

MLA

Safer Recruitment Policy 2024



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Our Mission Statement

MLA Move Language Ahead endeavours to provide industry leading SAFE, EDUCATIONAL and CULTURAL experiences to guests from around the world.

MLA Equal Opportunities Statement

In the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of staff, the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet the requirements of the programme or course or post.

The requirements being met, no employee will be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality (within current legislation), age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, or beliefs on matters such as religion or politics.

Statement on Disability:

At MLA Move Language Ahead we will aim to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act.
- Eliminate harassment of disabled pupils that is related to their disabilities.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.
- Take steps to account for disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

In the recruitment, selection, training, appraisal, development and promotion of staff, the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet the requirements of the programme or course or post.

The requirements being met, no employee will be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality (within current legislation), age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, or beliefs on matters such as religion or politics.

Introduction

This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout MLA Centres and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in our care. This policy complies with guidance outlined in 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education-January 2007' and 'Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff - DfE 2012' and has been ratified by the Senior Management Team at a meeting in November 2024 and will be updated annually.

This policy is an essential element in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students, staff, group leaders and others within the school community and aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection of all staff and volunteers by:

- attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies
- deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying for vacancies
- identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

MLA Move Language Ahead is committed to using disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices.

As an employer we are under a duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), any member of staff who, following disciplinary proceedings, is dismissed because of misconduct towards a pupil and we may refer any concerns we have before the completion of this process.

As an employer we are under a duty to refer any allegation of abuse against a child/vulnerable adult/member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer within one working day of the allegation being made.

A referral will be made if a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child/vulnerable adult/member of staff
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/vulnerable adult/member of staff
- behaved towards a child or children/vulnerable adult(s)/member(s) of staff in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children/vulnerable adults/members of staff.

The UK Operations Team and the UK Academic Manager will review all documentation on an annual basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

The organisation will be responsible for the following:

- ensuring the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment, selection of staff and volunteers; and to monitor compliance with the policies and procedures
- ensuring that all appropriate staff have completed safer recruitment training
 - Staff with Safer Recruitment Training for 2024: Ruth Marin, UK Academic Manager; Perry Bullock, UK Operations Coordinator; Josh Williams, UK Academic Coordinator and Luke Orban, UK Academic Coordinator.

The UK Operations Coordinators and Academic Manager will:

- Ensure that the school operates safely.
- Ensure fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- Ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers and the school have appropriate action plans, risk assessments and rationales in place for any staff hired who have not yet satisfied all checks.
- Monitor any contractors and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults at every stage of this process

Inviting Applications

All applications will be received and all candidates' details and interactions will be stored in our Applicant Tracking System (ATS) recruitment platform, Applicant Stack.

All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement:

MLA - Move Language Ahead Welfare and Safeguarding Statement

MLA - Move Language Ahead is committed to safe practices in recruitment and selection that includes consideration of issues to do with child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Successful applicants will undergo an Enhanced DBS check (PVG in Scotland), have their references verified and checks completed in line with our Safeguarding & Safer Recruitment Policies

All applicants will receive an online pack containing the following when applying for a post:

- A statement of the MLA's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of the students on our care
- Job description and person specification
- The school's Safeguarding Policy
- The school's Safer Recruitment Policy

Prospective applicants should complete MLA's online signed application form in full in addition to their CV. Gaps in employment history must be satisfactorily explained. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has not passed.

Identification of the Recruitment Panel

At least one member of the Interview Team will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment. (Ruth Marin, UK Academic Manager, Perry Bullock, UK Operations Coordinator, Josh Williams, UK Academic Coordinator and Luke Orban, UK Academic Coordinator)

The Interview Panel for MLA Move Language Ahead will consist of (in whole or in part):

- **Ruth Marin**, UK Academic Manager
- **Perry Bullock**, UK Operations Coordinator.
- **Luke Orban**, UK Academic Coordinator
- **Josh Williams**, UK Academic Coordinator
- **James Suttle**, UK Operations Coordinator

Short Listing and References

Shortlisting

Candidates will be shortlisted based on their alignment with the person specification for the position. Those who meet the criteria will progress to the interview stage through our Applicant Tracking System (ATS) recruitment platform.

References Requirement

Candidates are required to provide at least two references in their application (preferably 3), with at least one preferably from their current or most recent employer, unless their latest employment is irrelevant to the role. References will be verified before the selection process to identify and address any discrepancies.

All candidates are requested to give permission to contact references provided in the application form at any time during the recruitment process. Candidates may request MLA in writing not to contact their referees until having attended the interview.

MLA Returners are required to provide at least one recent reference from a new employer (if they have been employed during their previous and new employment periods with MLA). Alternatively, we will contact the same employer we received a reference from the previous year.

Reference Verification

References will be requested in writing directly from the referees via our ATS recruitment platform. Where necessary, referees will be contacted by phone to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. All such exchanges will be documented in detail within the ATS recruitment platform.

