

Safer Recruitment Policy

2024 - 2025



مدارس دبي
DUBAI SCHOOLS
ند الشبا
NAD AL SHEBA



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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Taaleem Holdings P.J.S.C. (hereafter referred to as “Taaleem” or the “Company”) is unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people under our care.
- 1.2 This policy serves as an extension to the HR-POL-008 Recruitment and Onboarding Policy. The safer recruitment policy aims to provide a comprehensive guide to our robust and diligent safer recruitment practices, with the primary aim of preventing the engagement of unsuitable individuals in roles involving contact with children.
- 1.3 Taaleem is dedicated to the strict enforcement of a stringent recruitment procedure designed to thoroughly assess the suitability of all candidates before they join Taaleem.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all permanent and temporary staff (excluding supply staff and contractors) of Taaleem Holdings PJSC and its subsidiaries.
- 2.2 This policy is guided by applicable child protection laws and regulations, including, but not limited to:
- The UAE Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on child rights (Wadeema’s Law)
 - UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) and Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) guidelines on safeguarding
 - International standards of best practice in safer recruitment and child protection

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 **Safer Recruitment Panel:** The Safer Recruitment Panel responsible for safer recruitment within Taaleem consists of the Directors of Education for the respective portfolios and the Head of HR –



School Operations. This panel is tasked with overseeing safer recruitment processes, conducting regular audits of employee files at the school level (via delegated team members), and ensuring full compliance with the policy.

3.2 **School HR Department:** The school HR department is responsible for ensuring that all pre-employment safer recruitment documentation is properly filed and meets the required standards before a candidate begins employment. If any documentation is incomplete or missing during the evaluation process, the school HR department must immediately escalate the matter in writing to the HR Safer Recruitment Panel.

3.3 **School Principal:** The School Principal is accountable for the consistent enforcement of this policy and ensuring that all staff members understand their obligations regarding safer recruitment practices.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

4.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead plays an essential role by guiding those involved in the recruitment process to ensure the adoption of best practices, conducting ongoing reviews, supporting in monitoring the policy's implementation, and reporting any concerns to the Safer Recruitment Panel to ensure consistent collaboration in Taaleem's commitment to safer recruitment.

5. Safer Recruitment Training

5.1 All employees participating in interview panels must receive comprehensive training in safer recruitment principles and maintain records of completion in their employee files. If this not possible, at least one person on the interview panel must have completed the safer recruitment training.



- 5.2 Safer recruitment training can be conducted through two approved channels: TES or NSPCC. This training is mandatory for all staff involved in interviewing or hiring processes. The School HR department is responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff complete the safer recruitment training.
- 5.3 School HR must ensure that all employees identified as needing the safer recruitment training, have completed it within the first three months of employment or promotion. Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that the employee enrolls and completes the safer recruitment training. HR must update the Single Central Record and the employee file once the safer recruitment training has been completed.

6. Interview Panel

- 6.1 During interviews, the panel must focus on asking in-depth questions related to safeguarding, evaluating the applicant's suitability for working with children, and carefully reviewing their employment history, including addressing any gaps or discrepancies.
- 6.2 The interview panel must complete the standard interview feedback form found on the Taaleem Applicant Tracking System (ATS) before an offer letter of intent (LOI) is issued to the candidate. An LOI cannot be sent without the completed feedback form.
- 6.3 All interviews must have a minimum of two (2) interviewers. The interview process may be in one stage with two interviewers or two stages with single interviewers. In line with internal requirements, additional interviews may be set.



7. Advertising Vacancies and Taaleem Job Descriptions

- 7.1 Advertising of job posts and all Taaleem job descriptions must include the following statement at the start of the job posting:

"Taaleem is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. At Taaleem, we hold ourselves to a high standard of effective practices in relation to child protection, and we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all staff to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be subject to various background checks including receipt of references, proof of relevant qualifications, identification, and police checks, including overseas checks."

8. Risk Assessment Form

- 8.1 A Risk Assessment Form, found in the Appendix of this policy, is a crucial document that provides an audit trail for unique situations where the standard processes outlined in this policy cannot be fully applied.
- 8.2 The Risk Assessment Form must outline, with dates, the steps taken to comply with this policy, provide justification for any deviations, and specify who was consulted during the process.
- 8.3 School HR is responsible for completing the Risk Assessment Form, signed by both the HR representative and the School Principal. Once signed off by the Principal, the form must be shared with the Safer Recruitment Panel for their information and reference.
- 8.4 Some examples of situations that a Risk Assessment Form would be used. Please note that this list is not exhaustive but an indicative guide of the type of situations that may arise requiring the form to be completed:



- Dual national without a copy of their second citizenship passport ID
- A Teaching Assistant (TA) reference from personal email addresses because the TA has only worked for personal employers
- A teacher who is coming from a school that has closed
- A staff member with a Golden Visa
- A reference that is unsatisfactory but the decision is made by School Principal to continue with hiring the candidate
- A teacher who is teaching more than one subject, but the KHDA system is not allowing the approval of two subjects

8.5 The use of a Risk Assessment Form is not limited to the scenarios mentioned above. Whenever the policy is not being fully adhered to, the Risk Assessment Form must be completed.

