



REC Education

The Recruitment & Employment Confederation's (REC's) specialist education sector group brings together those agencies working within the sector to discuss and resolve regulatory issues ranging from safeguarding to the impact of the Agency Worker Regulations, benchmarking and emerging challenges in the sector such as teacher shortages.

Sector developments

Few sectors have witnessed the level of regulatory change experienced in the education sector. Working with children naturally brings high expectations for safeguarding. But wider changes, ranging from the statutory repeal of the standardised pay and conditions document for teachers, new configurations of schools and more complex Ofsted inspection frameworks, have greatly added to the complexity within this sector.

Over the next decade the UK will need more than 40,000 new teachers to respond to pupil increases of up to 800,000. Teacher training colleges are finding it increasingly difficult to fill their quota's.

Teacher fatigue is also on the rise. In fact, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers recently found that 73% of trainee and newly qualified teachers had contemplated leaving the profession.

Recruitment agencies will play an ever increasing role in ensuring the continuity of education amidst such challenges.

What you need to know about safeguarding

Schools and recruitment agencies have a shared responsibility to ensure students are protected and only suitably qualified and thoroughly vetted staff gain access to schools.

CHECKS THAT AGENCIES AND SCHOOLS MUST CARRY OUT

- ✓ Verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available;
- ✓ Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check where the person will be engaging in regulated activity;
- ✓ Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- ✓ Ensure that a potential candidate is not on a prohibited list. Such checks are undertaken via a system called the Employer Access Online Service;
- ✓ Verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- ✓ If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate; and
- ✓ Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.



The REC requires its members to undertake a status update check annually on all candidates working with children and vulnerable adults. This provides a layer of protection for schools, and is more frequent than the base limits established by Department for Education guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2014).

THE REC GUIDE : EDUCATION



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Teacher shortages

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) has reported that schools in many parts of the country are experiencing significant recruitment challenges, with take-up of schemes such as School Direct on the decline.

Data for Education identified two thirds of School Direct places were unfilled in physics and about 60% empty in mathematics and chemistry. Skill shortages in the UK economy are already amplified for core STEM subjects and the lack of suitably qualified teachers will restrain future economic growth.

In November 2014, the Department for Education identified a downturn in the number of new starts in teacher training courses – with only 32,543 starting compared to the target of 34,890 (only 93% of the overall total). But in key subjects like foreign languages, vital for students seeking globalised careers, take-up is only at 79%. The targets are based on the number of teachers needed to meet the expected pupil base of 800,000 over the coming decade. Such shortages mean candidates in these disciplines will be able to negotiate higher salaries. Increasingly flexible employment contracts may allow staff to cover a number of different schools, therefore ensuring the continuity of the British education system.

“Any agency that acquires the REC Audited Education status has achieved the highest kitemark on safeguarding available in the education space. As the Chair of the REC steering group for the benchmark, I know it will both stand the test of time and respond to the changing education arena. It is a tool that will continue to be a mark of excellence for an agency.”

Professor John Howson
Chair, REC Audited Education Steering Group

REC Audited Education

REC Audited Education provides a sought after kitemark for recruitment agencies in the education sector.

The REC managed the Quality Mark on behalf of the DfE for ten years until the scheme was terminated in 2013. In response to the demand for a robust benchmark for best practice, the REC produced REC Audited Education, led by a steering group which includes the ASCL, NAHT, NUT, Local Authorities and the LGA, and chaired by Professor John Howson, a well respected expert in education policy.

The Audit covers both teaching and non-teaching staff and goes beyond just compliance, requiring agencies to demonstrate that they operate best practice in areas such as customer service, staff development, diversity and client management.

In any competitive market, benchmarks provide a useful comparison to aid in the selection of an excellent service



Get Involved

To find out more about joining REC Education, visit [here](#). The best way to get involved is to come to the next meeting or join our next webinar – ask your REC account manager for more details.

www.rec.uk.com/education

