# Candidate Selection Policy

#### **Youth Start Limited**

Company Number: 16864238

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

# **Effective Date**

1 January 2026

**Next Review Date** 

1 January 2027

# Introduction and Purpose

Youth Start Limited is committed to selecting candidates fairly and objectively to ensure that the best candidates are placed with employers and that young people receive appropriate support and mentorship. This Candidate Selection Policy sets out our procedures for selecting candidates for warehouse placements and for employment with Youth Start.

Candidate selection is a critical process that determines which young people receive support from Youth Start and which candidates are matched with employers. We are committed to ensuring that selection decisions are made fairly, objectively, and without discrimination, and that candidates are selected based on their suitability for the role and their potential to succeed.

This policy applies to all candidates who apply for warehouse placements through Youth Start Limited and to all individuals who apply for employment with Youth Start.

As a social enterprise focused on supporting young people aged 18-24, many of whom may face barriers to employment, we recognise that selection processes can disadvantage candidates from certain backgrounds. We are committed to removing barriers and ensuring that all candidates have a fair opportunity to be selected.

# Scope

This Candidate Selection Policy applies to:

- All candidates aged 18-24 who apply for warehouse placements through Youth Start Limited
- All individuals who apply for employment with Youth Start Limited
- All staff members involved in candidate selection
- All selection decisions made by Youth Start

This policy does not apply to:

- Candidates who do not apply through Youth Start's formal selection process
- Selection decisions made by employers after candidates are placed (although Youth Start supervises employer compliance with fair selection practices)

# Legal Framework

Candidate selection must comply with the following legislation:

# **Equality Act 2010:**

The primary legislation governing equality and discrimination in the United Kingdom. The Act requires that selection decisions are made fairly and without discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.

# **Employment Rights Act 1996:**

This Act establishes the framework for employment rights and requires that employment decisions are made fairly and in accordance with contractual terms.

# Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR):

These Acts regulate the processing of personal data collected during the selection process. Candidate data must be processed fairly, transparently, and securely.

# Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:

This Act regulates the disclosure and consideration of criminal convictions in selection decisions.

### **Human Rights Act 1998:**

This Act protects individuals' rights to fair treatment and private life.

# Youth Start's Approach to Candidate Selection

Youth Start is committed to:

# Fair and Objective Selection:

We select candidates based on objective criteria that are directly related to the role and to the candidate's potential to succeed. We do not make selection decisions based on protected characteristics or other irrelevant factors.

# Removing Barriers:

We recognise that many young people aged 18-24 face barriers to employment. We are committed to removing these barriers and ensuring that all candidates have a fair opportunity to be selected, particularly young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

#### **Transparency:**

We are transparent about our selection criteria and processes. Candidates are informed of the criteria used to make selection decisions and are given feedback on their application.

#### **Consistency:**

We apply selection criteria consistently to all candidates. We do not apply different criteria to candidates with different protected characteristics or backgrounds.

#### **Proportionality:**

We ensure that selection criteria are proportionate and directly related to the role. We do not impose unnecessary or disproportionate requirements that may disadvantage certain candidates.

# Reasonable Adjustments:

We make reasonable adjustments to selection processes to ensure that candidates with disabilities or other protected characteristics are not disadvantaged.

### **Candidate-Centred Approach:**

We take a candidate-centred approach to selection, considering the candidate's individual circumstances, potential, and support needs. We assess not only whether the candidate is suitable for the role, but also whether the role is suitable for the candidate and what support the candidate may need to succeed.

# Selection Criteria

# **Essential Criteria**

Essential criteria are skills, qualifications, or attributes that are necessary for the candidate to perform the role. Candidates must meet all essential criteria to be selected.

#### **Essential Criteria for Warehouse Placements:**

- Age 18-24 (as per Youth Start's target demographic)
- Right to work in the United Kingdom
- Ability to work safely in a warehouse environment
- Basic literacy and numeracy skills
- Reliability and commitment to the role
- Willingness to engage with mentorship and support

# **Essential Criteria for Employment with Youth Start:**

- Relevant experience or qualifications (depending on the role)
- Commitment to Youth Start's mission and values
- Ability to work effectively with young people
- Reliability and professionalism
- Willingness to comply with safeguarding policies

#### Desirable Criteria

Desirable criteria are skills, qualifications, or attributes that would be beneficial for the candidate to have, but are not essential. Candidates do not need to meet all desirable criteria to be selected, but candidates who meet more desirable criteria may be ranked higher.