At first instance, references should be institutional emails, webmail addresses must be avoided. Candidates entering employment for the first time must provide a valid academic reference. The recruitment panel will verify webmail addresses in online searches or via phone call to the relevant institution/business/school and such process will be recorded in our ATS.

Permission to Contact Previous Employers

During the application process, candidates will be asked to provide permission to contact previous employers in addition to their listed referees. If necessary, previous employers not named as referees may be contacted to resolve any discrepancies. Detailed records of these communications will be maintained in the ATS recruitment platform.

Specific Questions for Referees

Referees will be asked specific questions concerning the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Any disciplinary warnings, including those that are time-expired, related to the safeguarding of children and young people.
- The candidate's overall suitability for the position.

Reference Request Content

- Reference requests will include inquiries about the following:
- The candidate's position.
- Sickness and attendance records.
- Disciplinary record.
- Suitability to work with children or any existing concerns regarding the candidate's potential to work with children.

Referees will also be asked:

- "Have there been any disciplinary procedures, allegations, or concerns expressed about the candidate during their employment that relate to the safety and welfare of children and young people?"
- "Is there any reason the candidate should not be employed with individuals under 18?"

Alternative Reference Formats

Human Resource consultants and lawyers now advise employers to only give 'standard' references, stating only dates employed and job title. If a referee's company policy prevents them from completing our reference request template, as may occur with recruitment agencies, and they provide their own format, the recruitment team will ensure the reference addresses the candidate's suitability to work with children. If this is not covered, a follow-up phone call will be made to inquire directly about the candidate's suitability to work with children. All communications will be recorded in our ATS recruitment platform.

Conditional Offer

All appointments are contingent upon receiving satisfactory references, completing vetting procedures, and obtaining DBS clearance:

- UK - disclosure and barring service enhanced check processed with us unless candidates are on the update service OR registration with the PVG scheme in Scotland
- Outside UK - disclosure and barring service enhanced check processed with us unless you are on the update service OR registration with the PVG scheme in Scotland, AND a police certificate of good conduct / criminal record check from the employee's country of residence or from the last country they worked in (no older than 3 months prior to the commencing of your contract).

*In the event that obtaining a relevant police certificate from the last country staff resided or worked in proves impossible, at least one additional reference will be sought.

Communication with Non-Shortlisted Candidates

Candidates who are not shortlisted will receive an email notification informing them that their application is no longer under consideration for the position.

Online Searches

In line with the KCSIE 2023, and although this is not a standard recruitment procedure, the recruitment team may carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates if they see it necessary.

Applicant Tracking System Process

Stage 1: New

Description: Review CVs and application forms.

Recruiter process: Assess candidate qualifications against job requirements. Shortlist candidates who meet essential criteria for the next stage.

Stage 2 (optional): Need more information OR Explain qualifications

Description: Only applicable to candidates who have come directly from Indeed and have not completed MLA's application form in full.

Recruiter process: An email will be sent to request necessary information.

Stage 2 (optional only for Academics): Explain qualifications

Description: Only applicable to candidates who have completed the application form but have provided unclear information about their qualification status (PGCE in related matters, ATEFL portfolio, unclear foreign qualifications and recognition, etc).

Recruiter process: An email will be sent to request necessary information.

Stage 2: Interview 1 / Reference Checks

Description: Conduct interviews and check references for shortlisted candidates.

Recruiter process: Schedule and conduct interviews with shortlisted candidates. Recruiter submits the interview feedback form. If the interview is successful, initiate reference checks with previous employers or relevant contacts. In some cases reference requests will be sent before the interview

Stage 3 (ONLY for managerial positions): Video Task Interview (Activity Managers only)

Description: Assess candidates' practical skills and problem-solving abilities in a real-world scenario relevant to the position.

Recruiter process: Candidates are provided with a specific video task aligned with the role's responsibilities. Examples may include a demonstration of how they would handle a scenario with students or address a team-related issue.

Candidates will record their response, complete the task, and submit the video by a set deadline.

Stage 3 (ONLY for managerial positions): Task Interview (Director of Studies and Assistant Director of studies only)

Description: Assess candidates' practical skills and problem-solving abilities in a real-world scenario relevant to the position.

Recruiter process: Candidates are provided with MLA guidelines to group students in an Excel sheet and timetable teachers.

Candidates will complete and submit the task by a set deadline. Rationale for their decisions will be discussed in a second interview.

Stage 3 (Stage 4 for Managers): Job Offer

Description: Candidate receive an appointment offer

Recruiter process: Candidates receive an official job offer letter outlining terms and conditions. Await candidate's acceptance to finalise hiring.

Stage 4 (Stage 5 for Managers): Hired

Description: Candidate has accepted the offer and is now considered hired.

Recruiter process: Candidates receive a full contract of employment are moved to the onboarding platform. Begin onboarding process.

