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Abbey Physic Community Garden  
Growing a Healthy Community

## Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

Policy agreed	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
Date of next review	Biannually
Signed	Agreed at Trustee Meeting 

### Introduction

This document sets out the arrangements for recruiting, selecting and inducting new staff. The aims of our recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance
- to ensure that APCG meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of members by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

### Our approach to recruitment

APCG has a principle of equal access and open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job.

Each vacant post will have a job description and person specification drawn up by the Garden Manager and at least one Trustee. The recruitment and selection process should help to identify the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

If a trustee or member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the selection decision-making process. To ensure that there is equality of opportunity APCG will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

All applicants will be informed that appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

## **The selection process**

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible. The interviews will be conducted by the garden manager and a trustee. Members and other staff members may also be involved at the discretion of the garden manager.

As an employer we need to comply with the Equality Act (and our own Equal Opportunities policy) ensuring that we do not discriminate against employees or job applicants, in respect of the nine 'protected characteristics'.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. All applicants will be asked similar questions. All applicants who are invited for an interview should be asked bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications (e.g. passport or driving license or birth certificate). This is to confirm identity and right to work in the UK. Original documents will only be accepted, and photocopies will be taken. For candidates who are unsuccessful these documents will be destroyed after six months as will notes from their interview. For successful candidates the notes from the interview and identity check will be kept for the duration of their employment in their staff file.

## **Confirming the job offer and contract**

Having selected the most suitable candidate, the person should be contacted to confirm the job offer, which will be subject to satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS check. Ideally, we should take up at least 2 references e.g. former employers or people with whom the candidate has worked.

Telephone references are acceptable and in some cases may offer more detailed insights than written references. The referee should not be a relative. We will not accept open references (i.e. 'of the To Whom It May Concern' variety!)

Once the references have been obtained we will confirm the job offer and start date in writing. We are required by law to provide each new member of staff with a written

contract of employment from their first day of work. The same obligation applies to people employed on a casual or temporary basis. The contract must include a statement of the days of the week that the worker is required to work, whether working hours or days may be variable, with details of how they may vary.

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore the onus is on the employee to bring their certificate to the Garden Manager and for the Garden Manager to make sure that this is completed. We will normally expect checks to be completed before the employee starts work.

APCG will require all new staff to pass a probationary or trial period. This would typically be 3 months. The length of the period and any conditions related to it must be detailed in the employment contract. If we fail to do this then there is a risk that any dismissal during the probationary period may lead to a claim of breach of contract, even though the staff member may not be able to claim unfair dismissal.

## **Induction**

All new members of staff will have an induction designed to help them feel they are connected to APCG and its values, understand their role and what is expected of them, feel safe and secure and, perhaps most importantly, feel like they belong.

The Garden Manager should make sure that the new person starts on a day when she/he is working. It would be helpful to identify someone in the team who could act as a 'buddy'; to the new person, show them around and perhaps share lunch or a tea break with them during the first week. New joiners should also have the opportunity to spend some time with each member of the staff team and to meet the trustees.

Other things that should be included in the induction of new staff members.

- An introduction to APCG's policies and where they can be accessed
- Briefing on the grievance policy
- An explanation of the different ways we communicate with each other and with our members
- Briefing about some of our key partnerships with other organisations
- Specific details about arrangements for absence
- Organisation of safeguarding or other necessary training where appropriate
- Health and safety induction including record keeping
- Adding the person to the group WhatsApp
- Meetings with members and some of the trustees
- An end of first week review to provide the person with an opportunity to ask questions
- Explanation of the appraisal and performance review process

The induction period allows the line manager to train, guide, monitor and appraise the work of the new employee, ensuring that this is done thoroughly and giving employees every opportunity to pass their probationary period. The Garden Manager should hold at least one supervisory meeting during this period to

identify any areas that might need improvement.

### **When a member of staff leaves APCG**

As soon as a member of staff submits their resignation to the Garden Manager, she/he will notify the trustees and arrange for one of them to conduct an exit meeting with the staff member, ideally during the final week of their work at the garden. The purpose of this meeting is to get feedback on how well APCG is doing as an employer and to identify things we could improve. The Appendix offers some sample questions. Employees can refuse to take part and they should be offered the option of giving their thoughts in writing as an alternative to the meeting.

## **Appendix**

### **Sample questions that could be asked in an exit meeting**

1. Please describe your general feelings about working here. If possible, please tell us why you are leaving.
2. What were three things you enjoyed most about working here?
3. If you could change three things, what would they be?
4. How could conditions be improved?
5. What advice would you give to the Trustees?
6. Are there ideas or changes for APCG that you have which you wish you could have implemented while you were here?
7. Please describe the three best things about working with your manager.
8. Are there things that you wish you had known before or during the beginning part of your employment with APCG?
9. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us?