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# Recruitment & Selection Policy

Policy Overview	
<b>Last Review Date</b>	04.11.2021
<b>Next Review Date</b>	05.11.2022
<b>Reviewed By</b>	Rachel Thomas
<b>Version Control</b>	Recruitment&SelectionPolicy_240116_v1 Recruitment&SelectionPolicy_251016_v2 Recruitment&SelectionPolicy_Oct2019_v3 Recruitment&SelectionPolicy_July2020_v4 Recruitment& SelectionPolicy_v5_23.09.20_SB Recruitment&SelectionPolicy_v6_04112021_RT
<b>Policy Links</b>	Data Protection Policy Equality & Diversity Policy Safeguarding Policy
<b>Supporting Documentation</b>	Safer Recruitment Policy Statement – see Section 12

# Recruitment & Selection Policy

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# Recruitment & Selection Policy

## 1: Introduction

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Recruiting and selecting the right people is of paramount importance to the continued success of WELL Associates Ltd. This Recruitment and Selection Policy sets out how to ensure, as far as possible, that the best people are recruited on merit and that the recruitment process is free from bias and discrimination.

Building on the previous guidelines, the main thematic change relates to monitoring the recruitment process and its outcome.

The Equality Act 2010 places a responsibility on organisations to monitor, amongst other things, their recruitment processes to ensure they are not discriminatory. Accordingly, this policy sets out a procedure to enable WELL to monitor staff recruitment activity across the organisation.

By following the policy, in addition to fulfilling employment law requirements, WELL Associates Ltd will also ensure that it continues to uphold its commitment to equal opportunity.

## 2: Principles

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This policy is designed to assist WELL Associates Ltd to recruit and select the best candidate for a vacancy. In doing so it also enables WELL to take account of:

- WELL's Equality & Diversity Policy
- Legislation including the Equality Act 2010, and the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR Regulations
- Advice on good practice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission etc
- Requirements for compliance with UK Immigration legislation

It is the responsibility of each Manager to ensure that this policy is carefully followed. All Line Managers should make members of their staff aware of the obligation to familiarise themselves with and follow this policy.

Appointments must be based on merit. Principles including fairness, credibility and equal employment opportunity underpin recruitment and selection at WELL Associates Ltd.

## 3: Scope

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Normally appointments must be made in accordance with this policy and must, therefore, be subject to advertisement and interview. Requests to waive the requirement to advertise an appointment in exceptional circumstances may be approved as outlined in this document.

Where a grant awarding body approves funding for a named individual to work on a particular piece of work and the grant is dependent on that individual's contribution, advice should be sought from the Human Resources Lead in advance of formal appointment.

When employing temporary or casual staff on a short-term basis the principles of good practice outlined in this policy should be followed.

In summary these are that details of a post must be publicised, selection must be on the basis of appropriate criteria and merit, a record of the process and decision must be kept.

Financial approval for the establishment of a new post or the filling of a vacancy must be obtained before recruitment commences.

## 4: Job Description and Job Specification

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### **New Jobs and Job Vacancies:**

The occurrence of a vacancy is an opportunity to review the necessity for the post and its duties, responsibilities and grade.

When a vacancy arises, consideration must be given to staff whose posts are being made redundant and for whom redeployment is being sought.

Recruiting managers must advertise their post to redeployees for 5 working days and give consideration to the eligible applicants.

Redeployees may apply for roles that are the same grade or lower to their current grade.

Redeployees should meet the essential criteria for the post (or can achieve this with minimal training) but do not need to meet the desirable criteria.

If a redeployee meets all the essential criteria, they must be invited to a placement interview.

Recruiting a redeployee can reduce both the time and the cost incurred in filling a vacancy.

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## **Job Description (details of the role):**

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the process. It should clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job and must include:

- the job title (which must be sex and age neutral)
- the location of the job i.e. department/division/business area
- salary of the post
- the post to whom the postholder is responsible
- any posts reporting to the postholder
- main purpose of the job
- main duties and responsibilities
- any special working conditions (e.g. unsocial or shift working patterns, the requirement etc.)

