Cardiff Academy

POLICY /// STAFFING AND HR

Safer Recruitment and Staff Suitability Policy

How Cardiff Academy recruits, checks and appoints staff, governors, volunteers and contractors so that only suitable, qualified people work with students – including job descriptions, interviews, references, identity, right to work, enhanced DBS and barred list checks, overseas checks, qualifications, the Single Central Record, and induction.

REFERENCE	**CA-HR-01**	VERSION	**1.0 (Approved)**
POLICY OWNER	**Principal (with HR)**	APPROVED BY	**Board of Governors**
ISSUE DATE	**October 2026**	APPROVAL DATE	**October 2026**
REVIEW CYCLE	**Annual**	NEXT REVIEW DUE	**October 2027**
APPLIES TO	**Board, senior leaders, recruiting managers, HR and administrative staff**	PUBLISHED	**Staff portal; website (summary); statement in all job adverts**

RELATED POLICIES CA-WEL-01 Safeguarding and Child Protection; CA-HR-02 Staff Code of Conduct; CA-HR-04 Staff Appraisal, Observation and CPD; CA-INF-01 Data Protection; CA-WEL-06 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

LEGAL ENTITY Cardiff Education Group Ltd, trading as Cardiff Academy (Company No. 14569122). Registered office: 168 City Road, Cardiff CF24 3JE. Teaching premises: 8 Drake Walk, Cardiff CF10 4LG

1 Policy statement

Cardiff Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Safer recruitment helps deter, reject or identify people who might harm students or are otherwise unsuitable to work with them. This policy also makes sure that staff have the qualifications and experience required by our accrediting bodies and partner universities.

2 Scope

All appointments: permanent, fixed-term, part-time and sessional staff; agency and supply staff; governors and directors; volunteers; homestay or guardian partners (where used); and contractors who work regularly with students.

3 Recruitment process

3.1 Planning

- Every post has a **job description** setting out duties (including safeguarding responsibilities) and a **person specification** setting out essential and desirable qualifications, experience and attributes, including suitability to work with young people.
- Teaching posts specify the qualifications required (section 5).

3.2 Advertising

Adverts state: the Academy's commitment to safeguarding; that the post is subject to an enhanced DBS check (where applicable), references and other pre-employment checks; and that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (where applicable).

3.3 Application

- Candidates complete the Academy's **application form** (CVs alone are not accepted), including full employment history since leaving secondary education with an explanation of any gaps, qualifications, and details of referees.
- Candidates for posts involving regulated activity complete a **self-disclosure** of unspent and relevant spent convictions, cautions and barring information, in line with the filtering rules.

3.4 Shortlisting and interview

- At least two people shortlist and interview, and at least one has completed **safer recruitment training**.
- Gaps in employment, inconsistencies and reasons for leaving previous roles are explored.
- Interviews include questions on safeguarding and attitudes to working with young people. Teaching candidates normally teach an observed lesson.
- Candidates' identity is checked at interview with original photo ID.
- Shortlisted candidates may be subject to an online search as part of due diligence, and are told this in the application pack.

3.5 References

- Two references are required, one from the most recent employer. References are requested **before interview** where possible and are verified directly with the referee.
- Reference requests ask specifically about suitability to work with children and young people, any disciplinary action or allegations, and whether the referee is satisfied the candidate is suitable.
- Open references ("To whom it may concern") are not accepted.

4 Pre-employment checks

No appointment is confirmed, and no one starts work, until the following checks are completed and recorded:

Check	Requirement
Identity	Original photo ID and proof of address checked and copied
Right to work	Check of original documents or Home Office online right-to-work check, in line with Home Office guidance, before employment begins
Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check	For all staff in regulated activity with under-18s or adults; enhanced DBS (without barred list) for other staff working with students. The DBS Update Service may be used with consent
Qualifications	Original certificates checked; overseas qualifications verified using UK ENIC where needed
Overseas checks	For anyone who has lived or worked outside the UK for 3 months or more in the last 5 years: a certificate of good conduct or police check from the relevant country, or other evidence where this is not possible, with a risk assessment
References	Two satisfactory references (section 3.5)
Prohibition and professional registration	Check of the Education Workforce Council register and teacher prohibition lists, where relevant to the role
Medical fitness	Health questionnaire to confirm fitness for the role and identify reasonable adjustments

4.1 Starting before a DBS certificate is received

In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may allow a person to start before the DBS certificate is received, provided the **barred list check is clear**, all other checks are complete, a written risk assessment is completed, and the person is **supervised at all times** and has no unsupervised contact with students until the certificate is received.

