

Safe Recruitment Policy

Policy statement

Sport Structures is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults. There is an expectation of staff employed by us, to share this commitment, in line with our company values.

Safeguarding Culture

We are committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture across all areas of our work. We recognise that safer recruitment is only one aspect of safeguarding and that creating a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk requires vigilance, accountability and professional curiosity from all staff.

We will:

- Adopt a child-centred approach to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children in all aspects of our work.
- Ensure safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all staff understand their role in protecting learners from harm.
- Foster a culture where concerns about learners or adults working with learners are identified, shared, recorded and acted upon appropriately.
- Promote the reporting and management of low-level concerns, allegations and whistleblowing matters.
- Ensure staff understand that safeguarding concerns may arise both in person and online, and both within and outside educational settings.
- Provide appropriate induction, training and ongoing safeguarding updates to maintain staff knowledge and awareness.
- Support staff to exercise professional curiosity and take appropriate action where they have concerns regarding a learner's welfare, safety or wellbeing.

We also recognise the importance of identifying and addressing low level concerns. Low level concerns are concerns, no matter how small, that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including behaviour that does not meet the threshold for a safeguarding allegation. All low-

level concerns will be shared, recorded and managed in accordance with our Safeguarding and Prevent Policy.

Purpose of the policy

The procedures detailed in this policy support Sport Structures' wider safeguarding responsibilities and ensure compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and other relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance.

Scope of the policy

This policy sets out the recruitment and selection processes used by Sport Structures. It applies to the recruitment of all individuals engaged to work on behalf of the organisation, including employed staff, associate tutors, assessors and verifiers, freelance tutors, assessors and verifiers, and volunteers (this list is not exhaustive). For the purposes of this policy, all such individuals will be referred to collectively as "staff". The company reserves the right to vary the typical processes in response to operational requirements, our responsibilities to safeguard children and adults, or recruitment challenges.

This policy should also be considered in conjunction with the following (list not exhaustive):

- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Cultural Code for Staff and Workforce
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Disciplinary policy and procedure
- Appeals policy and procedure
- Grievance policy and procedure

Role and responsibilities

At Sport Structures:

- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for reviewing this policy once a year and ensuring it is included in any staff/associate induction process and is available to all staff and associates for reference

- Line Managers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the contents of this policy and applying it fairly
- Employees and associates are responsible for reading and following this policy

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to fairness and equality of treatment for all staff and will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We will not discriminate against any employee through use of this procedure directly or indirectly for reasons related to their race, sex, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, disability sexual orientation, gender identity, religious or political belief or trade union membership. For more details, please refer to our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Human Resource (HR) staff will monitor the ethnic origin, gender, age, disability and marital status of all job applicants to ensure we offer fair and equal access to employment opportunities to all within the community.

Recruitment planning

- Before seeking to recruit, whether for a new or replacement position, the Manager should consider whether a vacancy still exists and whether the work could be allocated to a current member of staff or divided between several members of staff. Consideration should also be given to whether the priorities and main duties of the post have changed. Only after full consideration, and if none of the above actions can be used to meet the staffing need, should the manager formally seek approval to recruit.
- It is recommended that the Manager arranges a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to discuss the rationale for the post and the terms and conditions of the role.
- Once the post is approved for recruitment, HR staff will work with the Manager (and CEO if applicable) to confirm the job description and person specification. This should identify the role title, lines of accountability, terms of the position, salary, working conditions, job closing date, and interview date (where possible), along with essential requirements of the post (i.e., skills, knowledge, experience etc). The person's specification should make it clear

whether a criterion is essential or desirable and whether any criterion is more important than the other. This document should also provide details about Sport Structures, including our commitment to safeguarding children and adults, and a summary of the role. Where relevant, it should also make it clear that the applicant will have responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of children and adults.

- The CEO must approve the job description, prior to advertising.

Recruitment

- All vacancies that are anticipated to last for six months or more at the time of recruitment will usually be advertised both internally and externally. There may be occasions where roles are specifically advertised internally only.
- Roles will be advertised for a minimum of 7 days.
- An external advert will be placed on the Sport Structures website and advertised widely in order to ensure diversity among applicants. If, after the advert closes, and on completion of the shortlisting process, an appropriate level of response has not been identified, then the vacancy may be extended.
- A role may also be advertised on appropriate organisational websites (relevant to the role being advertised) and through social media. Requests for paid advertising must be sought in advance from the CEO.
- Where a vacancy is advertised only internally, any member of existing staff will be eligible to apply for the position.
- Applications will be received by HR staff through the HR@sportstructures.com email address, with specific role enquiries directed to the appropriate Manager.