#### **Desirable Criteria for Warehouse Placements:**

- Previous warehouse or logistics experience
- Forklift certification or other relevant certifications
- Customer service experience
- Team working experience
- Problem-solving skills
- Willingness to pursue further training or qualifications

# Desirable Criteria for Employment with Youth Start:

- Coaching or mentoring qualifications
- Experience working with young people or vulnerable groups
- Experience in recruitment or human resources
- Knowledge of safeguarding best practice
- Experience in the warehouse or logistics sector
- Commitment to equality and diversity

# Criteria Development

# **Evidence-Based:**

Selection criteria are developed based on evidence about what skills, qualifications, and attributes are necessary and desirable for the role. We consult with employers, mentors, and other stakeholders to identify appropriate criteria.

#### **Non-Discriminatory:**

Selection criteria are developed to be non-discriminatory and do not disadvantage candidates with protected characteristics. We do not include criteria that are based on protected characteristics (such as age, race, religion, or disability) unless such criteria are genuinely occupational requirements.

# **Proportionate:**

Selection criteria are proportionate and directly related to the role. We do not impose unnecessary or disproportionate requirements.

#### Reviewed and Updated:

Selection criteria are reviewed regularly and updated to reflect changes in the role, the business, or best practice guidance.

# **Selection Process**

# Stage 1: Application

### **Application Form:**

Candidates submit an application form that requests information about their background, experience, skills, and motivation for the role.

#### **Information Requested:**

The application form requests information that is relevant to the selection criteria, including: - Personal details (name, address, contact information, date of birth) - Education and qualifications - Employment history - Skills and experience - Reasons for applying - Support needs or reasonable adjustments required

# Accessibility:

The application form is available in accessible formats (such as large print, Braille, or audio) upon request. We provide support to candidates who need assistance completing the form.

#### Deadline:

A clear deadline is set for applications. Candidates are informed of the deadline when they are invited to apply.

# **Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge receipt of all applications and provide candidates with information about the next steps in the selection process.

# Stage 2: Shortlisting

# **Shortlisting Criteria:**

Shortlisting decisions are based on the selection criteria set out in the job description. We assess each application against the essential and desirable criteria.

### **Objective Assessment:**

Shortlisting is carried out objectively. We assess each application against the same criteria and do not make decisions based on protected characteristics or other irrelevant factors.

#### **Blind Shortlisting:**

Where possible, we use blind shortlisting techniques (such as removing names from application forms) to reduce the risk of unconscious bias in shortlisting decisions.

# Scoring:

We use a scoring system to assess applications against the selection criteria. Each criterion is scored consistently across all applications.

### Consistency:

Shortlisting is carried out by a team of at least two individuals to ensure consistency and to reduce the risk of bias. Both individuals assess each application independently and then compare their assessments.

#### **Recording:**

We record the reasons for shortlisting or rejecting each candidate. This enables us to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates and to identify any patterns of bias.

#### Feedback:

We provide feedback to candidates who are not shortlisted, explaining which selection criteria they did not meet and suggesting areas for development.

# Stage 3: Interview

#### **Interview Invitation:**

Shortlisted candidates are invited to interview. The invitation includes information about the interview format, the date and time, the location (or virtual meeting details), and information about the interview panel.

# **Interview Format:**

Interviews may be conducted in person, via telephone, or via video call, depending on the circumstances and the candidate's preferences.

### **Interview Questions:**

Interview questions are based on the selection criteria and are designed to assess the candidate's suitability for the role. All candidates are asked the same core questions to ensure consistency.

#### **Interview Panel:**

Interviews are conducted by a panel of at least two individuals. Where possible, the panel includes individuals from diverse backgrounds to reduce the risk of unconscious bias.

### Reasonable Adjustments:

We make reasonable adjustments to interview processes to ensure that candidates with disabilities or other protected characteristics are not disadvantaged. For example, we may: - Provide additional time for candidates to answer questions - Allow candidates to bring support workers or interpreters - Conduct interviews in accessible locations - Provide interview questions in advance - Allow candidates to take breaks during the interview

#### **Interview Assessment:**

The interview panel assesses each candidate against the selection criteria. Each panel member scores the candidate independently and then the scores are compared and discussed.