Interview Process

Interviews will primarily be conducted online using Teams, Zoom, or other video conferencing software. If these options are unavailable, alternative video conferencing tools may be used. On occasion, interviews may also be held in person.

Notification and Preparation for Interview

Candidates progressing to the interview stage in the ATS recruitment platform will receive the following:

Interview Confirmation:

Candidates moved to the interview stage in the ATS recruitment platform will receive:

- An email confirming the interview and any other selection techniques, such as an online link and password.
- Details of the interview day including details of the panel members
- Further copy of the person specification and job description
- All applicants will receive the following safeguarding reminder:

MLA is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Successful candidates will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS, sign a Declaration of Suitability to Work with Children. All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures, DBS clearance and proof of identity (show physical passport during interview) and Right to Work in the UK. If the candidate's residency is outside the UK, a police certificate of good conduct / criminal record check from their country of residence OR the last country they worked in (no older than 3 months prior to the commencing of their contract).

- Proof of identity will be required at the interview. Candidates are required to have a full working video camera to attend the interview.
- References will be followed up. A reference request will ask specifically whether there is any reason the candidate should not be employed with people under 18. All gaps in CVs must be explained satisfactorily
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview
- Details of any documents they will be required to bring
- All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures, DBS/PVG clearance, and satisfactory explanation of any gaps in the CV.
- References will be verified, with specific attention to whether there are any reasons the candidate should not be employed to work with individuals under 18.
- Interview Tasks (for Managers only): Details of any tasks to be completed as part of the interview process for managers

Interview Template: Interviews will follow a template of questions provided to interviewers to ensure objectivity and consistency in the selection process.

Evaluation Criteria for Interviewees: Interviewees will be provided with a sample criteria to evaluate their responses. The criteria include:

- Exceeds Requirements (only academics)
- Meets Requirements
- Needs a Little More Training
- Doesn't Meet Requirements

Interview Feedback Form: Interviewers will complete an Interview Feedback Form in the ATS recruitment platform. This form will record interview answers and award performance based on the provided criteria.

Selection Process

The selection techniques employed will be based on the nature and responsibilities of the position.

Offers and Onboarding

➤ Selected Candidates

- Application Requirements: All candidates who receive an offer must meet the application requirements.
- Interview Requirement: All candidates who receive an offer must have been interviewed unless they are returners.
- Conditional Offers: All offers are contingent upon:
 - Satisfactory references
 - Completion of vetting procedures
 - DBS/PVG clearance
 - Proof of identity
 - Right to Work in the UK

Post-Offer Process

- Once a candidate accepts the offer of employment, a formal contract of employment will be issued.
- Candidates will then be transitioned to our ATS onboarding platform for further processing where they are Hires.

Non-Shortlisted Candidates

- Candidates who are not shortlisted will be informed via email that their application is no longer under consideration.

Onboarding Process

Candidate's Document provision:

Hires receive their credentials to their personal onboarding profile via email and also encouraged to verify and edit their contact information displayed on the portal including their legal residential address, phone number, and email.

Hires then complete the onboarding tasks and upload scans/photos of the following:

- Signed Contract of Employment (electronically signed or scans/photos of the signed contract)
- Passport (Driver's license for UK nationals who do not possess a passport)
- Teacher Qualifications (Academic positions only)
- Criminal Record Check from their country of residence (if Applicable)
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) OR Disclosure Scotland | Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG)
- 2024 Employee Declaration Form (to state that they are a person fit to work with children)
- English UK British Council Safeguarding Training (to complete and upload an up-to-date certificate)
- UK Prevent Training (to complete and upload an up-to-date certificate)
- UK Refresher Prevent Training (for returning staff only to upload an up-to-date certificate)
- Right to Work Check
- University holidays calendar (Only applicable to 20 hour student-visas)

Employment Checks

All online proof of check will be:

- Uploaded onto the hire's profile and retained on the personnel onboarding platform
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.

Original copies of staff passport (ID), qualifications, DBS/PVG certificates registered in the Update Service will be checked.

Original hard copy of ID will be checked on campus at induction.

Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed.

- In cases where DBS/PVG or Reference checks are pending, MLA reserves the right to postpone starting date in contract until all clearances have been successfully completed.

Induction

All staff will receive a full induction prior to the commencement of their contract. Each new staff member will be issued with their own induction checklist which will include:

- guidance regarding not being alone with students and appropriate physical contact when pupils are distressed or in need of assistance (e.g. with soiled clothing)
- discussion related to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras in school
- guidance about what to do if they witness inappropriate behaviour towards children from other members of staff
- a general list of topics all staff must be aware of (e.g. fire evacuation policy), to be completed with the employee and the Operations Team and Centre Director

All staff and volunteers will receive information on the school's Safeguarding Policy, Preventing Sexual Harassment Policy, Prevent Policy; and procedures and guidance on safe working practices as part of their induction training.

All staff will have access to the contact details of the main Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as well as the DSL in their centre.

THANK YOU!

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