



Symmetrical
North Staffs

Safer Recruitment Policy

Date: March 2021

Version 1.0

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Principles
 - 1.2 Equality and Diversity
 - 1.3 Applicant Declaration

2. Recruitment of paid staff
 - 2.1 Vacancy
 - 2.2 Application process
 - 2.3 Selection process
 - 2.4 Interview process
 - 2.5 Making an offer of employment

3. Recruitment of volunteers
 - 3.1 Advertising and promotion
 - 3.2 Application, selection and interview process
 - 3.3 Recruiting volunteers

4. Supporting staff and volunteers
 - 4.1 Induction
 - 4.2 Training
 - 4.3 Supervision and support
 - 4.4 Probationary period

5. Pre-employment checks
 - 5.1 References
 - 5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
 - 5.3 Eligibility to work in the UK (Asylum & Immigration Act 1996)

6. Dealing with complaints and managing allegations against staff and volunteers

1. Introduction

Symmetrical is committed to safeguarding and protecting all children, young people and vulnerable adults by implementing robust safe recruitment practices. We expect all of our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Our Safer Recruitment Policy applies to all staff including our Chief Executive Officer, members of the Board of Trustees, paid staff and volunteers.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy that can be found on our website – symmetricalinstaffs.org

1.1 Principles

Symmetrical aim to ensure that all recruitment and selection activity complies with all relevant legislation and best practice. The correct application of these arrangements will help to:

- Avoid unlawful discrimination
- Improve the quality of recruitment and selection decisions
- Influence our culture and future success
- Promote positive relationships between all those carrying out work on behalf of Symmetrical and the young people we support

1.2 Equality and Diversity

We believe that equality is about treating people fairly, openly and honestly recognising that people have different needs, cultures, experiences and expectations.

It is the policy of Symmetrical and all those undertaking work on its behalf, to ensure that no person, whether they are an applicant, employee, volunteer, service user or third party receives any less favourable treatment because of their gender, marital status, family status, lifestyle, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, political affiliation, membership of any group or any other condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

1.3 Applicant Declaration

Symmetrical is committed to ensuring that all appointments are made on the basis of merit and that there is no conflict of interest. All trustees, employees and volunteers will be required to declare whether they are related to or have a close personal relationship with any current trustees, employees or volunteers of Symmetrical. The declaration will not disqualify anyone from consideration but will ensure the recruitment process is applied fairly.

2. Recruitment of paid staff

2.1 The vacancy

Where a vacancy for a paid role has been identified in order to meet the needs of Symmetrical, it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Board of Trustees to develop a clear and concise role description and person specification that is non-discriminatory.

The advertising of all vacancies will be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees (or any other person with authority that has been delegated by the aforementioned). Before advertising, the CEO and Board of Trustees must approve the most appropriate medium taking into consideration the level of the post, the market at which the vacancy is aimed and any cost of local/national advertising.

Vacancies will be advertised in appropriate media. Consideration will also be given to advertising in specific media to target under-represented groups including care leavers.

2.2 Application process

All vacancies will be advertised with an appropriate job description, person specification, details of closing date and a contact number for the appropriate representative of Symmetrical.

All advertisements will specify the means by which application should be made (ie online by providing an electronic means or by CV and covering letter).

Decision to receive applications after the specified closing date should be carefully noted along with the reason(s).

2.3 References

Since paid staff and volunteers will be working with children or vulnerable adults, references will be sought for all short-listed candidates. They will be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern that are raised can be explored with the referee and where appropriate, discussed with the candidate at interview.

Two references will be sought, where possible, one should be from the current or most recent manager of the candidate.

References will be sought directly from the named referee. In some cases it may not be possible to obtain references prior to interview but this should be the aim in all cases.

2.4 Selection process

The selection process will be undertaken by a panel of at least two representatives of Symmetrical. The panel must ensure there is no conflict of interest and declare whether they

are related to the applicant at the earliest stage. If there is a conflict of interest they should withdraw from the panel. Decisions on whether there is a potential conflict of interest will be made by the CEO and Board of Trustees.

In order to provide consistency, where possible the panel members must remain the same throughout the process.

Where possible, young people receiving support through Symmetrical will be involved in the selection process.

Shortlisting will take place after the closing date. The selection criteria will be applied consistently to all applicants. The panel will use a shortlisting schedule and record their results accurately.

Where possible, references should be sought during the selection process and before interview so that any issues can be discussed before interview with the referee or during interview with the applicant. All applicants will be made aware of this process during the application stage and may indicate if they do not wish referees to be contacted prior to interview. If they do, their request will be respected.

The selection process will be followed no matter how many applicants there are.

2.5 Interview process

All shortlisted candidates will be given adequate notice of future interview dates.

All applicants will be asked the same core questions. Supplementary questions may be asked based on individual responses.

The interview process will involve questions about safeguarding, values, attitude and motivation in order to test the applications approach to supporting vulnerable groups and their ability to manage appropriate relationships.

Notes taken during interview will be available to applicants upon request whether an offer of employment is made or not.

The interview process may include other selection methods that are appropriate for the role applied for. Applicants will be notified of the means in advance.

2.6 Making an offer of employment

All decisions made about applicants should be clearly recorded along with a clear rationale and score where appropriate.

Once a decision has been made, the nominated panel member should contact the successful applicant to confirm the offer of employment subject to necessary checks.

The panel will then obtain references from all named referees, verify the successful applicants Eligibility to Work documentation (copy of passport, visa or other appropriate work permit) and request checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The appointment should then be confirmed in writing once satisfactory clearance has been confirmed.

