (GTP), in which case the teacher would then need to be registered with GTCW.

Acumen must ensure that a candidate to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012 and, must check that a person taking up a management position as described is not subject

to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State.

### **Single Central Record of Disclosure and Barring Checks - Education**

Acumen must keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks for all staff who work in our agency.

The central record must indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- an identity check.
- a barred list check.
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate.
- a prohibition from teaching check.
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK (this would include recording checks for those European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions);
- a check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

In addition, Acumen must record whether the person's position involves 'relevant activity', i.e. regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of persons aged under 18; and a section 128 check.

### **Agency Staff**

Under the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003, employment agencies and employment businesses are not allowed to introduce or supply a work seeker to a hirer unless they have made checks to ensure that both work seeker and hirer are aware of any legal or professional body requirements, which either of them must satisfy to enable the work seeker to work for the hirer. So, in the case of employment agencies and businesses supplying staff to Acumen, the agency should check that any supply staff have the qualifications required for the post that we are seeking to fill.

Agencies should adhere to Safer Recruitment practices. Acumen must ensure that agencies are aware of the obligation on the agency to complete satisfactory checks required for a given job role and that we have obtained written notification from the agency to confirm that all satisfactory checks are in place for agency members of staff prior to working in a service. These checks should be carried out by the agency. The agency should present an Agency Worker Passport to be checked and approved by the Manager, and confirmation

should be communicated to the agency that the appropriate checks have been made. In the case of DBS checks, the certificate should be seen before or, as soon as practicable, after appointment.

It is important to be sure that the agency worker is who they claim to be. In some cases, the candidate will be known to the service. If not, the employer should ask to see proof of identity, such as a birth certificate, driving license or passport. This should be checked prior to starting shift.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers who may undertake unsupervised work will be required to undertake the same level of vetting as members of staff.

## **The Acumen Induction**

All new staff must attend a core Acumen induction prior to going live in their role in line with the Induction Policy.

The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the services' policies and procedures.
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role.
- confirm the conduct expected of staff within the home or school via a Code of Conduct.
- provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities.
- enable the individual's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the individual's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The core induction program will include information about, and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention or restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection and safeguarding procedures;
- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behavior expected of staff and pupils in the establishment.
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised.

- other relevant employee procedures, such as disciplinary, capability and whistle blowing procedures.
- Their assigned mentor to support them during their onboarding.
- A job description for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and confirmation of their point of contact for their service.
- For all roles in Children's Services, attendance at child protection training.

All new staff will be subject to a probation period as detailed in the company's probation policy, which provides a formal framework for ensuring that the standards of performance set by Acumen are fully communicated and that required standards are being met and maintained. During the probationary period, the individual's practice in respect of safeguarding will also be monitored. Any areas of concern will be highlighted and addressed with the individual.