

Safer Recruitment Policy
Version 1.2
Revision November 2024



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Company No 12911052
www.questapsych.com
admin@questapsych.com
02381 924877

Registered office:
Exchange House
Cross Street
Newport PO30 5PZ

1. Policy Statement and Aims

The purpose of this document is to set out our position and procedures for safe recruitment of staff with the aim of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our patients.

We are committed to:

- Implementing fair and objective recruitment practices to promote diversity and inclusivity
- To ensure that the most skilled staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, qualifications, suitability and experience.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including statutory guidance
- Compliance with the Equality Act 2010
- Compliance with guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2019 (KCSIE) and Care Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk) <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- ensuring that Questa meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk by carrying out all necessary pre-employment background checks..

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Questa staff performing functions in relation to Questa, whether employed, self-employed or volunteer/honorary and performing clinical or non-clinical roles. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy.

3. Processes for recruitment and selection of staff

- Job description and advertisement

- A Job description is produced to describe tasks and responsibilities as well as to outline desirable qualifications, skills, experience and personal qualities needed to fulfil the role.

The advertisement should accurately reflect this as well as ensuring that it is compliant with legislation. It will include our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

We are committed to diversity and inclusion, encouraging applicants from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

- Application Process and shortlisting
 - Questa publishes its privacy notice on its website that sets out how personal data will be stored and used, applicants are made aware of this on application.

Shortlisting will normally be carried out by the Directors on the basis of merit and suitability for the role bearing in mind the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity in line with the Equality Act (2010).

- Interviewing
 - Applicants are usually interviewed online by one Director initially; with another member of the team who is familiar with safer recruitment and subsequently by the other Director with another member of the team. At Questa, in addition to our permanent employees we recruit self-employed Clinical Associates who are sufficiently qualified and experienced to work as autonomous clinicians within an independent psychological practice setting.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments where needed to accommodate applicants with disabilities or any other requirement.

If a candidate is known to one of the team the initial interview is carried out by a neutral interviewer.

Candidates, (whether governed by professional registrations or not) are asked about their commitment and understanding of safeguarding and whether they are the subject of any ongoing investigations.

Associates are made aware of the expectations of working with Questa (professional practice, clinical responsibility/accountability, safeguarding and administrative requirements) during this 2-stage interview process and throughout the 'onboarding' process. Any offer of employment is made subject to satisfactory references and background checks.

- References and background checks

- Everyone who works with Questa has to provide a current enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and valid identity document for ID check/right to work. DBS checks should be renewed every 3 years.

A minimum of two satisfactory references is sought from previous employers and/or clinical supervisors. Referees will be asked about the candidates suitability for the role (in their opinion) and any reason why that person should not work with young or vulnerable people.

Clinical applicants must submit proof of qualifications and registrations eg certificates and registration identities eg HCPC as well as copies of valid certificates of indemnity insurance.

- Onboarding and induction

- All employees/associates/volunteers sign a tailored contract outlining duties, responsibilities and requirements for their role as well as detailing terms, conditionals and employers responsibilities. All employees participate in an induction which addresses our safeguarding policies and procedures, management of risk and crisis. Copies of our policies are also attached to their employment agreement. They are also given training in the use of our secure data system and GDPR requirements.

Additionally, all Associates and staff have immediate access to the Directors who are qualified, HCPC registered and experienced Psychologists and are available as a direct point of contact for any questions, queries or support regarding their work with Questa.

4. Complaints and disciplinary procedure

It is the case occasionally that through clinical governance processes undertaken by the Directors, complaint/feedback from a client or referrer, or contact from the Associate themselves that they are struggling to work in line with the standards expected by Questa. Where this is the case, the following procedure can be followed if appropriate and is helpful to do so. At all times we are mindful to balance appropriate levels of supervision with clinical quality and safety depending upon the staff members experience and seniority.

Concerns should be considered case-by-case and can be discussed with the clinical team.

- i. Any serious concerns/complaints/feedback regarding an Associates clinical competence or fitness to practice will be investigated immediately and thoroughly by the Directors. The Associate may be suspended whilst the issue is investigated if it is deemed serious. After investigation if it is necessary to terminate the Associate contract with Questa and take appropriate action regarding informing regulatory bodies this will be done.
- ii. Any concerns/complaints/feedback regarding Associate ability or willingness to comply with the broader expectations of Questa (including but not limited to safeguarding, duty of care, professional manner, responsiveness to communications, administrative duties, organisation, timekeeping, documentation and confidentiality) will be raised with the Associate by the Clinical Director, who will arrange an initial phone call to discuss the issues.
- iii. During this discussion the issues will be clearly highlighted and discussed in a supportive and solution focussed manner - our aim is to understand and resolve any difficulties early and directly. The Clinical Director and Associate will agree actions, outcomes required, and a time to review. The Clinical Director will inform the Associate of their responsibility to contact the Clinical Director prior to the review meeting if they are unable to implement the plan that has been agreed. The Clinical Director will send a follow-up email to the Associate after the initial meeting summarising the discussion and agreed actions. The issue(s) will then be monitored by the

Clinical Director through usual clinical governance procedures until the agreed review meeting.

- iv. The review meeting will take place as agreed and progress towards the agreed outcomes discussed/assessed. If the Associate has been unable to address the concerns and achieve the agreed outcomes, the Clinical Director will support them to further problem-solve any issues and agree a further plan in writing. The Clinical Director will inform the Associate that failure to address concerns within this review period may result in their contract with Questa being withdrawn.
- v. The Clinical Director will inform the Founding Director of the situation and engage their support with monitoring and reviewing the Associate performance until the agreed follow-up meeting.
- vi. If by this third review meeting, and with the support of the Clinical Director, the Associate has been unable or unwilling to address concerns in the way that has been agreed, their contract with Questa will be terminated.

5. Review and Communication

This policy will be regularly reviewed.

All Associates and staff have immediate access to the Directors who are qualified, HCPC registered and experienced Psychologists and are available as a direct point of contact for any questions, queries or support regarding their work with Questa.

Bandna@questapsych.com 07522 848972

karen@questapsych.com 07966 192228

Safer Recruitment Policy

Date Issued: 30 January 2022

Date of next review: 30 January 2026

Authors: Bandna Rekhi, Karen Quatermass Directors