#### **Recording:**

We record the reasons for assessing each candidate as suitable or unsuitable for the role. This enables us to provide feedback to candidates and to identify any patterns of bias.

# Feedback:

We provide feedback to all candidates after the interview, explaining how they performed against the selection criteria and suggesting areas for development.

# Stage 4: Additional Assessment (if required)

#### **Practical Assessments:**

For some roles, we may conduct practical assessments to assess the candidate's ability to perform key tasks. For example, for warehouse placements, we may assess the candidate's ability to work safely in a warehouse environment.

#### **Psychometric Tests:**

We may use psychometric tests to assess the candidate's skills, abilities, or personality. However, we only use validated tests that are appropriate for the candidate group and that do not discriminate against candidates with protected characteristics.

### **Group Exercises:**

We may conduct group exercises to assess the candidate's ability to work as part of a team and to communicate effectively with others.

### **Reasonable Adjustments:**

We make reasonable adjustments to additional assessments to ensure that candidates with disabilities or other protected characteristics are not disadvantaged.

#### Feedback:

We provide feedback to candidates on their performance in additional assessments.

# Stage 5: Selection

### **Decision Making:**

Selection decisions are made by a team of individuals who have been involved in the selection process. The team reviews all the information gathered during the selection process and makes a decision about which candidate or candidates to select.

#### **Selection Criteria:**

Selection decisions are based on the selection criteria set out in the job description. We assess each candidate against the essential and desirable criteria and select the candidate or candidates who best meet the criteria.

#### **Candidate Fit:**

We assess not only whether the candidate meets the selection criteria, but also whether the candidate is a good fit for the role and the organisation. We consider the candidate's values, motivations, and potential to succeed.

#### **Support Needs:**

We assess the candidate's support needs and consider what mentorship and support the candidate may need to succeed in the role.

# **Diversity:**

We consider the diversity of the candidate group and aim to select candidates from diverse backgrounds to promote diversity and inclusion.

### Recording:

We record the reasons for selecting or not selecting each candidate. This enables us to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates and to identify any patterns of bias.

# Stage 6: Offer and Asseptance

#### Offer Letter:

We send an offer letter to the selected candidate. The offer letter includes: - The role title and description - The employer name and location - The salary and benefits - The start date - The duration of the placement or employment - Conditions of the offer (such as satisfactory background checks or references) - Information about the mentorship and support provided by Youth Start

#### **Conditions:**

Offers may be conditional on: - Satisfactory background checks - Satisfactory references - Satisfactory health checks (if required) - Right to work verification - Acceptance of the employment contract or placement agreement

### Acceptance:

The candidate is asked to confirm their acceptance of the offer within a specified timeframe (usually 5 working days).

# Rejection:

If the candidate declines the offer, we record this and consider whether to offer the role to the next candidate on the shortlist.

# Assessing Candidate \$

# Skills and Experience

#### **Essential Skills:**

We assess whether the candidate has the essential skills required for the role. Essential skills are skills that are necessary for the candidate to perform the role safely and effectively.

#### Desirable Skills:

We assess whether the candidate has desirable skills that would enhance their ability to perform the role. Desirable skills are skills that are beneficial but not essential.

#### Transferable Skills:

We assess whether the candidate has transferable skills from previous roles or experiences that could be applied to the new role.

#### **Skills Development:**

We assess the candidate's potential to develop new skills and their willingness to engage in training and development.

# Motivation and Commitment

#### **Motivation for the Role:**

We assess the candidate's motivation for the role. We look for candidates who are genuinely interested in the role and who have thought carefully about why the role is suitable for them.

# **Motivation for the Organisation:**

We assess the candidate's motivation for working with Youth Start or for engaging with Youth Start's mentorship programme. We look for candidates who are committed to Youth Start's mission and values.

#### **Commitment to Development:**

We assess the candidate's commitment to personal and professional development. We look for candidates who are willing to engage with mentorship and support and who are motivated to improve their skills and prospects.