## **Items that should be included in job descriptions are:**

- A note that indicates that, as duties and responsibilities change, the job description will be reviewed and amended in consultation with the postholder.
- An indication that the postholder will carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job as requested by the line manager etc.
- A statement that the postholder will actively follow WELL Associates Ltd policies including Equality & Diversity policies.
- An indication that the postholder will maintain an awareness and observation of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations.

## **The language in job descriptions should:**

- Avoid jargon and unexplained acronyms and abbreviations
- Be readily understandable to potential applicants for the post
- Avoid ambiguity about responsibilities and be clear about the postholder's accountability for resources, staff, etc.

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- Use inclusive language

## **Person Specification:**

The person specification is of equal importance to the job description and informs the selection decision.

The person specification details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

It should be drawn up after the job description and, with the job description, should inform the content of the advert.

The person specification should be specific, related to the job, and not unnecessarily restrictive - for example only qualifications strictly needed to do the job should be specified.

The inclusion of criteria that cannot be justified as essential for the performance of the job may be deemed discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010, if this impact disproportionately to the disadvantage of specific groups.

The person specification must form part of the further particulars of a vacancy along with the job description in order that applicants have a full picture of what the job entails.

The person specification enables potential applicants to make an informed decision about whether to apply and those who do apply, to give sufficient relevant detail of their skills and experience in their application.

The person specification forms the basis of the selection decision and enables the selection panel to ensure objectivity in their selection.

WELL Associates Ltd has agreed a set of core behaviours, which may inform the person specification for every appointment.

When developing the person specification, the recruiting manager will include the relevant competencies and expectations.

## **Elements of the Person Specification:**

### **The person specification details the:**

- knowledge (including necessary qualifications)
- skills and abilities

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- experience
- aptitudes

required to do the job, specifying which are essential and which are desirable; these may be different from the attributes of the previous postholder.

Essential criteria are those without which an appointee would be unable to adequately perform the job; Desirable criteria are those that may enable the candidate to perform better or require a shorter familiarisation period.

Criteria which are subjective and for which little evidence is likely to be obtained through the selection process should be avoided.

Knowledge can be derived in a number of ways, for example through education, training, or experience.

For some jobs a particular qualification(s) may be essential, while for others no single qualification may be appropriate, and a particular type of experience may be just as relevant as a formal qualification.

Where qualifications are deemed essential these should reflect the minimum requirements necessary to carry out the job to an acceptable standard.

UK qualifications should be stated but (other than for required membership of a UK professional body) it should be made clear that overseas equivalents will be accepted.

The Human Resources Lead can assist in advising on the equivalence of particular overseas qualifications.

Candidates will increasingly come forward with National Qualification Framework qualifications (NQFs - previously NVQs).

These qualifications recognise the achievement of employment-led standards of competence.

The type of experience required of applicants should be specified; but stipulating the length of experience must be avoided unless it can be objectively justified because the quality of experience is more important than its length and the Equality Act 2010 makes such stipulation unlawful unless objectively justified.

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It is also important to remember that experience is sometimes transferable from one area of work to another, in which case specifying skills is likely to be more effective than specifying a narrow definition of experience.

Required abilities should be expressed in terms of the standards required, not just in terms of the task to be undertaken.

For example, avoid statements such as 'Ability to write reports'; instead, indicate the expected standard, such as 'Ability to write detailed financial reports that encompass departmental budgeting, annual variances, and forecasting'.

Extreme care must be taken if physical requirements are specified. The Equality Act requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to a workplace or the way a job is carried out to make them suitable for disabled people.

It is therefore important that any physical requirement is stated in terms of the job that needs to be done.

Personal qualities may affect the ability of an individual to do the job, but they should not be seen as substitutes for skills.

For example, the ability to deal effectively with frustrated customers is a skill. Simply possessing patience (a personal quality) will not be enough.

### 5: Details for Applicants

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The details of a vacancy or 'further particulars' of a post must include the job description and person specification for the post together with any other important information that a potential applicant needs to decide whether to apply.

The purpose of advertising a post is to attract the widest range of high calibre applicants possible and therefore the further particulars sent to or accessed by applicants must give a clear picture of the post, the organisation, and of WELL Associates Ltd as an employer.

Further particulars must include the following where they apply:

- details of the main terms and conditions of employment (including holiday and pension arrangements).
- details of any relocation benefits - relocation expenses, relocation supplements where they apply, etc.



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- Information about the organisation (including details about the research strategy or research interests within the department).
- the Equal Opportunity Policy
- guidelines about completing the application form, including the number of referees and whether there is an intention to seek references before interview
- where a CV is required, candidates should be advised that it must include: education history (institution name, start and end dates of courses, qualification gained), details of membership of any professional organisations, details of current or most recent employer (name and address of current organisation, job title, salary and duties), details of previous employment and how the applicants' knowledge, skills, and abilities meet the job requirements;
- in addition, WELL Associates Ltd requires applicants applying with a CV to provide standardised monitoring information
- where applicable, a statement explaining that only candidates who are shortlisted will be contacted
- an indication of the need for a criminal records check, depending on the post
- Proof of Right to work

When requested and where reasonable, documentation should be translated into alternative formats.

For example, blind or partially sighted people should be allowed to receive an application in a different form e.g. via a hard copy.

Alternatively, the candidate may request Braille, large print, tape or an electronic format so that their accessibility software can be used.

## 6: Publicising the Vacancy

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Authorisation needs to be obtained from both the CEO and HR Lead before a role is cleared for advertising.

The majority of posts will be advertised through both the WELL website and social media outlets in addition to other specialist, local, regional and national media to maximise the chances of attracting the best candidate. All

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posts must be advertised for a minimum of two weeks to help attract the best pool of applicants.

Where head-hunting organisations are used for very senior or specialist positions, a requirement to seek out suitable female and ethnic minority candidates for consideration must be incorporated into the brief for the assignment.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission advises that 'word of mouth' recruitment is likely to be indirectly discriminatory in terms of race and/or sex discrimination.

It is very important therefore that all posts are advertised as widely as possible in media that reach underrepresented groups and that all applicants are dealt with in the same way and given the same information and opportunity to make an application.

All appointments for senior leadership roles must be advertised externally with appropriate positive action statements.

To ensure that applicants are fully informed about the vacancy for which they are applying and to ensure that they provide WELL with all the information we require, adverts must direct applicants to the further particulars, which will provide more information including how to apply.

An advertisement is written from the job description and person specification and should contain the following points:

- WELL Associates Ltd name and logo (use of the WELL logo is strictly regulated)
- salary
- brief details of the job
- key details of the person specification
- the necessity of a criminal records check, if required
- duration of the appointment (if fixed term)
- how to access further particulars of the vacancies
- closing date for applications (sufficient time should be allowed to enable applicants to consider the further particulars and make their application)

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- where known, date of interview
- A copy of adverts placed in all media should be retained by the organisation.

## 7: Processing Applications

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Directors must make their staff aware that when dealing with enquiries about vacancies it is unlawful to state or imply that applications from one sex or from a particular racial group or in relation to any other protected characteristic would be preferred and to do so may lead to a complaint of race, sex or other discrimination against WELL Associates Ltd.

Care must also be taken when initiating contacts with applicants that all are treated in the same way, for example with regard to invitations to visit the organisation, informal meetings to discuss the vacancy, and provision of information.

The confidentiality of applications must be respected by all of those involved in the selection process.

### **Selecting the Interview Panel:**

All interviews must be conducted by a panel. Familiarity with the vacancy and preparation for the interview is a key to successful interviewing.

### **Panels must:**

- consist of a minimum of three people including the immediate line manager of the vacant post, a colleague who is familiar with the area of work and a third person, preferably from outside the area to balance the panel's perspective.
- reflect an ethnicity balance wherever possible - the make-up of panels will be monitored to assess how regularly this is achieved
- declare if they already know a candidate
- be willing and able to attend all interviews for the duration of the recruitment process, to maintain consistency and to ensure fair treatment of all candidates.

