Responsibility:	Operations Director	Date doc. created:	V3 February 2023
Print name sign off:	Joanna Hawkins	Last review date:	April 2025
Signature:	Joanna Hawkins	Next review date:	March 2026

Owner and version control

BPN Recruitment Policy and procedure

Policy Statement

To support the effective delivery of its mission and strategy, Best Practice Network is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality for all applicants and employees throughout every stage of the recruitment and selection process.

This Recruitment Policy outlines the principles and procedures governing recruitment, ensuring that decisions are based on a fair and objective assessment of an applicant's ability to fulfil the role requirements. The policy applies to all staff recruitment. To maintain its effectiveness, any employee involved in recruitment or selection must adhere to this document and follow its guidelines.

Recruitment for Employees

Job Description

Every role—whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary—must have an up-to-date job description, aligned with the company's standard templates.

The Recruiting Manager is responsible for preparing both the job description and person specification. The person specification must clearly distinguish between "essential" and "desirable" criteria.

Additionally, the person specification must explicitly reference:

- Suitability to work with children and adults at risk.
- Ongoing compliance with Best Practice Network's safeguarding policies and procedure

Advertising

All permanent and fixed-term vacancies will be advertised on the SEG ATS system, which is found under recruitment on the main SEG site. Additionally, the BPN recruitment team may promote vacancies through external recruitment platforms, job boards, or social media to attract a diverse range of candidates.

Key Principles

- Internal Applicants: If a role is advertised externally, internal applicants must still be permitted, and all candidates (internal and external) must be assessed equally against the same selection criteria.
- Safeguarding Statement: All advertisements must clearly state Best Practice Network's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk.

Compliance & Reporting

- Any applicant who believes they have faced discrimination during the selection process (on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, or other protected characteristic) should report the matter to the Managing Director for investigation.

- The BPN recruitment team must be consulted before each stage of recruitment (Advertising, interviewing & offering)
- All required documentation must be submitted directly to and managed by the BPN recruitment team.

Shortlisting, Assessments, and Interviews

Shortlisting

- Direct Applications: If vacancies are advertised internally or externally, applications will be assessed against the essential criteria defined by the BPN recruitment team.
- Agency Applications: If applications are received via a recruitment agency, the BPN recruitment team will review them for eligibility and completeness.

Interview Arrangements

Candidates will be given reasonable notice of their interview date and time, with flexibility offered to accommodate their needs. The BPN recruitment team will send a formal invitation, including:

- Interview format (e.g., panel interview, in-tray exercise, observed activity).
- Preparation required (e.g., a 5-minute presentation on their suitability for the role).
- Logistical details (arrival time, location/map, and a named contact for enquiries).

Interview Process

- Panel Composition: Interviews will be conducted by a panel of at least two people.
- Structured Assessment: A standardised interview proforma will be used to ensure:
  - Questions are lawful, relevant, and consistent.
  - Responses can be fairly scored and compared.
- Record-Keeping: Panel notes will be retained for at least three months and used to provide candidate feedback.

Offer of Employment

Making the Offer

- Following a successful interview, BPN recruitment team will extend a verbal offer of employment.
- Once accepted and a start date agreed, the SEG HR Department will issue a formal written contract.

References

- The SEG HR Department will retrieve written references, whether the candidate was recruited directly or via an agency.
- At least one reference must be from the candidate's most recent employer.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Legal Framework

Best Practice Network complies with:

- The **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
- The **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975**
- **Data Protection Act 2018** (GDPR provisions) for handling disclosure information

Requirements

- All staff must obtain a satisfactory **enhanced DBS check with barred list verification** where appropriate under Section 113B of the Police Act 1997.
- In exceptional circumstances, new staff may begin under **Risk-Assessed Supervision** (per DBS guidance) while awaiting clearance.
- Applicants must be informed during the **initial application stage** that:
    o The role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
    o Disclosure of all convictions (including spent convictions) is required

Handling Disclosure Information

- Any relevant information revealed will be assessed considering:
    o The nature/gravity of the offence
    o Time elapsed since the offence
    o Relevance to the role (per DBS Code of Practice)
- The applicant has the right to:
    o Dispute inaccurate information directly with DBS
    o Provide context before any employment decision is made

Ongoing Safeguarding

- Annual self-declarations are required under **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)** statutory guidance
- Staff must immediately report any new convictions/ cautions under our Safeguarding Policy

Data Protection

- DBS certificates and related information are:
    o Stored securely for no longer than 6 months (per DBS guidelines)
    o Processed in accordance with Article 10 of the UK GDPR

Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) Compliance

Regulatory Alignment

This policy satisfies:

- **DfE Contract Clause [X.Y]**: *Personnel Security Requirements*
- **HMG Security Policy Framework** (2023 Edition)
- **DfE Data Sharing Agreement** Annex B: *Staff Screening Standards*

2. Mandatory Checks

As mandated by DfE Framework Agreement Schedule [Z]:

Check Type	Standard Required	DfE Reference
Identity Verification	Two original ID documents (1 primary + 1 secondary)	DfE Security Annex 4.2.1
Employment History	3-year verification with gap analysis	DfE Contract Condition 12.3(c)
Right to Work	Digital check via Share Code or manual inspection	UKVI Compliance Standard
Criminal Record	Unspent convictions declaration	ROA 1974 (Exceptions Order)