### Reliability:

We assess the candidate's reliability and commitment to the role. We look for evidence that the candidate is reliable and will commit to the role.

#### Potential and Attitude

# Potential to Succeed:

We assess the candidate's potential to succeed in the role. We look for candidates who have the potential to perform well and to progress in their career.

#### **Attitude to Work:**

We assess the candidate's attitude to work. We look for candidates who have a positive attitude and who are willing to work hard.

# **Attitude to Learning:**

We assess the candidate's attitude to learning and development. We look for candidates who are willing to learn new skills and who are open to feedback.

#### Resilience:

We assess the candidate's resilience and ability to cope with challenges. We look for candidates who can handle setbacks and who are motivated to overcome obstacles.

# **Support Needs**

#### **Individual Circumstances:**

We assess the candidate's individual circumstances and any support needs they may have. We consider factors such as: - Disability or health conditions - Caring responsibilities - Financial difficulties - Housing instability - Mental health or wellbeing concerns - Language or literacy needs

#### Reasonable Adjustments:

We assess what reasonable adjustments or support may be needed to enable the candidate to succeed in the role.

#### Mentorship and Support:

We assess what mentorship and support Youth Start can provide to help the candidate succeed.

# Avoiding Discrimination and Bias

# **Unconscious Bia**

### **Definition:**

Unconscious bias refers to attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. Unconscious bias can lead to discrimination, even when we do not intend to discriminate.

#### **Examples:**

Examples of unconscious bias in candidate selection include: - Assuming that candidates from certain backgrounds are less capable - Assuming that candidates with disabilities cannot perform certain tasks - Assuming that candidates from certain age groups have particular characteristics or

abilities - Making assumptions based on someone's appearance, accent, or name - Preferring candidates who are similar to existing staff members

### **Addressing Unconscious Bias:**

We are committed to addressing unconscious bias in our selection processes. We: - Provide training to all staff members involved in selection on unconscious bias - Use structured selection processes (such as standardised questions and scoring systems) to reduce the opportunity for bias - Use blind shortlisting techniques where possible - Involve diverse selection panels - Review selection data regularly to identify any patterns of bias - Encourage staff members to reflect on their own biases and to challenge biased behaviour in others

### **Protected Characte**

#### **Prohibited Discrimination:**

We do not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics, including: - Age - Disability - Gender reassignment - Marriage and civil partnership - Pregnancy and maternity - Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin) - Religion or belief (including lack of belief) - Sex - Sexual orientation

### Reasonable Adjustments:

We make reasonable adjustments to selection processes to ensure that candidates with disabilities or other protected characteristics are not disadvantaged.

### **Genuine Occupational Requirements:**

In rare cases, a protected characteristic may be a genuine occupational requirement for a role. In such cases, we clearly state this requirement in the job description and ensure that it is applied consistently and fairly.

# Structured Processes

# **Standardised Questions:**

We use standardised interview questions that are based on the selection criteria. All candidates are asked the same core questions to ensure consistency and to reduce the opportunity for bias.

#### Scoring Systems:

We use scoring systems to assess candidates against the selection criteria. Scoring systems help to ensure that assessments are objective and consistent.

#### Documentation:

We document the reasons for selection decisions to ensure transparency and to enable us to identify any patterns of bias.

### **Review:**

We review selection data regularly to identify any patterns of discrimination or bias. If patterns are identified, we investigate and take corrective action.

# Feedback and Communication

# Feedback to Shortlisted Candidates

#### **Interview Feedback:**

We provide feedback to all candidates who are interviewed, explaining how they performed against the selection criteria and suggesting areas for development.

#### **Constructive Feedback:**

Feedback is constructive and specific. We explain which selection criteria the candidate met well and which areas could be developed.

### **Suggestions for Development:**

We provide suggestions for how the candidate could develop their skills and improve their chances of success in future applications.

# Feedback to Unsuccessful Candidates

# **Reasons for Rejection:**

We provide feedback to candidates who are not selected, explaining which selection criteria they did not meet.

#### Specific Feedback:

Feedback is specific and relates to the selection criteria. We do not provide vague feedback such as "you were not suitable for the role."

# **Suggestions for Development:**

We provide suggestions for how the candidate could develop their skills and improve their chances of success in future applications.

