LEITHS EDUCATION

Recruitment and Safer Recruitment Policy

Document Control

Date of Publication/Review	Version	Author/Reviewer	Approved by	Changes Made	Date of next review
1st September 2026	1.0	Sophie Kidd	Maria Dunbar (CEO)	Initial Release	August 2027

1. Introduction

Leiths is committed to recruiting and retaining employees who are suitably qualified, skilled and capable of contributing to a safe, inclusive and professional learning and working environment.

As an educational provider, Leiths recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of all students, staff and visitors. Whilst Leiths policy only permits students aged 18 and over to study at the Culinary School, we acknowledge that some learners may be vulnerable adults and therefore adopt safer recruitment practices where necessary to reduce the risk of harm, abuse, exploitation or inappropriate conduct.

This policy aims to ensure that all recruitment and selection decisions are conducted in a fair, transparent and consistent manner, free from unlawful discrimination and in accordance with relevant employment, equality and safeguarding legislation.

All applicants will be assessed objectively against the requirements of the role and in accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Any individual involved in the recruitment or selection process who has a personal or professional conflict of interest must declare this immediately and withdraw from the decision-making process where necessary.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

Leiths is committed to fair, transparent and safer recruitment practices that support the safeguarding and wellbeing of all students and promote equality of opportunity.

All recruitment activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act 2014, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.

Appropriate pre-employment checks, including verification of identity, right to work, qualifications, employment history, references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required, will be undertaken to ensure that all staff are suitable for their role.

The organisation also fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty) and adheres to relevant local and national safeguarding guidance, including the Care and Support Statutory Guidance, H&F Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures and the London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy, Practice Guidance and Procedures.

3. Advertisement

All recruitment advertising must accurately represent the requirements of the role and promote the Leiths commitment to safeguarding and equality practices.

Job advertisements will normally include:

- Job title

- Key duties and responsibilities
- Essential and desirable qualifications
- Relevant skills, experience and competencies
- Working arrangements (such as location, hours and contract type)
- Details of any safeguarding-related requirements applicable to the role.

All advertisements and recruitment materials will be reviewed to ensure they do not contain discriminatory wording or requirements that are not objectively justifiable.

4. Applications

Application forms will seek only information that is relevant to assessing an applicant's suitability for the role.

Applicants will be required to provide:

- Full employment history
- Relevant qualifications and professional memberships
- Details of referees
- Information necessary to complete pre-employment checks

Leiths reserves the right to investigate discrepancies, anomalies or unexplained gaps in employment history as part of the recruitment process.

At each stage of the recruitment process, candidates will be informed:

- Whether they have been shortlisted for the next stage
- What the next stage of the process will involve
- Whether any additional information or documentation is required to proceed

Recruitment decisions will be reviewed and approved by the relevant hiring manager before being communicated to applicants

5. Selection and Interview Assessments

To ensure a fair robust and robust recruitment process compliant with safeguarding legislation where appropriate, selection criteria and assessment methods will be established before interviews are conducted.

The hiring manager and Director of People & Culture will ensure that:

a) Selection criteria are clearly identified, documented and directly relevant to the requirements of the role
b) Any tests, practical assessments or skills-based exercises are free from discriminatory elements and are proportionate to the requirements of the position
c) Selection tests, interview questions and assessment methods are designed to assess the candidate's knowledge, skills, experience, behaviours and overall suitability for the role
d) Any safeguarding responsibilities associated with the role are identified and incorporated into the assessment process
e) Any concerns arising from application forms, references, employment history, qualifications or other pre-employment checks are documented and explored during the interview process
f) Assessment decisions are based solely on objective evidence gathered throughout the recruitment process and are consistent with Leiths commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and safer recruitment practices

6. Interview

The interview process will normally consist of:

- An initial screening call conducted remotely by either the Director of People & Culture or The Director of People & Culture and the Hiring Manager
- An in person interview, including practical assessment or skills test relevant to the role
- Where appropriate, a final interview with the CEO or relevant Head of Department

The following standards apply to all in-person interviews:

- The interview panel will consist of at least two members of staff
- At least one panel member must have completed Safer Recruitment training
- Comprehensive interview notes will be retained in accordance with the GDPR legislation and Leiths data retention procedures
- Questions will be directly linked to the requirements of the role and the person's ability to work safely effectively and professionally within an educational environment, including relevant prior experience
- Candidates will be assessed on their values, behaviours and commitment to maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment
- Unexplained gaps in employment, discrepancies in application information, safeguarding concerns and relevant conduct issues will be explored
- Appropriate safeguarding based questions may be included where relevant to the position

Leiths reserves the right to conduct additional interviews or assessments where further information is required before an appointment can be made.