4.2 Agency staff and contractors

Written confirmation is obtained from agencies that they have carried out all checks required by this policy, and the identity of the agency worker is checked on arrival. Contractors are managed under CA-HSE-04.

4.3 Governors and directors

Governors and directors have enhanced DBS checks, identity checks, a fit and proper persons declaration (CA-GOV-01) and overseas checks where relevant.

5 Academic staff qualifications

Role	Minimum requirement
Academic manager (Director of Studies)	Degree; recognised teaching qualification; for English language provision, a TEFLQ qualification (for example Cambridge DELTA, Trinity DipTESOL, or MA TESOL with substantial practice) as required by British Council criterion T2; management experience

Role	Minimum requirement
Subject teachers (IFY / IYOne / Pre-Masters)	Degree (normally at least upper second class) in a relevant subject; recognised teaching qualification (for example PGCE, PGCert in HE, Cert Ed) or equivalent experience; experience teaching international students preferred
English / EAP teachers	Degree plus a TEFL-initiated qualification (for example CELTA or Trinity CertTESOL) as a minimum, in line with British Council Accreditation UK guidance on qualifications; EAP experience for EAP teachers
Summer School activity staff	Experience with young people; first aid; appropriate activity qualifications

Staff who do not meet the requirement may be appointed only with a written development plan and the Principal's approval, and within the proportions allowed by the British Council criteria.

6 Single Central Record (SCR)

The HR Officer maintains a **Single Central Record** of all checks for every member of staff, governor and volunteer, showing the date each check was completed and by whom. The SCR is kept up to date and audited **termly** by the Principal and the nominated governor for safeguarding. Records are retained for current staff and those who left within the last three years.

7 Induction and probation

- All new staff complete induction covering: safeguarding and Prevent; the Staff Code of Conduct; health and safety and fire; data protection; IT acceptable use; the Academy's policies; and role-specific training.
- New staff have a probation period of **six** months with formal reviews.
- Academic staff are observed within their first six weeks (CA-HR-04).

8 Ongoing suitability

- Staff must tell the Principal immediately if they are arrested, charged, cautioned or convicted of any offence, or if there is any change that may affect their suitability to work with students.
- DBS checks are renewed every **three** years, or staff subscribe to the DBS Update Service, which is checked annually.

9 Referrals

The Academy will refer to the DBS anyone who has been removed from regulated activity (or would have been had they not left) because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a student, and to the Education Workforce Council where the person is registered with it.

10 Data protection

Recruitment records are processed in line with CA-INF-01. DBS certificate information is handled in line with the DBS Code of Practice; copies of certificates are not kept for longer than six months.

11 Review

This policy is reviewed annually. The SCR audit outcomes are reported in the annual safeguarding report.

Compliance mapping

This policy has been written to meet, and to evidence, the following external requirements. Inspectors and university partners can use this table to locate the relevant provisions.

ISI Educational Oversight (PFE) standards	Standards 54–56 (identity and right to work; enhanced DBS and barred list checks with interim arrangements; references, employment history, qualifications and overseas checks before appointment confirmed); Standard 64 (records of checks for current staff and previous three years); Standard 65 (DBS referrals); Standard 47 (high-quality staff)
British Council Accreditation UK criteria	M10 (effective recruitment and selection procedures); S4 (recruitment procedures for all roles with under-18s); T1–T3 (academic staff recruitment and qualifications); M9 (duties specified)
UKVI Student sponsor guidance	Sponsor duties – key personnel suitability; right-to-work checks for staff
University partner due diligence	Partner due diligence – staff recruitment and selection policy verifying qualifications and references; academic staff CVs
Legislation and statutory guidance	Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; Police Act 1997; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended); Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (right to work); Equality Act 2010; UK GDPR; Keeping Learners Safe (Wales, 2022) and Welsh Government safer recruitment guidance; Education Workforce Council registration requirements (where applicable)

Document control

Version	Date	Author / reviewer	Summary of changes
0.9	Pre-2026	Various	CA Safer Recruitment Policy (2025); CA BC Qualification and Academic Staffing Policy (2025)
1.0	October 2026	Principal (with HR)	New policy written for university partnerships, ISI Educational Oversight and British Council Accreditation UK. Supersedes all previous versions.

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD	SIGNATURE	DATE
Chair of the Board of Governors		