Application process

- All applicants will be asked to complete a Sport Structures application form and submit a cover letter to demonstrate how they meet the criteria for the post. CVs on their own will not be considered. The application form will ensure that the below minimum information is obtained:
- Full identification details, current and former names, current address and contact details

- Contact details for two referees, one being their current or most recent employer.
- Confirmation that the applicant is permitted to work with children and adults and is not subject to any sanctions from any regulatory body.
- Confirmation of any convictions
- Opportunity to share any disability / special requirements / reasonable adjustments/working conditions necessary.
- The applicant has the Right to work in the UK
- Personnel will be shortlisted based on their suitability to meet the job/role-related requirements and responsibilities and their ability to demonstrate that they can work safely with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Short listing

- Internal candidates are not guaranteed interviews, and their applications will be short-listed in the same way as all other applicants, against the criteria.
- Short-listing must include a minimum of two staff. Each member of staff must shortlist independently before meeting to discuss their scores.
- Those responsible for short-listing should take part in the interview process.
- Short-listing will be undertaken against the person specification for the post.
- A standard short-listing matrix will be used to record application assessments.
- Short-listed candidates will be sent information about the company through signposting to the company website.
- Short-listed candidates will be invited to either a face-to-face or online interview via email. Candidates will be given the opportunity to request any reasonable adjustments required to support them throughout the recruitment and selection process.

HR will retain the short-listing matrix and relevant recruitment records for up to three months following the selection decision.

Pre-interview

- Prior to the interview, online searches will be conducted as part of due diligence. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online search may be necessary. This will help to identify any issues or incidents that have happened

and are publicly available online, which we will explore with the applicant at the interview.

- Shortlisted applicants will be given a minimum of five days' notice of the date of the interview to allow adequate time for preparation. The interview date should be communicated in the job description, as stated above. If the selection process requires applicants to undertake various assessment procedures, applicants will be advised of this in advance.
- Applicants may also be required to bring with them documents confirming any educational or professional qualifications that are necessary for the post, as required.
- For applicants who have been unsuccessful in obtaining an interview, an email will be sent to inform them they have been unsuccessful and to invite any requests for feedback.

Interviews

- The aim of the interview is to collect comprehensive information about the applicants in relation to the criteria for the vacancy, select an applicant for the job and communicate further information to the applicant about the company and position, so they can make an informed decision if offered the post.
- Interview questions should be based on the job description and agreed upon in advance of the interview.
- All interviews for roles involving learner contact will include safeguarding questions designed to assess the individual's suitability to work with children, understanding of safeguarding responsibilities, professional boundaries and attitude towards safeguarding.
- Interview panels will normally consist of a minimum of two people; the composition of which will depend on the nature of the role and the level of responsibility. At least one person on the panel will have undertaken the safe recruitment training.
- Interviews will be conducted in a virtual or face-to-face environment.
- Interviews will normally follow the below structure:
 - Introductions to the panel and an explanation of the format of the interview process

- An overview of the role
- Interview questions posed by the panel
- Any questions from the applicant
- Next steps of the process
- Expectations and commitments prior to appointment (i.e., DBS check, references, Right to Work check etc)
- The successful applicant's application form will be kept on their personal file.
- Interview paperwork will be given to HR staff for both successful and unsuccessful applicants. For unsuccessful applicants, application, shortlisting, and interview paperwork will be kept for 6 months. Successful applicants, applications, shortlisting, and interview paperwork will be transferred to their staff record

Appointment process

- New members of personnel are required to confirm their agreement to abide by the Sport Structures policies and procedures, including the safeguarding policy, in writing along with confirmation that they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Awareness of child/vulnerable protection practices will continue to be addressed via ongoing training and all staff will be expected to keep themselves up to date with current practices.
- An interviewed applicants will receive verbal notification of the outcome of their selection process and will be provided with feedback.
- Applications and details of applicants not appointed should be kept for a period of 6 months and then destroyed in line with Sport Structures policies.
- Managers will be responsible for contracting the successful applicant by phone to discuss the provisional job offer.
- A provisional job offer letter will be sent to the successful applicant, including a provisional start date, subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. Under section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 it is a criminal offence to employ a person who is not entitled to live and work in the UK. In order to comply with this law, we must complete basic checks; this will include:

- 'Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references. We require a reference from the current / most recent employer wherever reasonably possible, with documented exceptions. This process will also seek to confirm that the applicant is suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults and identify any safeguarding concerns, disciplinary findings or unresolved matters relevant to their suitability for the role
- Eligibility to work in the U.K
- Verification of identify or address
- Verification of qualifications and professional status where required
- An appropriate DBS check, including a children's barred list check where required
- Appropriate checks for applicants that have lived overseas (i.e. criminal record checks)
- Verification of mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Any other checks required by legislation, regulation or the nature of the role
- This information will be retained on the employee's HR File in accordance with GDPR guidelines, privacy notices and retention policy, including copies of documents used to verify the successful candidate identity. Copies of DBS certificates will only be retained for a period of 6 months.
- If previously non-disclosed and criminal/police information is identified by the DBS disclosure, HR staff will discuss this with the CEO to determine whether withdrawing the conditional offer of employment is necessary.
- On receipt of the satisfactory documents specified above, a staff contract will be issued electronically to the employee. The employee/associate will be required to keep a copy, and a copy will be stored on their staff/associate file.

Single Central Record

- As set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, a single central record of staff/associate personal details and employment checks will be maintained.
- The DSL(s) will work with HR staff monthly to review the Single Central Record to ensure the information held is correct.

- These records are to be password-protected and only accessible by the Directors and HR staff.
- When employees leave their records will be maintained for five years.

Disclosure and Barring Service

- All staff employed by Sport Structures will be required to have a DBS check. The level of check will be determined by the employee's role and responsibilities.
- All staff and associates must hold an appropriate DBS check relevant to their role. DBS checks will normally be renewed every three years unless the individual subscribes to the DBS Update Service.
- Where a newly appointed member of staff or associate already holds a valid DBS certificate at the appropriate level, Sport Structures may accept this following verification of identity, the original certificate and the suitability of the check for the role.
- Where an individual subscribes to the DBS Update Service, Sport Structures will obtain consent and undertake status checks as required. The cost of the Update Service will be reimbursed through the standard expenses procedure.
- Staff who are not subscribed to the DBS Update Service must complete an annual declaration confirming that there have been no changes to their criminal record or circumstances affecting their suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk.
- DBS certificates must be presented to HR upon receipt. The certificate number, date and level of check will be recorded on the Single Central Record.
- Copies of DBS certificates will not normally be retained and, where retained in exceptional circumstances, will be held in accordance with data protection legislation and destroyed within six months.
- Individuals who fail to provide satisfactory DBS documentation or consent to required status checks may have their offer withdrawn or be subject to appropriate management action.
- Any information disclosed on a DBS certificate will be considered on a case-by-case basis using a risk-based approach.

- Sport Structures reserves the right to undertake additional DBS checks, barred list checks or status checks where there are concerns regarding an individual's suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk.
- All staff and associates must immediately disclose any criminal investigations, cautions, convictions, safeguarding concerns, professional sanctions or other matters that may affect their suitability to undertake their role.

Lone Working and Home Visits

Where roles involve one to one delivery, home visits or lone working, we will implement appropriate safeguarding measures, which may include risk assessments, lone working procedures, parental/carers consent, and check in/check out arrangements. Staff will receive guidance on maintaining professional boundaries and responding to safeguarding concerns.

Induction

- All new members of staff must have either a face-to-face or online induction. The induction process will involve company policies and procedures, HR processes, technology and systems, company strategy and organisational structure, mandatory training, along with meeting new staff.
- Every staff member will receive safeguarding and child protection training, which encompasses online safety along with an introduction to the practicalities of our Safeguarding and Prevent Policy. This training ensures a clear understanding of expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Training will include awareness of safeguarding risks and themes including:
 - Child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
 - Child criminal exploitation (CCE), including county lines.
 - Child sexual exploitation (CSE).
 - Serious violence and weapon-related concerns.
 - Domestic abuse, including teenage relationship abuse.
 - Radicalisation and extremism.
 - Online safety, online abuse and online exploitation.
 - Modern slavery and human trafficking.

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.
- Mental health concerns, self-harm and suicide risk.
- Abuse, neglect and extra-familial harm.
- Missing education and children at increased risk of harm.
- Staff will receive regular safeguarding updates and refresher training to ensure they remain aware of current safeguarding requirements, emerging risks and statutory guidance
- Regular meetings will be held with the new member of staff and their Line Manager.
- As part of the induction process, the new member of staff must complete the internal safeguarding training, read 'Part One: Safeguarding Information for All Staff' and complete the safeguarding quiz and declaration.