Following completion of the recruitment process, any offer of employment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks.

7. Internal Recruitment

It is important that we recruit people that are suitable for the position and who will carry out each role to a high standard. We take the recruitment, development and promotion of our staff seriously and we do this by following a fair and non-discriminatory process.

Any opportunities for promotion will be advised and open to all members of staff and if you feel you have the skills and experience to bring to the role, we welcome your application and any questions that you may have.

8. Offer

Any offer of employment made is conditional and subject to the satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks.

Leiths reserves the right to withdraw a conditional offer of employment where:

- Any information provided during the recruitment process is found to be false, misleading or deliberately omitted
- Pre-employment checks reveal information that calls into question the individual's suitability for the role
- Satisfactory references cannot be obtained
- Required qualifications, professional memberships or eligibility to work in the United Kingdom cannot be verified
- The candidate fails to meet the safeguarding or professional standards expected by Leiths

A conditional offer of employment does not constitute confirmation of appointment. Employment will only be confirmed once all required pre-employment checks have been completed and deemed satisfactory.

Where concerns arise during the pre-employment screening process, Leiths may undertake further enquiries, seek clarification from the candidate, or conduct a risk assessment before making a final employment decision.

Leiths is committed to applying pre-employment screening requirements in a fair, consistent and proportionate manner, whilst maintaining its responsibility to safeguard students, staff and visitors and protect the integrity of the learning environment.

For teaching positions, confirmation of appointment will additionally be subject to satisfactory completion of all education-sector safeguarding checks, including any required DBS and Prohibition from Teaching checks. Non-teaching appointments will be subject to the level of vetting deemed appropriate to the responsibilities of the role.

9. Pre-employment Screening

As an educational provider, Leiths is committed to undertaking robust and proportionate pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of all employees.

Prior to employment commencing, we will complete the following checks where applicable:

- Verification of identity
- Verification of the individual's right to work in the United Kingdom
- Verification of qualifications, professional memberships and teaching credentials relevant to the role
- Verification of employment history
- Investigation of any unexplained gaps in employment
- Receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, including one from the individual's current or most recent employer
- Verification of the candidate's suitability to work within an education setting

All references will be scrutinised by the Director of People & Culture and any concerns will be investigated before employment is confirmed.

No employee will commence work until all mandatory pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed, unless a documented risk assessment and written approval have been provided by the CEO or an authorised member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

10. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

Leiths applies a risk-based and proportionate approach to criminal record checking in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

The following checks will normally apply:

- Teaching staff will be required to obtain a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check
- Non-teaching staff will normally be required to obtain a satisfactory Basic DBS Check

Where a DBS certificate contains information relevant to the role, Leiths will undertake a documented risk assessment before making any decision regarding employment.

Failure to disclose relevant information during the recruitment process may result in an offer of employment being withdrawn.

11. Prohibition from Teaching Checks

Individuals appointed to teaching positions will be subject to a Prohibition from Teaching check via the Department for Education (DfE) before employment is confirmed. This includes members of staff visiting our Partner Schools in any capacity (i.e. running assessments).

Any outcome that indicates an individual is prohibited from carrying out teaching work will normally result in the withdrawal of any conditional offer of employment.

12. Overseas Criminal Record Checks

Leiths may require overseas criminal record checks where an applicant has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom and relevant information cannot be obtained through domestic vetting processes.

In particular, overseas checks will normally be considered for teaching staff who have lived or worked overseas for more than three months during the previous five years.

Applicants may be required to provide:

- Overseas police certificates
- Certificates of good conduct
- Professional standing documentation
- Additional references from overseas employers

Where overseas documentation cannot reasonably be obtained, we will conduct an appropriate risk assessment and consider alternative evidence before making a recruitment decision.

13. Online Searches

As part of the recruitment process, we may conduct proportionate online searches of publicly available information relating to shortlisted candidates. The purpose of such searches is to identify any information relevant to the candidate's suitability to work within an educational environment and to safeguard students, staff and our organisational reputation. Any information identified that may affect the recruitment decision will be discussed with the candidate before a final decision is made.

14. Safeguarding Commitment

Leiths is committed to maintaining a culture of professionalism and high standards and expects all employees to share responsibility for protecting the welfare and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors.

All employees are expected to:

- Act professionally and maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Report safeguarding concerns in accordance with School procedures.
- Complete mandatory safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Promote a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment.

Any safeguarding concerns identified during the recruitment process may result in an application being rejected, irrespective of whether all other recruitment criteria have been met.