



Oxford United Football Club

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

Oxford United Football Club is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. This Safer Recruitment Policy is designed to supplement and enhance the Club's **Safeguarding Children Policy** and **Safeguarding Adults Policy**, while complementing the Club's wider equality, diversity, and inclusion commitments set out within the '**All United Project**'.

OUFC recognises that robust recruitment practices are essential to deter unsuitable individuals from seeking employment or voluntary opportunities at the Club. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners who work in a position of trust or engage directly with children, young people, or adults at risk.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all recruitment across the Club, including:

- The Academy (Male and Female).
 - First Team Operations (Men's and Women's).
 - Matchday and Non-Matchday Operations.
 - All roles where contact with children, young people, or adults at risk is likely.
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3. Policy Statement

Oxford United is committed to:

- Ensuring all recruitment reflects safeguarding as a priority consideration.
 - Undertaking robust pre-employment checks, including DBS checks and referencing, in line with legislative and regulatory requirements.
 - Ensuring all recruitment processes reflect the Club's values of **Inclusion, Respect, and Integrity**, aligning with the '**All United Project**'.
 - Providing ongoing safeguarding training and support for all staff and volunteers.
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4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is written in accordance with:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Football Association Safeguarding Regulations
- DBS Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

5. Safer Recruitment Procedure

Oxford United will apply the following **Safer Recruitment Procedure** to all roles where contact with children, young people, or adults at risk is possible:

Action	By Whom
Posting of Job Application	Line Manager/ Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
Invite to Interview	Line Manager/ SLT
Interview (including safeguarding-specific questions)	Line Manager/ SLT with involvement of a safeguarding representative
Offer of Job	Line Manager/ SLT
Job Offer Accepted	References obtained by: - Helen (Academy) - Claire (Club) - Gemma (Women's & Girls)
DBS Process Initiated	DSL/ SSM (on notification of accepted offer)
Pre-employment Checks Completed (DBS & References)	Confirmation by Safeguarding Team to Line Manager/ SLT
Start Date and Induction (including safeguarding induction)	Line Manager with DSL/ SSM

Note: No candidate may commence employment until satisfactory **DBS** and **references** have been received and verified.

6. Safeguarding in Recruitment

a) Job Descriptions and Adverts

All job descriptions and adverts will state the Club's commitment to safeguarding and safe recruitment. Role profiles will highlight any safeguarding responsibilities.

b) Application Process

All applicants will complete an application form requiring disclosure of any criminal convictions or investigations relevant to safeguarding.

c) Interviews

All interviews for roles involving contact with children or adults at risk will include **safeguarding-specific questions**. The Club's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or **Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM)** will either attend interviews or provide approved safeguarding questions.

d) Pre-Employment Checks

Pre-employment checks will include:

- Two professional references (including one from the most recent employer).
- An enhanced DBS check (with barred list check where applicable).
- Verification of qualifications and right to work.
- Review of employment gaps or anomalies in career history.

e) Conditional Offer of Employment

All offers will be conditional on satisfactory pre-employment checks being completed.

7. Induction and Ongoing Support

All new staff and volunteers will undergo a comprehensive induction, including:

- Oxford United Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Code of Conduct (aligned to the 'All United Project').
- Role-specific safeguarding training.

Ongoing safeguarding training will be provided in line with FA and regulatory requirements.

8. Record Keeping

All recruitment records, including application forms, interview notes, and pre-employment checks, will be securely retained in line with the Club's **Data Protection Policy** and GDPR regulations.

9. Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually by the **DSL/SSM** and the **Senior Leadership Team**, or sooner if there is a significant change in legislation or Club structure.

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through regular audits of recruitment files and safeguarding practices.

10. Linked Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
 - Safeguarding Adults Policy
 - All United Project Strategy
 - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
 - Code of Conduct
 - Whistleblowing Policy
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11. Managing Positive DBS Disclosures

Oxford United recognises that not all DBS disclosures automatically bar someone from working with the Club. When content is revealed on a DBS check, the following process will apply:

Initial Review

- The **DSL/SSM** and relevant **Line Manager/SLT** will review the content.
- The role applied for, level of access to children/adults at risk, and the nature of the disclosure will be considered.

Risk Assessment




- A formal **DBS Risk Assessment** will be completed.
- Factors considered will include:
 - Nature, severity, and relevance of the offence.
 - Time elapsed since offence(s).
 - Patterns of behaviour.
 - Explanation from the individual and honesty during recruitment.
 - Evidence of rehabilitation.

Safeguarding Panel Review

- Complex cases or high-risk disclosures will be reviewed by a **Safeguarding Panel**, which may include:
 - DSL/SSM
 - Senior Manager/SLT
 - HR Representative

- External advice may be sought from **The FA Safeguarding Team** if required.

Decision Options

-  Proceed with appointment without conditions.
-  Proceed with appointment subject to conditions (e.g., increased supervision, specific safeguarding training).
-  Withdraw offer if the risk to children, young people, or adults at risk is deemed too great.

Right to Appeal

- Candidates may appeal decisions. Appeals will be reviewed by a senior safeguarding professional not involved in the initial decision, alongside HR/legal advice if needed.

Confidentiality

- All DBS content will be treated confidentially, in line with the **DBS Code of Practice** and data protection legislation.

Ongoing Monitoring

- If appointed with conditions, regular safeguarding reviews will take place, with the right to escalate concerns if necessary.