Ongoing suitability

We recognise that safeguarding responsibilities continue beyond the recruitment process. All staff are required to maintain their suitability to work with children, young people and adults at risk.

Individuals must immediately disclose any information that may affect their suitability to undertake their role, including criminal investigations, cautions, convictions, safeguarding concerns or professional sanctions. We reserve the right to undertake further checks or risk assessments where information comes to light that may affect an individual's suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk

Recruitment, Selection and Induction of Learners (Non Apprenticeships)

Introduction

Sport Structures offer a wide range of courses to support the development of the sporting community. The recruitment, selection and induction of learners will be dependent on the duration and level of a course and will be adjusted accordingly to meet the requirements of each course. This will be made clear to learners prior to booking to ensure they are able to make informed decisions regarding the suitability of a course to meet their training needs.

Recruitment of Learners

Courses can be booked directly by individual learners or run as a closed course by a course organiser with pre-identified learners. Details of courses, including duration, format, level, price and learner prerequisites can be found on the Sport Structures website on a dedicated page for every course.

Learner requirements and prerequisites will be specific to each course and may include:

- A minimum age requirement
- Achievement of prior qualifications or certification as part of a development pathway
- Relevant experience, e.g., training for a specific role such as a welfare officer
- Membership of a specific organisation, e.g., a National Governing Body
- English language standard requirements
- Access to technology, such as internet access for online courses
- Ability to provide personal identification

The recruitment of learners will also consider Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where appropriate. Further details can be found in the Sport Structures RPL policy. Any learner requirements and prerequisites will be clearly stated on the Sport Structures website and learners will be asked to acknowledge they meet the criteria upon booking. Where a course is run in partnership with or on behalf of another organisation, such as a National Governing Body (NGB), Sport Structures will work

with that organisation to ensure information regarding course requirements, outcomes and progression opportunities are shared with their members. Learners and course organisers will be able to contact the education department by phone (0121 455 8270) or email (education@sportstructures.com) if they wish to speak to a member of staff regarding the suitability of a course. This will enable staff to offer guidance and signpost learners to appropriate training opportunities.

Selection of Learners

It may be necessary to implement an application process for more advanced courses where there are limited places available or there is a need for learners to evidence course prerequisites, such as prior qualifications or experience. Applications will be reviewed by at least two people with the relevant knowledge of the course, for example, approved tutors, assessors, quality assurers, or a member of the relevant NGB.

Where learners are unsuccessful with their application, Sport Structures will provide feedback and work with learners to identify potential next steps.

Induction of Learners

Pre-course information will be sent to learners via email or a closed webpage prior to the commencement of all training offered by Sport Structures. This may include any of the following if relevant:

- The date(s) of the course or workshop
- Format of the course (online, virtual classroom, face-to-face, one-to-one, etc) and any relevant access links or venue information
- Assessment format (on-course, video, in-club, portfolio submission, etc) and whether this is the learner's responsibility to organise, plus any deadlines
- Any learning materials relevant to the course
- Any additional supporting materials to support knowledge and understanding (e.g., a link to a relevant website)
- Any relevant policies, (e.g., terms and conditions, data protection, etc)

Tutors and assessors will introduce themselves at the start of the course or workshop and outline the format, the learning outcomes and any assessment processes and criteria. For courses of a longer duration, a separate induction session may be required to allow adequate time to provide all relevant information. Learners on all

courses will be encouraged to contact their course tutor or a member of the education team if they require any further clarification or support with any aspect of the course.

Initial Assessment of Learners

For courses without an application process, the induction process will also include the learners providing some background on their skills and experience to the course tutor. Where an application process has already collected this information, this will be shared with the course tutor. In addition, details of any declared learning or physical disabilities will also be passed to the course tutor to help inform their planning process and ensure the needs of all learners are catered for.

Learners or children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions

It is essential for all staff to recognise that prolonged or recurrent absences of learners can indicate various safeguarding concerns, including neglect, child exploitation, mental health issues, and the risk of substance abuse. Proactive measures should be taken to address persistently absent learners or children missing from educational activities, aiding in the early identification of potential abuse. This proactive approach helps prevent the risk of these individuals becoming learners missing from education in the future. It is crucial, especially when learners are under the care of the local authority's children's social services, to act early and involve social workers in addressing concerns, as prolonged absenteeism may amplify known safeguarding risks within the family or community. Please see our [Safeguarding and Prevent Policy](#) for more information.