#### **Encouragement:**

We encourage unsuccessful candidates to apply for future roles if they are interested in working with Youth Start or in engaging with Youth Start's mentorship programme.

# Communication with Selected Candidates

#### Offer Letter:

We send an offer letter to the selected candidate that clearly sets out the terms of the role, the start date, and any conditions.

### **Onboarding:**

We provide selected candidates with information about the role, the employer, and the support that Youth Start will provide.

#### **Mentorship Arrangements:**

We provide information about the mentorship and support that will be provided during the 12-week placement or employment period.

# **Employer Involvement**

While Youth Start makes selection decisions about which candidates to place with employers, employers have their own responsibilities in relation to candidate selection.

### **Employer Input:**

We consult with employers about the skills, experience, and attributes required for the role. Employers provide input into the selection criteria and the selection process.

### **Employer Approval:**

Employers may be involved in the interview process and may have input into the selection decision. However, Youth Start retains responsibility for ensuring that selection decisions are fair and non-discriminatory.

### **Employer Responsibilities:**

Employers are responsible for: - Conducting their own assessment of candidates' suitability for the role - Making their own employment decisions - Complying with employment law and safeguarding requirements - Providing a safe and supportive working environment

# Youth Start Supervision:

Youth Start supervises employer compliance with fair selection practices and employment law. We provide guidance to employers on best practice and take action if employers engage in discriminatory practices.

# Data Protection and Confidentiali

# **Data Protection Compliance**

#### Legal Basis:

We process candidate data on the basis that it is necessary for the purposes of recruitment and selection. We have a legitimate interest in processing candidate data to assess candidates' suitability for roles.

#### Consent:

We obtain consent from candidates before processing their data. Candidates are informed about what data will be collected, why it will be collected, and how it will be used.

#### **Transparency:**

We provide candidates with clear information about our data processing practices. We have a privacy notice that explains how we collect, use, and store candidate data.

# **Data Subject Rights:**

Candidates have the right to access data held about them, to request correction of inaccurate data, and to request deletion of data in certain circumstances.

# Confidentiality

#### **Restricted Access:**

Access to candidate data is restricted to staff members involved in the selection process. Staff members are required to treat candidate data confidentially.

# **Confidentiality Agreements:**

All staff members involved in selection are required to sign confidentiality agreements that require them to treat candidate data confidentially.

### **Secure Storage:**

Candidate data is stored securely in our CRM system (ZohoCRM) and on a password-protected USB backup drive.

# Secure Disposal:

Candidate data is securely deleted after the retention period has expired. We retain candidate data for 12 months after the selection process has ended, unless the candidate is selected, in which case data is retained in accordance with employment law.

# Responsibilities

#### **Data Protection Lead:**

Nick Calin (contact@youthstart.co.uk, 07470435603) is responsible for overseeing candidate selection, ensuring compliance with this policy and employment law, developing selection criteria, leading the selection process, making selection decisions, and providing guidance to employers.

#### **Selection Panel:**

The selection panel is responsible for conducting interviews, assessing candidates against the selection criteria, and making recommendations about which candidates to select.

# **Recruitment Staff:**

Recruitment staff are responsible for advertising vacancies, receiving and acknowledging applications, shortlisting candidates, coordinating interviews, recording information, and providing feedback to candidates.

#### **Employers:**

Employers are responsible for providing input into the selection criteria, participating in interviews (if appropriate), making their own assessment of candidates' suitability, and complying with employment law.

#### Candidates:

Candidates are responsible for providing accurate information in their applications, attending interviews if invited, and notifying Youth Start if their circumstances change.

# **Related Policies**

This Candidate Selection Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Right to Work Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Background Checks Policy
- Employment Contract Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Data Security Policy



We may update this Candidate Selection Policy from time to time to reflect changes in employment law, our practices, or best practice guidance. We will notify relevant staff members and candidates of material changes and provide updated guidance as necessary.

# **Relevant Legislation**

This Candidate Selection Policy is based on the following legislation:

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998

# **Contact Information**

If you have questions about candidate selection or this policy, please contact:

#### **Data Protection Lead:**

Nick Calin

Email: contact@youthstart.co.uk

Telephone: 07470435603

# **Youth Start Limited**

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