

POLICY ON RECRUITMENT

Studio Cambridge follows safer recruitment procedures in all aspects of our recruitment. We aim to attract and employ the most suitable candidates, while deterring unsuitable candidates from applying and preventing them from being appointed. We do this by making the application and employment process as transparent and clear as possible.

Recruitment of staff

This is achieved during the job application process by:

- Providing candidates with clear and precise job descriptions, where roles and responsibilities are well defined
- Job adverts stating our commitment to safeguarding and the promotion of student welfare.
- Highlighting that:
 - references will be taken and suitability to work with under-18s will be checked
 - a DBS check will be required
 - any gaps in the CV must be explained
 - proof of identity and qualifications will be required
- Compiling candidate shortlists by more than one member of the hiring team (where possible) to allow fair and independent discussion.
- Inviting candidates to face-to-face interviews (or on-line interviews when distance or best practice limits travel).
- Job description, Conditions of Employment and appropriate policies are available to interviewees in advance.
- Ensuring that interviews are conducted by appropriate members of the hiring team, with more than one person where possible.
- Asking candidates to answer questions related to the vacant position, but also ask questions relating to safeguarding.
- Requiring interviewers to complete assessment forms for the applicant's suitability.
- Providing safe HR practices to ensure safe, confidential and accurate records are kept, in line with Company GDPR policies.

References

Studio Cambridge recognises the importance of references in providing an indicator of a candidate's suitability for a post and their potential performance. A position offered to a successful applicant is always subject to references and an enhanced DBS check.

We aim to collect references from the most recent employer and/or places that are similar to the work for which the applicant has applied. We require 2 references for each new member of staff, at least one will be written. For each verbal reference a written record is kept and a template is followed. The person spoken to, position and date is noted. At least one reference question will ask about suitability to work with under-18s. Any causes for concern that arise from a reference are followed up with the applicant.

Pre-appointment checks

All applicants undergo an enhanced DBS check (either a new one or via the online subscription service). In the case of a check showing a criminal record, two managers will be responsible for discussing and deciding whether to appoint based on the offence and after following our documented procedures from our Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders.

For staff recruited from overseas, we ask for an overseas police check before they commence their employment. If we cannot obtain an overseas police check, we will take an additional reference.

Additionally, we check against the Prohibited List for staff who have taught in primary or secondary education (state or private).

A record of all checks is kept on a single central record of all staff.

In cases where a DBS check or police check has not been returned before the applicant commences work, a check of the Barred List will be made and a risk assessment will be completed.

When the applicant is a teacher there are several measures in place to allow the teacher to start work: the DoS monitors the room where the teacher is working at least once each lesson, the teacher is required to teach with the door open, he or she should not be alone with one or two students at any time, he or she cannot teach 1:1 or 2:1 classes to students under 18 years old.

Staff members for all positions may be able to work but cannot supervise students under the age of 18 without the presence of a DBS-checked staff member until such time that the DBS is available.

Returning Staff

For staff returning to work at Studio Cambridge after a break of 3 months or more, we will take an additional reference, when possible from a current employer. We will also carry out a new DBS check and retain the original references.

For returning staff after a break of 3 months or more who have been living abroad, if there has been a period of UK residence since last working at Studio, we will carry out a new DBS check.

Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

A referral will be made to the DBS when Studio Cambridge withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with under-18s or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which does not involve contact with under-18s. This will be enacted if that the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct; i.e. action or inaction that has caused neglect, emotional/psychological, sexual, or physical harm
- satisfied the Harm Test; to harm or cause harm, put a child at risk, attempt to harm or incite others to harm
- received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

The referral will be made to the DBS once sufficient evidence has been gathered as part of investigations to support the decision to withdraw permission to engage in work with under-18s. Following good practice and if appropriate, consultation will be taken with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Health and Social Care Trust Designated Officer.

Post-selection

New employees receive a Welcome Pack which includes induction information and procedures.

All new staff are asked to complete the Children Act 1989 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 self-declaration form and provide details of next of kin and bank details. A passport copy and copies of certificates are taken.

All new members of staff undergo training in Safeguarding, Fire Safety, and Prevent.

Recruitment of homestay hosts

In order to ensure that homestay hosts are suitable for hosting Studio Cambridge students, appropriate checks will be made to assess their suitability. All new hosts will be visited and assessed for suitability by our accommodation team. References will be taken and enhanced DBS disclosures will be obtained from all new hosts before they are allowed to host junior students. We aim to revisit existing hosts on an annual basis.

Private fostering hosts and hosts of junior students have DBS checks carried out on every member of the household and they are required to sign up to the DBS update service, which we check every year. They will not be used until the DBS check has come through.

*Reviewed: Mar 2025 by RE, GT & RM
Next review due: Mar 2026*