Detailed 'Reference' based cases that require a Risk Assessment Form

- 8.6 If a reference cannot be obtained from a trusted authoritative source, for example, if the school has shut down, both a written justification must be obtained from the candidate, and a completed Risk Assessment Form must be added to the employee file, signed by the School Principal and HR.
- 8.7 If academic support candidates (LA and TA staff) have previously worked with families in the role of a nanny etc, the reference may be obtained from the private email address of the sponsor on the visa. When obtaining a reference from the sponsor, for verification, a form of personal ID copy should be requested to verify that this is the correct person providing a reference. An example of a form of private ID would be a passport copy. For this category of staff, the last 5 years of employment history must also be covered with references.
- 8.8 If a candidate is junior and has limited work experience with only one previous employer, an additional reference must be obtained from that employer. Alternatively, if the candidate has been enrolled in an educational institution within the last five years, a reference may be obtained from



the institution. In cases where the second reference is from either the first employer or an educational institution, a Risk Assessment Form must be completed, signed by both HR and the School Principal, and included in the employee's file.

- 8.9 In the rare instance that a Line Manager wishes to proceed with a candidate's application despite an unsatisfactory reference, HR must escalate the matter in writing to the Safer Recruitment Panel. A follow-up with the referee should be conducted to gather additional details regarding the concerns raised, ensuring that the reference does not involve safeguarding issues. A Risk Assessment Form must be completed, signed by both HR and the School Principal, and included in the employee's file.

KHDA Appointment Letters and a Risk Assessment Form

- 8.10 If the appropriate designation is not available on the KHDA portal, a Risk Assessment Form must be completed that records this. This must be signed by HR and School Principal before being placed in the employee file.
- 8.11 A Risk Assessment Form should also be completed in the event that a teacher is teaching more than one subject, and the KHDA system is not allowing to process multiple subject appointment letters.

Candidates Holding a Golden Visa that require a Risk Assessment Form

- 8.12 Taaleem cannot process a work permit for anyone who holds a golden visa, unless it is a spouse golden visa in the same Emirate.
- 8.13 Taaleem cannot hire a candidate who has a golden visa from another Emirate.

In both the above situations, a Risk Assessment Form needs to be completed for the employee file.

Please seek guidance from Head of HR - School Operations for any additional situations that may require the completion of a Risk Assessment Form.



9. Gaps in Employment

- 9.1 A full five years of employment history must be covered in references. This means that if a candidate has a gap in employment, this period of time cannot be considered in the total five years of history.
- 9.2 If a candidate has a gap of employment history, they must declare this on the Taaleem ATS when registering their application for a vacancy. The justification of this gap of employment history must be explored by the interview panel during interview and recorded on the interview feedback form. In any case where this has not happened, School HR must seek justification from the candidate to add to the ATS candidate profile notes. This field in the ATS is titled as 'Additional notes', before the candidate is selected.

10. Pre-Employment Checks

- 10.1 Before commencing employment, all applicants must provide/undergo the following:
- 10.2 **CV:** An updated CV must be obtained reflecting all past employment. Specific dates and justification for gaps in employment should be included on the interview feedback form and verified by HR.
- 10.3 **Taaleem Application Form:** If applicable to the school, the Taaleem application form must be completed by all applicants before the interview process begins. This would be either through the Taaleem ATS when a candidate builds their profile or a completed form shared with HR. All questions on this form must be completed, including specifically all questions relating to child safeguarding and justification for any gaps in employment.
- 10.4 **Job Role-Associated Credentials:** Professional qualifications/registrations/credentials (e.g., QTS for teaching staff, DHA license for nurses/doctors) must be obtained and verified through relevant attestations, where necessary.
- 10.5 **Educational Certificates:** Educational certificates must be duly attested and legalised by the



relevant ministry in the country where the educational certificate was obtained. Additionally, the educational certificates must be attested by the UAE Consulate in the country where the educational certificate was obtained, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in the UAE.

