



Recruitment and Employment Policy

This relates to all paid staff.

This policy was agreed by trustees on: 14th June 2021

It will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.
The next review is due by:

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CARAS Recruitment and Employment Policy

Recruitment Policy.

CARAS is a value driven organisation. Our values are:

Kindness. CARAS will nurture all who are part of our community, helping everyone to develop their skills, talents and interests.

Justice. CARAS will strive for social justice following a rights-based approach in all of our work and challenging instances when rights are not upheld in wider society.

Empowerment. CARAS works alongside people, recognising and respecting their skills and strengths and striving together for better outcomes.

'With' not 'for'. CARAS will put the voices, opinions, experiences and needs of its beneficiaries at the heart of all that we do.

We exist to support people seeking asylum and people of refugee background, including children and people with vulnerabilities. Therefore, CARAS takes recruitment to paid roles extremely seriously. We want to recruit people who are the best fit for the roles we have, including having appropriate skills, experiences, qualifications where relevant, and values and attitudes that align with ours. (Please refer to the Volunteering Policy for information on volunteer recruitment processes.)

New roles

All new roles are planned. They are set out in our budget, approved in September of each year. As such, every new role is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Safer Recruitment

CARAS follows Safer Recruitment practices. As such, we will always carry out the following steps in our recruitment. These apply for every role, whether for volunteers or for recruiting new employees.

Advertising

1. A clearly defined role description is posted on job advertising websites and may also be shared in relevant newsletters. The minimum time an advert will



be placed for is two weeks. CARAS currently uses Charity Job and will also place roles on our own website.

2. The role description will specify the role title, essential skills, time commitment, any necessary qualifications, remuneration, a named line manager, and location of work and any flexible working opportunities.
3. The advert will specify that a DBS check is necessary.
4. The advert will specify that two references will be pursued, one of which must be the current or most recent employer (or in the case of first employment, suitable alternatives).
5. All applications must be made using a standardised application form. This is to allow greater ease of comparison, ensuring that all essential information is provided and removing some of the risk of bias that can come from seeking CVs.

Inclusion, equality and diversity.

1. CARAS recognises that having a diverse workforce that includes people from all walks of life will make us stronger; we want a range of life experiences and protected characteristics represented on our staff team as we know that this will bring a great richness to our work, helping us to bring in different perspectives and change our thinking and practice where necessary.
2. We uphold our duties as set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
3. CARAS recognises that despite all efforts to be an inclusive, equal opportunities employer, there are many systemic disadvantages that mean some people find it harder to join our workforce.
4. Unless a role demands a professional qualification (eg a teaching certificate of an appropriate level), CARAS will not specify the level of education we expect someone to have attained. Instead, our adverts will specify the skill or experience we are seeking and candidates will be marked against this.
5. Where an applicant or a new staff member requires adaptations or support to attend an interview or to do their job, CARAS will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments within our means.
6. In order to boost the range of people we reach and ultimately employ we will advertise in a wide range of places.
7. We will include the following equalities statement in all adverts: 'CARAS is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or age. All applications will be considered solely on merit.'



8. CARAS will ask people to voluntarily disclose their age, gender, sexuality, race, whether they live with disabilities. This information will not affect their application, but will help us track whether we are reaching a wide range of people. If we are not, we will take steps to actively improve this.
9. Ensure that our internal inclusion practices are shared, for example, making sure that the sharing of pronouns is normalised.
10. Have an interview panel that is as diverse as we can make it.

Method of application

All applicants must apply using CARAS' application form. CVs and covering letters will not be accepted; this will be clearly stated in the advert. This is to ensure that we are always comparing like with like and have gathered the same information from all applicants.

Applications will be submitted by email to the person leading the recruitment (most often the Managing Director).

Shortlisting process

1. Shortlisting will be carried out by two people, at least one of whom has completed Safer Recruitment training within the last three years. Currently these people are Eleanor Brown and Helen Mason.
2. Applications for paid roles will all come to the Managing Director. They will enter a candidate number onto the form, using this to replace name, contact details and other identifying factors. A master spreadsheet linking the candidate number to their name and contact details is kept by the Managing Director. This is not referenced again until shortlisting has been completed.
3. A spreadsheet containing the candidate number and listing the essential and desirable skills is shared between the two assessors and filled in according to a pre-agreed scale and weighting.
4. The top three candidates will be invited for a formal interview. -

Interview process

Where possible, interviews will be held face to face. However, where Covid-19 restrictions are in place or where a candidate has access issues that cannot be supported at interview, Zoom or Teams will be used. Whether face to face or held online, the same processes apply. The interview will include:



1. A panel consisting of two staff, at least one of whom has completed Safer Recruitment training. There will also be at least two CARAS beneficiaries present
2. A set of pre-agreed questions that cover essential criteria. Follow up questions can further explore anything raised in the interview
3. A prepared, standardised assessment sheet to be filled in by all members of the panel
4. All members of the panel will ask questions and be active in the assessment of each candidate. All appointments are therefore informed by beneficiaries.
5. A verbal explanation of safeguarding procedures for recruitment, making it clear that for the successful candidate the following will need to be completed:
 - a DBS check
 - receipt of two positive references, one of which must be from the current or most recent employer (or in the case of first employment, suitable alternatives)
 - evidence of the right to work in the UK
6. Questions that allow the candidate's values and opinions to be considered
7. Time for the candidate to raise their own questions

Making an employment offer

Decisions will be made collaboratively with all members of the interview panel contributing their ideas and giving reasons for the judgements. However, the final decision rests with the Managing Director. The following steps will be followed:

1. Each member of the panel will score the candidates based on the answers they give at interview.
2. Scores will be added up. Each panel member will declare their top scorer.
3. Where there is agreement, a discussion will follow to double check the decision.
4. Where there is no clear and agreed top-scorer, further discussion will follow. Each panel member will be asked to give their reasons for the scores they gave. Decisions must be evidence based.
5. Where two candidates are equally good, we may consider taking proportionate positive action on the basis of any protected characteristics they have disclosed to address legitimate aims such as underrepresentation or inequalities.



6. When a conclusion is reached, the Managing Director will contact the successful candidate to offer the role. The offer is contingent on all safeguarding checks being carried out successfully. The Managing Director will contact the successful candidate and make an offer of employment, ensuring that the specifics of type of contract, hours to be worked, and salary are re-stated.
7. If the selected candidate accepts, employment is conditional upon securing two positive references from previous employers (or in the case of first employment, suitable alternatives), and undergoing a clear DBS check.
8. If the selected candidate rejects the job offer, the role may be offered to a second choice candidate.
9. The unsuccessful candidates will also be contacted and full feedback offered. Feedback should be supported by evidence from the interview as detailed in the scoresheets and notes.
10. Where no candidate fulfils criteria to a high enough standard, no appointment will be made.

Communication with unsuccessful candidates

CARAS will endeavour to give feedback to all applicants no matter what stage of the process they reach. However, some roles yield a very high number of applicants; in these situations, emails will be sent en masse which set out the main reasons that people were rejected. If CARAS volunteers have applied, the staff member who knows them best will give them full feedback.

Shortlisted candidates who attend an interview will be given clear feedback on why they were not selected. This will be offered in writing or during a phone call, whichever the candidate prefers.

CARAS will keep records of how people were scored in order that feedback can be carefully evidenced.

Induction

All new staff will be given a full induction. CARAS holds an induction checklist which is to be completed by all new staff members, with the support of their line manager.

Probation



All staff have a named line manager who is responsible for supporting them through probation and beyond. All roles are subject to a successfully completed probation period. For most roles, this is three months.

Probation is passed if duties have been carried to the satisfaction of the relevant line manager. Any performance issue that could result in failure of probation will be raised early; the line manager will always seek to support new staff to do well at their role and to pass their probation. However, in cases where this is not possible, clear steps will be given towards positive change; if these are not met, a senior member of staff will be involved to set out the end of the role.

Adjustments

Where staff live with a disability, CARAS will seek advice from an Occupational Therapist on the adjustments we can make. We will also be guided by what the employee needs and wants.

Pay and conditions.

All staff will be paid the salary stated in the advert for their role. CARAS has a pay scale that sets out how salaries will rise. CARAS also pays into a workplace pension for all qualifying staff. Details of this are shared at the start of employment. Full details and additional benefits are set out in the Staff Handbook.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or if the law changes.

This policy is agreed by the board of Trustees, and signed on behalf of them by:

Helen Gribble

Helen Gribble

Date 14.06.21