3. DfE-Specific Requirements

- **Enhanced Scrutiny**: For roles accessing **DfE CONNECT** or **Analyse School Performance (ASP) data**:
  - Additional verification of educational qualifications (per *DfE Data Access Policy v3.1*)
  - Mandatory re-check every 5 years (*DfE Security Bulletin 2022/04*)

4. Withdrawal Process

1. **Preliminary Notice**: Candidate receives written explanation of adverse findings
2. **Right to Respond**: 5 working days to submit mitigating evidence
3. **Final Determination**: HR Director consults DfE Contract Manager if precedent unclear

5. Record-Keeping

- **Retention Period**: 6 years post-contract termination (*DfE Record Retention Schedule*)
- **Audit Compliance**: All checks documented in **BPSS Tracker** for DfE annual audits

6. Breach Notification

Any failure to complete BPSS checks must be reported to DfE within:

- **24 hours** for critical roles (Tier 1 data access)
- **5 working days** for standard roles

BPN Employee Recruitment Process

BPN Recruitment Process Flowchart

Stage	Action	Responsible Party	Outputs/Documents
1. Preparation	Create job description & person specification	Line Manager	- Approved JD/PS - Essential criteria defined
2. Advertising	Post on SEG ATS + external boards/agencies	BPN Recruitment Team	
3. Shortlisting	Review applications against criteria: • Direct apps: BPN Recruitment Team • Agency: BPN Recruitment Team	BPN Recruitment Team	Shortlisted candidates
4. Interview Setup	Schedule interview + notify candidate: • Format (panel/tasks) • Preparation required	BPN Recruitment Team	Interview invitation email
5. Interview	Conduct interview: • Min. 2 interviewers • Use scoring proforma	Interview Panel	Completed scores/notes
6. Offer & Checks	1. Verbal offer 2. Initiate checks: • Right to Work • References (x2) • Qualifications 3. Issue provisional contract	BPN Recruitment Team/ Hiring Manager (RTW & qualifications)/ SEG HR (References & contract)	Conditional offer letter
7. Safeguarding	Complete: • DBS check • BPSS (if DfE role) → Risk-Assessed Supervision if pending	SEG HR Team	Clearance confirmation
8. Onboarding	Deliver BPN induction Complete employment docs	Line Manager/ SEG HR	Signed contract Induction checklist

Recruitment for Associates

1. . Job Description & Specification

- **Requirement**:
  Each associate role must have an up-to-date job description using BPN's standard templates.
- **Responsibilities**:
  - **Recruiting Manager**: Drafts job description and person specification.
  - **Key Content**:
    - Clear "essential" vs. "desirable" criteria.
    - Explicit reference to:
      - Safeguarding compliance (children/adults at risk).
      - Ongoing adherence to BPN policies.

2. Advertising Process

- **Channels**:
  - BPN website (mandatory).
  - Internal associate network (optional).
  - External platforms (e.g., job boards/social media) if wider recruitment needed.
- **Safeguarding Statement**:
  All adverts must include BPN's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable groups.

3. Application Process

Step	Action	Notes
1. Application	Submit via BPN Associate Portal.	Includes: • Personal details • Role preferences • Right to Work proof • ID headshot • 2 referees • DBS certificate (≤3 years old).
2. Partner-Nominated Associates	Exempt from references. DBS exemption form accepted if school provides last certificate details.	Form must include certificate number/issue date.
3. Pre-Checks Completion	HR validates: • Right to Work • DBS status • References (if applicable).	Automated system updates status.
4. Contract Issuance	Sign **Contract for Provision** of Services (CoPS) digitally – for not partner nominated associates Sign **Associate Partnerships Service Agreement** (Final) – for partner nominated associates	"Green-listed" upon signature.

4. Post-Recruitment Compliance

- **Annual Requirement**:
  All associates must submit a **self-declaration** confirming:
  - o No changes to DBS status.
  - o Ongoing safeguarding compliance.
- **System Access**:
  "Green-listed" associates are visible to relevant departments for work allocation.

BPN Associate Recruitment Process

Stage	Key Actions	Responsible (R)	Accountable (A)	Documents/Outputs	Exit Criteria
1. Role Setup	• Create JD using BPN templates • Define "essential/desirable" criteria	Hiring Manager (R)	HR Lead (A)	Approved Job Description	JD signed off by HR
2. Advertising	• Post on BPN website • Email associates • Optional external boards	HR Coordinator (R)	Hiring Manager (A)	Live vacancy notice	Candidate applications received
3. Application	• Submit online form • Upload: Right to Work, photo, DBS/references	Candidate (R)	HR (A)	Completed application	All fields validated by system
4. HR Screening	**Partner-Nominated?** → ✔ Yes: Verify DBS exemption form + school letter ✔ No: Check DBS (<3yrs) + 2 references	HR Officer (R)	Compliance Team (A)	Screening checklist	Pre-checks completed
5. Contracting	• Issue digital CoPS • Receive e-signature	HR Admin (R)	Legal (C)	Signed Contract for Services	Associate "green-listed" in system
6. Activation	• System access granted • Added to work pool	IT (R)	Dept Heads (I)	Induction pack	Associate visible for assignments