Recruitment, Selection and Enrolment of Learners (Apprenticeships)

Introduction

Sport Structures offers a wide range of on-pitch and off-pitch apprenticeships. The recruitment and selection of apprentices is the responsibility of employers but is facilitated by Sport Structures. The information below details how we facilitate this process and the support we give to ensure a fair, safe and equitable recruitment process that succeeds in offering an individual and excellent career opportunity with a sport and physical activity organisation.

Recruitment of Learners

Employers interested in taking on an apprentice will contact Sport Structures to recruit or enrol an apprentice on an apprenticeship programme. We have created a helpful guide to support employers in their recruitment and selection of apprentices, incorporating tips and information supporting recruitment practice in (with): the promotion of vacancies, safe recruitment, policies and procedures, inclusivity and equality. This also encourages employers to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service Check when recruiting a new apprentice. The level of check will be determined by the apprentice's role and responsibilities. If an employer decided to use the National Apprenticeship Vacancy website for recruitment, then Sport Structures will forward applicants who meet the employer's requirements to the employer who will then go through the employer's recruitment process.

If an apprentice expresses an interest in completing an apprenticeship, they are contacted with additional information and signposted towards potential vacancies. Details of our apprenticeships, including duration, format and level can be found on the Sport Structures website.

Learner requirements and prerequisites will be determined by the employer and may be specific to each apprenticeship, examples may include:

- Age 16 or over
- Working predominantly in England
- Not in any other full-time education or training
- Relevant job role to meet apprenticeship KSBs

- Relevant prior knowledge and experience (if necessary)
- Access to technology, such as internet access for online tutor sessions
- Right to work in the UK and ability to provide personal identification and National Insurance number

The recruitment of learners will also consider Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where appropriate. Further details can be found in the Sport Structures RPL policy.

Employers and potential apprentices will be able to contact Sport Structures by phone (0121 455 8270) or email (apprenticeships@sportstructures.com) if they wish to speak to a member of staff regarding the suitability of an apprenticeship.

Selection of Learners

Apprenticeship applications are initially screened by a member of the Apprenticeships Team based on the employer's requests and suitable candidates are forwarded to the employer. The employer then follows their own recruitment process including conducting interviews with potential apprentices.

Where learners are unsuccessful with their application, they are able to contact Sport Structures who can provide feedback and work with candidates to identify potential next steps.

Enrolment and Initial Assessment of Learners

At the start of each apprenticeship, the apprentice will attend an enrolment session with their course tutor and their employer. The session outlines the format of the apprenticeship, EPA requirements, and what is expected from the employer, apprentice, and training provider. All compliance paperwork is completed to document the signed agreements between the employer, apprentice, and training provider.

A member of the Apprenticeships Team will screen the learner's previous knowledge and experience using their Personal Learning Record (PLR) (if available) and this is completed in conjunction with a skills gap analysis to reflect their competence level against each Knowledge, Skill and Behaviour of the Apprenticeship. This information will determine if an apprentice is eligible to complete the apprenticeship and if any

Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) needs to be recorded which may mean result in the delivery plan being adapted accordingly.

Initial assessments are conducted to understand the apprentice's starting point and where the required maths and English qualifications aren't achieved or available to evidence, functional skills (FS) will be embedded into the apprenticeship delivery. Information, advice and guidance is given to ensure the programme is right for the apprentice and expectations are understood by all parties. Any barriers that might prevent the apprentice from attending and/or completing their apprenticeship are identified and discussed and details of any declared learning or physical disabilities are captured and shared with the tutor to help inform their planning process and ensure the needs of all apprentices are catered for. The tutor will share their contact details with the apprentice and employer, and a follow-up apprenticeship session will be organised.

Further details can be found in the Sport Structures Enrolment Procedure.

Learners or children who are absent from education

Apprentices or individuals undergoing educational programs should be aware that prolonged or recurrent absences may raise safeguarding concerns and absenteeism will be tracked accordingly. Taking a proactive approach is crucial to prevent the risk of these individuals' facing challenges in their educational journey. This involves addressing concerns in their early stages, particularly when apprentices are already under the care of the local authority's children's social services, with the involvement of a social worker. In such cases, absenteeism from educational activities may exacerbate known safeguarding risks within the individual's support network.