3 Recruitment of volunteers

Symmetrical value the special role that all volunteers play, in particular those who give their time freely for the benefit of supporting children and young people. Volunteers are central to our organisation. We want to attract those with specialist knowledge, experience, empathy and compassion who are committed to providing positive experiences and opportunities for our young people. Our relationship with all of our volunteers is critical the success of the support we offer to children and young people so the steps we will take to engaging potential volunteers, selecting and supporting them are of critical importance to us.

3.1 Advertising and promotion of volunteer opportunities

As with all paid roles, all volunteer roles will be clearly defined with a role description document that will detail:

- The nature of tasks the volunteer will undertake.
- The skills, experience or qualities that are needed to ensure the volunteer role can be undertaken safely.
- The level of support that volunteers can expect from Symmetrical.
- Whether this is a short term or long term role.
- The expectations of anyone volunteering on behalf of Symmetrical.
- Any risks to volunteers when carrying out their duties.
- Symmetrical's commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All volunteer roles will be suitably risk assessed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of our volunteers and the young people they support.

Volunteer roles will be advertised formally and informally to ensure that sufficient information is made available to potential volunteers. Volunteer information packs will be made available to anyone interested in becoming a volunteer.

3.2 Application, selection and interview process

Volunteers may be recruited at any time and as such, potential volunteers are able to express their interest in becoming a volunteer at any time, not just during a formal recruitment campaign. All promotion materials and communications relating to the recruitment of volunteers will invite interested parties to contact the recruitment lead for an informal discussion if they are interested in volunteering with Symmetrical.

Once a potential volunteer has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer they will be provided with a volunteer information pack and invited to complete an application to volunteer form. Applicants will be advised that references and DBS checks will be made in

respect of all volunteers as well as paid employees. Once an application has been received by the Board, it will be reviewed by the recruitment lead and at least one other member of the Board or paid employee.

Once a written application is received it will be reviewed by the Board member responsible for recruitment and at least one other Board member and one paid employee. If the panel agree, the candidate will be invited to a short interview that will be informal in nature but fully compliant with the process set out in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

The same panel will interview the applicant wherever possible. At interview the potential candidate will be advised that an enhanced DBS check will be sought along with references from at least two different sources.

3.3 Recruiting volunteers

If, following interview the panel agree that the applicant is suitable to become a volunteer, references and DBS checks will be sought. Only when references and DBS checks have been cleared will the candidate be able to undertake duties as a volunteer for Symmetrical.

All decisions made about volunteer applicants should be clearly recorded along with a clear rationale and score where appropriate.

Once a decision has been made, the nominated panel member should contact the successful applicant to confirm the offer of employment subject to necessary checks.

The panel will then obtain references from all named referees and request checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The appointment should then be confirmed in writing once satisfactory clearance has been confirmed.

4 Supporting staff and volunteers

In line with the ethos of Symmetrical, all volunteers and paid staff will be fully supported in their roles to ensure they remain able and equipped to support our young people.

4.1 Induction

All paid staff and volunteers will be provided with appropriate information, contacts and training to support them in their role. Safeguarding training is a mandatory part of the induction for all paid staff and volunteers.

4.2 Training

Level 1 Safeguarding training is mandatory and must be refreshed every three years. Appropriate training and ongoing development is available to all paid staff and volunteers upon request.

4.3 Supervision and support

All paid staff and volunteers will be offered the opportunity to receive 121 supervision and support from their line manager, Trustee or Board member. Ongoing support will be provided through monthly meetings with Board members and Trustees.

4.4 Probationary period

All paid staff and volunteers will be subject to a standard 6 month probationary period. The designated line manager/mentor will carry out a 12 week and 6 month review.

5. Pre-employment checks

5.1 References

At the point at which an offer of paid or voluntary work has been made, references can be followed up and any further details obtained. Where offers of employment are made pending suitable references, that will be made clear in the offer letter. The recruitment panel chair will also make telephone enquiries with all referees before employment/voluntary work commences.

5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Certain posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Applicants for such posts are obliged to declare any pending court actions, all previous convictions, bind overs, reprimands, warnings or cautions, which for other posts would be considered spent. Failure to disclose this information could lead to the offer of employment or offer of voluntary role being withdrawn, or dismissal, if the successful applicant has already commenced in post.

Under Home Office guidelines and within the provisions of the Amendment to the 1974 Act, a disclosure check will be made with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A DBS certificate will contain details of both spent and unspent convictions as well as cautions, reprimands and police warnings.

It is important to note that possession of a criminal antecedent history does not automatically bar and applicant from employment.

In the event of a positive disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service or where the police report information of concern via the DBS, the information disclosed will be reviewed by a panel consisting of at least one member of the selection panel. For quoracy, the panel must also consist of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and one other Board member or paid employee.

The candidate should be invited to discuss the positive disclosure with the panel and the panel chair will complete a positive disclosure risk assessment.

The candidate will be notified in writing of the outcome.

5.3 Eligibility to work in the UK (Asylum & Immigration Act 1996)

In line with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, all employers are required to check that employees are legally able to reside and work in the UK. To adhere to this requirement, all applicants should be asked to bring with them a form of identity that confirms this to be the case.

This process is carried out in line with government guidance published [here](#)

7. Dealing with complaints and managing allegations against staff and volunteers

The designated safeguarding lead will be responsible for managing any allegations about paid staff or volunteers. Our designated safeguarding lead is fully trained in managing allegations of this nature and will take all necessary steps to alert the police and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer.