HRM3 – Safer Recruitment Policy

Nisai Group is committed to ensuring the highest standards of care and education for all students. As part of this commitment, we uphold a rigorous and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of both students and staff.

The recruitment and selection process plays a vital role in enabling Nisai Group to attract and appoint individuals with the skills, values, and attributes necessary to fulfil our mission and objectives.

This policy supports and promotes best practices in recruitment, ensuring that all appointments are made based on merit, suitability, and capability, and recruitment decisions are made without bias and reflect our dedication to equality and safeguarding.

1.0 Aims of the policy

This policy is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To ensure fairness and equality throughout the recruitment process, where all applicants are assessed solely on their skills, experience, and suitability for the role. No applicant will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability.
- To ensure that Nisai Group upholds its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and employees by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- To recruit and appoint staff with the appropriate professional and personal attributes required to meet the current and future needs of Nisai Group.
- To implement a consistent, transparent, and robust recruitment and selection process, which ensures that only those who are suitable to work with children are employed in relevant roles.
- To ensure that staff appointed to posts involving teaching responsibilities are qualified to carry out such duties or are working towards an appropriate qualification.
- To work to a fair and effective recruitment procedure, which is consistent with employment legislation and Nisai Group's Equality and Diversity policies and practices.

2.0 Key Principles

A. **Filling the Vacancy**
In order for the recruitment process to commence, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nisai Group must give authorisation.

B. **Advertising**
It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised, both internally within Nisai Group as well as externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the prerequisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only.

C. **Selection**
Shortlisting
Applicants will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet all the essential criteria defined in the person specification. If the number of applicants meeting the essential criteria is excessive, further selection must be undertaken utilising the desirable criteria to achieve a workable shortlist (suggest no more than 5).

Shortlisting must be undertaken by at least two individuals who are experienced in the recruitment process and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process. At least one member of the Interview Panel must have passed Safer Recruitment in Education accredited training.

Equal opportunities
Fairness in how Nisai Group recruits and selects our employees plays a significant part in creating an equal opportunities environment. Nisai Group is committed to ensuring that every internal and external applicant for a job within Nisai Group is judged on pre-determined criteria, which relate only to the requirements of the job.

Discrimination
Nisai Group ensures that no job applicant is discriminated against on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, or disability.

Interviewing
The interview must be conducted by a panel, the suggested composition of which is detailed in the procedures. All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel.

All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role.

Skills assessment
As part of the selection process, Nisai Group may wish for candidates to partake in a series of skills tests, for example a micro teach or presentation. These tests must be directly related to the role in question and will be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates will be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for interview.

D. **Appointment**

The choice of candidate will be determined by Nisai Group's CEO after taking the views of the formal interview panel. A formal offer of appointment is to be made / confirmed in writing and will be conditional upon receipt of references which satisfy Nisai Group's requirements, medical assessment, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks, such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), if applicable to the post. Consideration will be given to reasonable adjustments for a successful disabled candidate.

E. **Confidentiality**

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

F. **Documentation**

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the Recruitment and HR Administrator to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process, either through an internal assessment or to support an external investigation. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them (please note that applications are retained for 12 months only) as part of the record of the interview. All records must be handed to the Recruitment and HR Administrator by the Chair of the panel.

G. **Feedback**

All applicants may receive formal written communication informing them of the status of their application upon request. Feedback will be provided by the HR Department at the request of any applicant at any stage of the recruitment process.

3.0 The Process

This document details the procedures required to undertake the recruitment and selection process to completion. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, Nisai Group Policy and good practice.

The stages detailed in the document are:

Pre-advertisement	Preparation prior to a position being advertised
Pre-interview	From promotion of vacancies through to short-listing of applications
Interviewing	Procedures relating to setting up interviews and selecting the most appropriate candidate
Post-selection	The administration required once a selection has been made
Administration	A detailed summary is provided in the following pages

3.1 Pre- Advertisement

3.1.1 In order to begin the recruitment process, the following documents are required.

- Advert text
- Job Description
- Person Specification

The main points to note about these documents are as follows:

3.1.1a Advert Text (The advertising procedure)

The responsibility for drafting advertising copy rests with the Group HR Director; this may be prepared in conjunction with an appropriate member of Nisai Group staff.

Nisai Group wishes to promote online applications, and the text of advert should therefore be 'web centric' wherever possible. The advert text will include a statement of Nisai Group's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and it will be clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken.

As a matter of policy, staff appointed to posts involving teaching responsibilities should be qualified (or expected to qualify) to carry out such duties. It is, therefore, essential that a standard sentence is included in the further information for posts that involve teaching responsibilities, for example:

Successful applicants without a teaching qualification will be required to undertake and pass a programme of initial teacher development within their first 18 months of appointment.

The choice of media is determined by Nisai Group's CEO.

The closing date must allow applicants sufficient time in which to prepare and submit their applications. Ideally closing dates must never be less than one week after the date of advertisement, or more than three weeks. Statutory or concessionary holidays should be taken into account when determining closing dates.

3.1.1b Job Description

A Job Description defines the purpose, the scope and the principal duties and responsibilities of a particular role. It provides a framework which outlines the expectations; both for the employee and the employer, and forms part of the working agreement, but is not in itself contractually binding.

It is the responsibility of the Group HR Director who may request the help of any member of Nisai Group to produce an electronic copy.

The key elements normally included are:

Identifying factors	Job title, and the post to which post holder is responsible etc.

Purpose/objectives	One or two short sentences to summarise the overall purpose/ objectives of the job.
Principal accountabilities	A description of the job, ideally no more than eight to twelve short sentences. The intention is to provide an outline of the job only. Tasks should be listed in order of importance.

3.1.1c Person Specification

The purpose of a Person Specification is to provide criteria against which the recruitment of candidates will be carried out objectively in line with Equality and Diversity guidance, defining both the essential and desirable criteria for the position.

The Person Specification should be based upon the Job Description.

Essential criteria	Requirements without which a candidate will not be offered an interview.
Desirable criteria	Requirements which enhance the candidates' application or basis for consideration and may facilitate more detailed shortlisting for interview.

The criteria required of the ideal candidate and the format of the Person Specification may vary, but typically could include:

Qualifications	Only where considered appropriate and specific to a profession or trade.
Experience	Either in the type of role outlined in the Job Description, or in a preparatory role.
Skills	Relevant to the post.
Special requirements	Will be specific to the job, e.g. ability to lift heavy weights, ability to work with specific client groups.

When deciding the difference between essential and desirable criteria, the author of the Person Specification should be very clear that any criteria listed as essential will be binding and as such would rule out the appointment of any applicant not meeting all such criteria.

3.2 Pre- Interview

This section considers the stages from the initial contact with applicants through to the shortlisting process.

3.2.1 Initial Contact with Potential Applicants

Advertisements, that are posted on external job boards and the company website, are designed to attract the attention of applicants, who are then encouraged to view the website for further details. The use of person specification criteria on advertisements are to ensure that those with the relevant experience and skills apply and they are advised to do so via the external job board or directly to the company. An initial telephone call may be arranged to determine suitability.

3.2.2 Application Form and Curriculum Vitae

It is Nisai Group policy that applications are made by completion of a standard Nisai Group application form for all posts. This may be accompanied by a curriculum vitae and supporting letter of application if appropriate. The Application Form collects information relevant to considering a candidate's suitability for the position including full employment history since leaving education, qualifications, declaration of criminal convictions and a statement detailing the candidate's specific reasons for applying, and the strengths, experience and achievements they would bring to the role.

All applications must be reviewed thoroughly and any gaps in employment, repeated change to employment, declared convictions and any anomalies must be explored and verified prior to or at the interview. If a criminal conviction is declared, further factors will be considered before reaching a recruitment decision including whether the conviction is relevant to the position, the seriousness of the offence, the length of time since the offence occurred, any pattern of offending behaviour and the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation provided by the applicant.

3.2.3 Confidentiality/Security

Nisai Group's policy is that the confidentiality of an applicant's details is of paramount importance. It is the Group HR Director's responsibility to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for this confidentiality to be maintained.

In accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data (such as application forms, CV's) is shared only with those involved in the recruitment process. Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

3.2.4 Shortlisting

The shortlisting should be undertaken against the information compiled on the Job Description and the Person Specification. It is important to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the way in which personal data is used and assessed in the shortlisting process. It is more important that the selection criteria used is applied in a fair and consistent way.

It is Nisai Group's policy that notes be kept on applicants to justify any decisions made regarding selection for interview. These must be recorded on the job board application or on the shortlisting form, in order to maintain the appropriate records. The notes should, therefore, be relevant to and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the shortlisting exercise.

All records will be available for the HR Department to access. It is the responsibility of the Recruitment and HR Administrator to collect any copies of application forms and/or CVs once decisions have been agreed. All surplus copies must be shredded to ensure confidentiality.

Out of consideration for applicants, shortlisting should be undertaken within the agreed timescales.

3.2.5 Online Searches of Shortlisted Candidates

As part of Nisai Group's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, the organisation may carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its recruitment due diligence. This search is undertaken to identify any publicly available information that may be relevant to a candidate's suitability to work with children or may raise safeguarding or reputational concerns. Online searches will only be conducted on shortlisted candidates and a record will be maintained to confirm that the check has been completed. Where appropriate, candidates will be given the opportunity to discuss or clarify any relevant findings as part of the recruitment process.

3.3 Interviewing

Following shortlisting, selected applicants will be invited to an initial telephone Interview with a member of the HR team, who must hold a valid Safer Recruitment in Education certificate. The purpose of an interview is to facilitate the selection of the most suitable candidate for the post, although it should be recognised that this is only one part of the selection process. The telephone call, which will follow agreed questions dependent on the role and the candidate's application, will aim to discover more about the applicant's experience, qualifications and skillset whilst also allowing the interviewer to question any CV anomalies such as employment gaps. Once satisfied that the applicant has the required experience and skills needed for the position and no concerns were raised during the telephone interview, a member of the HR team will invite the applicant to attend an in-person interview. An online interview may initially be conducted prior to the in-person interview depending on the specific vacancy. At least one member of the Interview Panel at each stage must have passed Safer Recruitment in Education accredited training.

3.3.1 Invitations to Interview

Candidates should be given at least one week's clear notice of an interview date. The invitation should include the details of any skills assessments and related preparatory work that they will be required to undertake prior to or as part of the recruitment process. Candidates should also be asked to bring with them satisfactory evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK and the originals of any qualifications required for the role. The candidates should also be asked whether any reasonable adjustments are to be made for the interview.

Section 8 of the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 sets out the law on the prevention of illegal working. To ensure that Nisai Group has a statutory defence against prosecution, certain original documents must be checked and copied.

3.3.2 Composition of Interview Panels

Nisai Group's CEO will determine the composition of the interview panel taking into consideration the seniority of the vacancy/nature of the post.

3.3.3 Conduct of the Interview

When conducting interviews every member of the panel must make notes of questions asked and answers given. This will provide feedback and evidence of why the candidates have been selected or rejected.

These notes must be signed and given to a member of the HR team who will ensure they are uploaded securely and are available to Nisai Group's CEO. Just as with shortlisting, these notes should be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants will normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the interview.

The panel must determine, prior to the interview, the questions and areas of discussion which will be put to each candidate. Care must be taken to avoid questions which are discriminatory.

As well as ensuring each step of the process is adhered to, the following are the administrative responsibilities of the interviewing panel which will include a member of the HR team.

- advise candidates what happens next
- advise candidates that all employment is offered subject to satisfactory references which meet Nisai Group's requirements and appropriate medical and other checks including DBS checks if appropriate to the role.
- check whether candidates require a work permit and seek evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. This should be asked of every candidate.

To avoid potential discrimination, all applicants should be asked to provide evidence of eligibility to work in the UK; not just applicants who may look or sound 'foreign' or who appear to have a 'foreign' name.

To provide defence for Nisai Group against individuals who may state that a work permit is not required, but who are in fact not eligible to work in the UK, satisfactory evidence must be obtained from all candidates. This evidence must be copied/scanned and forwarded to the Recruitment and HR Administrator.

The Recruitment and HR Administrator must also satisfy him / herself that the evidence provided appears to be original and relates to the person providing it.

Candidates will be asked to bring suitable evidence with them when invited to interview. This will usually be in the form of a passport or a documented National Insurance Number together with a full birth certificate.

It is important that interviews are conducted in a courteous and professional manner, since a badly managed and conducted interview could lead to legal action against the potential employer or the individual(s) involved in the interview. It is important that candidates leave with a positive impression of Nisai.

3.3.4 Other Selection Activities

Presentations, skill tests or other assessments that form part of the selection process must be measurable against objective criteria and a written note made; again, to be handed to the Chair of the selection panel to be retained as part of the selection process.

Under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, applicants will normally be entitled to have access to these notes if a specific request is made.

3.3.5 The Choice of Candidate

After discussion with the panel the choice of candidate to be appointed will be made by the CEO who will take account of any other information that will have been generated as part of the selection process. If the candidate selected does not take up the appointment, any decision to offer the appointment to the second-choice applicant will be taken by the CEO.

3.4. Post-selection Administration

It is important for securing the foundation of a good relationship with the successful candidate and to ensure that a good impression is left with the rejected candidates, that this final stage is completed properly.

3.4.1 Offer of Employment

An offer of employment on behalf of Nisai Group will be made by the HR team. It must be made clear, however, that the offer is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of references, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks including identity, proof of current address, medical assessment, overseas checks (where applicable) and DBS, where required. A verbal offer of employment must be followed up in writing by the HR team.

Only when all of the above have been obtained, verified and reviewed by the Group HR Director, will Nisai Group regard the offer of employment as legally binding with a formal offer of employment being issued.

Unsuccessful candidates must be notified as early as possible of the outcome of their interview by the HR team. Ideally this should be no more than three working days after the successful candidate has confirmed their acceptance of the post.

3.4.2 References

The taking up and verifying of at least 2 references is the responsibility of the Recruitment and HR Administrator. Employment references should be obtained, in writing, from at least the last or current employer, and where relevant, must include a reference from any employment within the educational sector and/or working with children. All referees are subsequently contacted by phone to verify their identity and the information provided and this is recorded and saved along with the written response and emails. If it is not possible to obtain 2 employment references, the company will accept a character or academic reference if they have known the applicant for more than 2 years. The questions and information gleaned from the reference must be relevant to the aspects of the post in question e.g. where cash handling is involved in a post, then the honesty of the prospective employee must be discussed or for a teaching/mentoring post, questions must be relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people and their understanding of safeguarding practices.

3.4.3 Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

As a registered body with the Disclosure and Barring Service, Nisai Group is obliged to comply with the DBS Code of Practice as published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997. The Code of Practice is intended to ensure that disclosure information is not used to unfairly discriminate against the subject of the disclosure (on the basis of convictions or other defaults revealed) and that the handling and storage of disclosed information is dealt with in an appropriate and confidential manner.

Positions requiring DBS Check

DBS Checks (enhanced) should be undertaken on the following category of staff: -

- All learning practitioners including mentors
- All other staff whose work involves or is likely to involve regular working with students under the age of 18.
- Any other position that involves substantial regular, training or being in the sole charge of persons under the age of 18.
- All other staff that has access to learner information.
- All staff with management responsibility and all governors must also be checked against the Section 128 list.

Retention and security of disclosure information

- Nisai Group stores disclosure information and other confidential documents securely, either in restricted access electronic files or in a lockable cabinet with access limited to authorised personnel only. Disclosure information is retained for no longer than six months and disposed of in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and applicable data protection legislation.

4.0 Final Administration

In order to finalise the recruitment process there are certain tasks which should be completed:

- All unsuccessful interviewed candidates to be advised by a member of the HR team.
- All recruitment documentation is given to the Recruitment and HR Administrator for archiving.
- All original copies of the details relating to the successful candidate are sent to the Recruitment and HR Administrator for inclusion on the individuals' personnel file, together with their application.
- All additional copies of candidate details used for interview purposes are collected and destroyed.

5.0 Candidate Feedback

Candidates often wish to gain feedback, in relation to either initial selection and/or interview, for their own development. It is Nisai Group policy that feedback from shortlisting or interview will be provided by a member of the HR team.

This feedback should be judged against the selection criteria. It should be honest, but constructive. It is important to realise that a prospective employer can be held liable for unfair selection by a candidate and this feedback can be used as evidence. This, however, is a rarity if the feedback is honest and appropriate to the candidate. It is essential that both shortlisting forms and interview notes are completed in order that a professional approach may be taken.

6.0 Unsolicited Applications

It is acknowledged that Nisai Group may receive from time to time unsolicited applications, typically by way of receipt of a speculative letter or email.

In such circumstances, the communication should be acknowledged and the author referred to the active job board and the Nisai website. The speculative communication should then be destroyed unless the author is specifically advised to the contrary.

Key Responsibility for Policy	Related Policies
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Group HR Director	Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) Policy

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