All WELL Associates Ltd staff on panels must have received training in fair recruitment and ideally at least one member who has received disability awareness training.

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Panel members external to WELL are welcome to attend WELL training but is not a requirement. In such circumstances the Panel chair is responsible for briefing external panel members and ensuring processes are followed fairly, legally and in line with WELL policy.

## **Monitoring:**

As good practice WELL Associates Ltd will monitor the ethnic origin, sex and disability status of applicants for all posts, those shortlisted and appointees.

This informs WELL how its Equality and Diversity Strategy is working in practice and whether its recruitment practices are having a discriminatory effect on any particular groups.

Applicants will complete equality monitoring information as part of their application. Panel members should remind themselves of the monitoring information required of them in relation to their selection decisions before commencing the selection process.

## **Shortlisting:**

After the closing date has passed the interview panel should assess the applications to determine which applicants are to be called for interview. At least two members of the interview panel, including the immediate line manager, should undertake the task of shortlisting.

Where the panel has an external member, that person should take part in the shortlisting wherever practicable. Shortlisting decisions should be based on evidence that the applicant has met the requirements of the person specification.

Shortlisting panel members should avoid dismissing applicants who appear to be over-qualified. Assumptions should not be made about their reasons for applying for the post as they may eliminate an otherwise exemplary candidate.

The original applications for all applicants, together with a written note of reasons for shortlisting or rejecting applicants must be retained for a minimum of 12 months from the date that an appointment decision is notified, in case of complaint to an Employment Tribunal and to satisfy UK Visas and Immigration requirements to keep records for 12 months where a certificate of sponsorship is required.

## **Arrangements for Interviews:**

Letters or e-mails to shortlisted candidates should include:

- date, time and place of their interview

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- instructions on how to find their way to the interview venue
- a request that they contact the author of the letter/message if they have any particular requirements or to discuss the interview facilities (related to access to the venue or any other need related to a disability).
- if appropriate, details of any test or presentation they will be required to take or anything they should bring with them (e.g., examples of work)
- qualification certificates that are essential to the post
- permission to work in the UK documents (or to indicate if a Certificate of Sponsorship is required)

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 makes it an offence to employ anyone who does not have permission to be in, or work in, the UK.

To avoid making assumptions about such permission, it is the organisation's responsibility to ask all appointees for evidence of eligibility to work in the UK.

It is unlawful racial discrimination to carry out checks only on potential employees who by their appearance or accent seem to be other than British.

It is therefore a requirement to ask all candidates attending for interview to bring with them evidence of their right to work in the UK.

WELL must take a copy of the original document, sign to confirm they have seen the original and send this to the HR Lead with all starter documentation.

It is best practice to write to candidates who have not been shortlisted but if this is not possible due to limited resources, the further particulars for the post should make clear that after a certain period, if they have not heard from WELL, applicants should consider themselves not to have been shortlisted.

## 8: Interviewing

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In addition to being available to offer advice on any stage of the recruitment process, HR staff can join an interview panel, if requested in advance.

Interviews should be scheduled as soon after the closing date as reasonably possible, as delays are likely to lead to a loss of candidates.

The structure of interviews should be decided in advance by determining who will chair the panel and what areas of questioning are required to cover all of the elements of the person specification.

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The question areas to be explored by each panel member should be agreed in advance to avoid overlap or repetition and panels may find it helpful to discuss their expectations of full answers to the questions, prior to the interview.

The same areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates and assumptions should not be made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their employment history.

Interview questions should be phrased so that they do not favour any one candidate or group of candidates.

Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous.

Recruiting managers are expected to ask candidates the reason for any gaps in their employment history.

Care must be taken to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g., questions about personal circumstances that are unrelated to the job).

It is, for example, legitimate to ask for confirmation of whether individuals can comply with the working patterns of the post, but not to ask details of their domestic or childcare arrangements etc.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that such questions are not asked.