- 10.6 **Identification Documentation:** Up-to-date and valid identification documentation must be obtained. Identification documentation acceptable is a valid passport copy. If the candidate is a dual national, passport copies of all citizenships must be obtained.
- 10.7 **References:** Before confirming an appointment, applicants must provide a minimum of two references. These references must cover the applicant's employment history for the last five years. If the applicant has had more than two employers in the past five years, additional references must be obtained to ensure full coverage of the five-year employment history.
- 10.8 References should be obtained from trusted authoritative sources, not from relatives or friends, and not from a private email address. Reference requests should specifically ask for the referee's relationship with the candidate, satisfaction with the candidate's suitability to work with children, current post, length of service, attendance record, performance history, conduct, any disciplinary procedures, and their outcomes, and details of any substantiated allegations or concerns related to the safety and welfare of children. References for academic applicants must be from the current/previous School Principal, and for administrative applicants, the references must be from the direct Line Manager.
- 10.9 References must be fully completed, signed, and dated by all referees.
- 10.10 **Criminal Check:** A police clearance or criminal background check must be provided from the candidate's country of residence. If the candidate has resided in the current country for less than 5 years, a second police clearance or criminal background check must be provided from the previous country of residence. The criminal check must always cover the last 5 years. HR should refer back to the candidate's CV to verify the candidate's last 5 years of residence.



10.11 The police clearance or criminal background check must be dated within the last 3 months of the candidate's prospective joining date at Taaleem.

10.12 The police clearance or criminal background check must not be state or county restricted for candidates who are overseas. It must be a police check that covers the country of residence. An example of some acceptable forms of police clearance or criminal background checks may be:

- UK- Enhanced DBS check is required. A basic or standard DSB check will not be accepted
- UK- ACRO ICPC
- USA- FBI check
- Ireland- GARDA check

10.13 For candidates who have been based in the UAE for the last five years, the police check is obtained from the Emirate that they reside in.

10.14 **Contractual Documents:** The LOI and the employment contract must be initialled on each page, signed, and dated by the Line Manager and the candidate.

10.15 **KHDA/ADEK and Taaleem Code of Conduct:** The KHDA/ADEK Code of Conduct and Taaleem Code of Conduct must be signed by all candidates before joining Taaleem.

10.16 **KHDA Appointment Letter:** The KHDA approval must be obtained before an academic staff member can join Taaleem. The subject must be in line with their actual designation. Below are examples of what is acceptable for the KHDA appointment letter:

- For primary/elementary school teachers 'Class Teacher'.
- For secondary school teachers, the subject that the teacher will teach must be mentioned.
- For Arabic A it should be processed as 'Subject Teacher- Arabic'.
- For Arabic B it should be processed as 'Subject Teacher- Arabic as a second language'.
- For SEN it must be processed as 'Special Needs Teacher'.



- All Head of Department academic staff should read as 'Head of Department' with the subjects that they will teach.

10.17 If the appropriate designation is not available on the KHDA portal, a Risk Assessment Form must be completed that records this. This must be signed by HR and School Principal before being placed in the employee file.

10.18 A Risk Assessment Form should also be completed in the event that a teacher is teaching more than one subject, and the KHDA system is not allowing to process multiple subject appointment letters.

11. Issuance of a Letter of Intent

11.1 Before an LOI is issued to a candidate, the below must be obtained:

- 1. CV
- 2. Taaleem Application Form
- 3. Interview Feedback Form

12. Start of Employment

12.1 Before a candidate can be considered as an employee and join Taaleem, the below documents must be on file:

- CV
- Application form
- Interview feedback form
- Signed Taaleem Code of Conduct
- Signed KHDA/ADEK Code of Conduct
- Signed LOI
- Signed employment contract



- Attested degree certificates and transcripts
- Two references at a minimum covering the last 5 years
- Experience letter, if applicable
- KHDA Appointment Letter
- Police clearance
- Personal identification documents

13. Record-Keeping and Single Central Data Record

- 13.1 School HR will maintain a single central record for all staff who are employed by Taaleem, excluding third-party suppliers and ILSAs. Third-party supplier documentation is kept with the school Operations team, and ILSA documentation is kept with the school Inclusion team.
- 13.2 The single central record template is maintained at the school by the HR department. It is the responsibility of HR to ensure that all the fields in the single central record template are implemented for each school.
- 13.3 Soft copy records of all employee files will be retained for five years.

14. Allegations and Associated Policies

- 14.1 Any allegations or concerns regarding staff behaviour related to safeguarding will be addressed by relevant policies, including but not limited to:
- Safeguarding policy
 - Disciplinary policy
 - Grievance policy
 - Complaints policy
 - Whistleblowing policy

15. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with any established corporate policies may result in disciplinary action.



Version Control

Version No.	Date	Details of Change
1	October 2024	New Policy

Disclaimer:

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Appendix - HR Risk Assessment Form

Taaleem HR Risk Assessment Form

Background Information			
Business unit:		Date:	
Type of risk:		Name of person completing this form:	

What is the risk?	Risk level H, M, or L	What are you doing to control the risk?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done

Signed by:

HR Advisor

Date:

Signed by:

School Principal

Date:

