

## Section 7 - Interviews and Assessment

4 minutes read

Last updated: 15 July 2021

Version: 1

### Requirements

7.1 All posts falling within the scope of this guidance require an interview of shortlisted candidates (even where there is only one applicant).

7.2 Interviews must be held face to face. Exceptions to this would be an applicant from outside the UK whose initial interview may be conducted virtually or where Government/Legal restrictions have been introduced e.g. due to a national emergency such as COVID19.

7.3 Interviews must be held with a panel of a least two, one of whom must have attended safer recruitment training within the last three years, be competent in interviewing and possess the appropriate expertise to assess the candidate's competence in the role. Wherever possible, interview panel members must not be closely related to the candidate. If this is unavoidable, the conflict of interest must be declared, and arrangements must be made for an additional person to be present.

7.4 All senior safeguarding roles (e.g. Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Cathedral Safeguarding Adviser) or other **employed** roles where there is a clear designation and responsibility for safeguarding must include a member of the National Safeguarding Team on the panel.

7.5 Interviews must explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults through a combination of questions that encompass the Church body's values and expected behaviours, with questions that focus on establishing skills, knowledge, qualifications & previous experience.

7.6 Any gaps, anomalies or discrepancies that have been identified in the application form during the shortlisting process must be discussed with the candidate during the interview and a satisfactory explanation provided. A note of these discussions must be made on the interview paperwork.

# Good practice advice

## Why?

An interview gives the opportunity to investigate the individual's motivation for working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults as well as explore his/her past experience of working with the relevant group, which may also reveal any indicators of concern.

It is also another opportunity to reinforce the value that the church body places on work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and the seriousness with which the body takes the appointment of those who work or volunteer with such groups.

## How?

### Selection Methods

Depending on the role, the decision-making process can sometimes be enhanced by using additional selection methods e.g. tasking the candidate with a presentation, observing the candidate working with a particular group.

### Interview Panel for Volunteer Roles

Interviews for voluntary roles may be more informal than an interview for paid employment, but must still involve a minimum of two people doing the interviewing. The conversation should still be structured and should help you to decide whether or not the person is suitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, including whether the individual has the ability to volunteer in the particular role and co-operate well with the others in the group.

## External Resources

- [The volunteer recruitment process — NCVO Knowhow](#)

## Interview questions

Questions asked during the interview - whether for paid employment or volunteering roles - should explore the candidates:

- Skills, abilities and motivation to work with the relevant group
- Experience with the particular group
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries
- Reasons for moving on from previous work with the relevant group (if applicable)
- Understanding of relevant safeguarding issues and good practice.

You could also explore:

- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours
- Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.

These areas should be explored using competency-based questions, for example, asking for examples from the candidate's experience ("tell us about a time..."), asking for responses to a variety of scenarios, probing the answers given ("how...?").

The interview should also provide the opportunity:

- to assess any training and support needs the candidate may have
- to allow the candidate to ask any questions they may have about the role.

## Gaps

The interview is an ideal place to address any gaps or discrepancies that have been identified in the application so far. Such conversations can be challenging and uncomfortable but are vital for ensuring nothing is left to chance. If the guidance Requirements and Good practice advice have been followed to this point, then it should come as no surprise to candidates that such anomalies are queried and they should understand the need for as much clarity as possible.

# Toolkit

- Example Interview Questions

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**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance/section-7>