Staff conducting interviews must be aware that, although questions asked may not in themselves be discriminatory, the interpretation of answers by the panel could exhibit prejudice.

For example, if indications of ambition were to be regarded as a worthy characteristic in applicants of one sex or ethnic group but not in another.

Information regarding personal circumstances which is offered in a CV or at interview must not be taken into consideration in reaching a selection decision.

For example, the fact that a male candidate shares details of his domestic circumstances with the panel, but a female candidate chooses not to (or vice versa), should not be taken into account.

Interview panels act for WELL in making selection decisions and are accountable for them. Interview notes must be taken by each panellist to

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help the panel to make an informed decision based on the content of the interviews.

Such notes must relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification.

The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes in the event of a complaint and an Employment Tribunal would expect WELL to have notes of every selection decision.

The lack of such notes would seriously impede WELL's ability to contest such a complaint. Obviously any inappropriate or personally derogatory comments contained within the notes could be considered discriminatory and are unacceptable.

It is good practice to offer internal applicants' feedback after interviews and it is WELL policy to respond to requests for feedback from external applicants.

Feedback should be specific, relating to the person specification, and honest. In feeding back to candidates it is good practice to balance the applicants' weaknesses with some positive points.

### **Selection Tests and Presentations:**

Consideration should be given to using job-related selection tests or asking candidates to give presentations as part of the selection process if there are some elements of the person specification that are difficult to test at interview.

If selection tests or presentations are to be used, all candidates should be given the same written information as to how long they will take, the topic area(s) they will cover, and what - if anything - they should prepare in advance.

### **Making a Decision After Interview:**

The information obtained in the application, the interview, any selection tests and in references (if obtained prior to interview) will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made.

The Chair of the panel must ensure that a written note of the reasons for selecting the successful candidate and rejecting others is made and placed on the recruitment file, together with the original applications and notes of all panel members, for a minimum of 12 months after the appointment decision has been notified to the candidates.

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Positive action provisions in the Equality Act 2010 can be used to recruit a staff member from an underrepresented group where they score equally.

If a member of a selection panel feels that there has been any irregularity in the recruitment and selection procedure and the panel cannot resolve the matter at the time, they must report the matter without delay to the Human Resources Lead.

Interview proceedings are confidential, and interviewers are free to divulge to others the decision reached only once the appointee has accepted the post.

If references, or other pre employment checks, e.g. the right to work, have not been taken up prior to sending new starter information through to the Human Resources Lead, only a provisional offers may be made, subject to a certificate of sponsorship being issued and entry clearance gained, Disclosure and Barring Service check or occupational health clearance, where appropriate.

Where the successful candidate is disabled, reasonable adjustments may need to be considered depending on their disability and in consultation with them.

This should be done as soon as possible after appointment. The candidate should also receive written confirmation of whatever adjustments have been agreed.

## 9: References

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The further particulars for a post should make clear to candidates the number and status of referees required and whether the panel intends to seek references before interview.

References from relatives or friends should not be accepted. Appropriate referees are those who have direct experience of a candidate's work, education or training: preferably in a supervisory capacity and a reference must be obtained from the current or previous employer.

In most cases references must only be taken up once a preferred candidate is selected.

If it is intended to take up references before a preferred candidate is selected it is not permissible under the Equality Act to enquire about the sickness absence record of the applicant.



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Where an applicant indicates that s/he does not wish his/her current employer to be contacted prior to a provisional offer being made, this should be respected.

In most cases references will be requested after a preferred candidate is identified. When requesting a reference at this stage information on the candidate's sickness/unauthorised absence record should be requested.

When requesting references, it is helpful to seek precise information and confirm facts, such as length of employment, relationship of the applicant to the referee, job title, brief details of responsibilities, reasons for leaving, unauthorised absence, attendance including sickness absence performance, and any other relevant information.

It is helpful to the referee to include a copy of the job description and person specification of the post to which you are recruiting.

Do not make requests that only elicit generalisations about candidates' attendance, honesty, or subjective information as to the applicant's suitability for the job.

The value of unsolicited references submitted by candidates and addressed 'To Whom It May Concern' is very limited and should be disregarded.

Telephone references should be avoided but, where time pressures or the location of referees dictate that this may be appropriate, recruiters should ensure that they are certain as to the identity of the person to whom they are speaking.

When conducting telephone references, it is helpful to plan the conversation beforehand and to have a list of questions ready.

A file note should be made at the time of the telephone conversation and written confirmation should always be requested.

References are confidential and must be sought 'in confidence'. References should only be used for the purpose for which they were intended, and their confidentiality must be maintained.

Panel members must return all copies of any references with the application forms and their interview notes to the Chair on completion of the recruitment exercise.

References must only be kept on the recruitment file and the personal file held by the Human Resources Lead.

### **Criminal record checks:**

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It is WELL Associates Ltd policy to require applicants to disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013) as part of their application.

The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide those certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account.

However certain types of posts, particularly those that involve working with children or adults in a vulnerable position or other positions of trust or sensitive areas, are exempt from these provisions, and in these cases all convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warning must be declared.

The Disclosure and Barring Service makes decisions about who will be barred from working with children and vulnerable adults.

If a manager believes that the appointee to a vacancy will be working in a 'regulated' position s/he will require an enhanced criminal records check before commencing employment.

Applicants must be made aware early in the recruitment process that a criminal records check will be required of the appointee.

Appointees to such positions involving regulated activity must be briefed on their responsibilities towards safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

### 10: Appointment

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Only the Human Resources Lead issues letters of appointment and places individuals on the payroll (other than very limited exceptions).

If the job offer is conditional on completion of a qualification, DBS check, visa clearance (see paragraph 94) or health screening, this will be made clear in the appointment letter.

Academic qualifications, professional registration, the right to work and any other specifics considered essential for the post must be verified at the time of interview.

If requested, Human Resources can advise on the equivalence of overseas qualifications.

If a qualification is essential for the post and the recruiting manager has any concerns about the legitimacy of the qualification document, they should contact the awarding body to ask for verification.

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If a qualification certificate is issued in a foreign language, recruiting managers can ask the candidate for a translation from a reputable source or document notarisation.

## **Induction and Probation:**

It is WELL Associates Ltd policy that all staff who are new to WELL undergo a structured induction and successfully complete a probationary period (subject to limited exceptions).

## **Salary:**

Within the financial provision or established grading of the post, the salary offered should have regard to the applicant's experience or expertise and will normally be at or above the incremental point equivalent to the applicant's present salary.

The salaries of other staff doing similar work within the department or division with similar experience should also be taken into account.

## 11: Breaches of Policy

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Any member of staff with concerns about the application of this policy should raise their concerns in writing with their Line Manager. Applicants for employment concerned about the application of the policy should write to Human Resources:

Paul Kennedy: HR Lead  
[paul@welltraining.co.uk](mailto:paul@welltraining.co.uk)

Lindsey Flynn: CEO  
[lindsey@wellconsultancy.co.uk](mailto:lindsey@wellconsultancy.co.uk)

## Safer Recruitment Policy Statement

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WELL Associates undertakes appropriate screening to ensure that their staff are fit to work in a training provider setting with young people and vulnerable adults. It also reserves the right to refuse to employ staff whom it has a reasonable belief may pose a risk to its learners.

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WELL Associates has systems in place to prevent unsuitable people from working with children or vulnerable adults and to promote safe practice. These systems apply to all new staff and require the following checks to be made prior to appointment:

- a minimum of two references, satisfactory to WELL Associates one of which should be from a previous employer
- documentary evidence checks of identify, nationality, residency and “right to work” status
- enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check with barred list information\*
- documentary evidence of qualifications
- satisfactory completion of the probationary period

In accordance with the Regulations, records of all checks carried out are kept in a single, central record.

\*If a DBS check is delayed for any reason the staff member will not be subject to lone working with learners aged under 18. They must always have a member of staff present who is fully DBS checked until the point they receive a full DBS check.