

ECB Guidelines on Appointing Appropriate Staff and Volunteers to Work With Children

It is ECB Policy that all staff and volunteers in cricket must go through an appropriate vetting process prior to appointment to establish their suitability to work with children.

Staff and volunteers actively working with children in sport may be defined as working in “Regulated Activity” depending on the type of work that they do and the time spent in contact with children. For further information on Regulated Activity see the document, ‘ECB List of Posts Which Require Vetting Checks’ located elsewhere in this Kit Bag.

Clubs who appoint individuals, whether paid or unpaid, into Regulated Activity will be subject to legal obligations. For more details refer to the document; ‘Responding to, Recording and Reporting concerns...’.

The Club Welfare Officer

Every club must identify, and appoint, a Club Welfare Officer responsible for advising the club on current best practice as well as implementing the various elements of “Safe Hands”.

The Club Welfare Officer position exists to help clubs create a child centred environment at the club.

The Club Welfare Officer is required to attend two separate training modules, to support and equip them for their role.

The Club Welfare Officer must advise clubs on which roles within the club require the post holder to undertake the ECB vetting process as part of the recruitment and appointment process. The Kit Bag contains details of posts likely to require vetting, which are based on legislation and must be followed by clubs.

Ideally the Club Welfare Officer should have a significant role within the process for recruiting volunteers and staff to a club.

Guidelines on recruitment and selection of volunteers working with children

These best practice guidelines were originally developed by the Football Association and have been amended by the ECB to provide clubs, and leagues, with advice, and guidance, on the recruitment and selection of volunteers working with children.

Any change to these guidelines will be posted on the ECB’s website and through updates to “Safe Hands”.

The safety of children should be paramount in all activities and these guidelines are designed to help you in this.

The ECB is committed to providing a safe environment for children. By adopting the points outlined here you will be putting in place the best current practice to protect children whenever a volunteer is sought to work with them.

Most of those working with children in cricket only have the best possible intentions. However, the ECB recognises it has a responsibility to safeguard children participating in cricket, by providing a safe and enjoyable environment. The ECB understands that sound recruitment and selection procedures will help screen out those who are not suitable.

When clubs, or leagues, recruit new volunteers, or paid staff, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. In addition, the volunteer selection processes

used by a club, or league, must be consistent and fair at all times. This guidance outlines methods club, or league officials, can use to assist recruitment choices.

While this guidance has a special emphasis on recruiting volunteers to work with children, it could just as easily be applied to the recruitment of all volunteers and paid staff.

Planning

The first stage of any recruitment process involves planning. Club, or league, officials should draw up a profile, which highlights the main areas of an identified voluntary role. They should also decide on the skills and experience needed to fulfil the requirements of the role and draw up a person specification. Sample job descriptions can be found on the ECB website.

A recruitment process must be developed in such a way that ensures every applicant is treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Application forms

Clubs, and leagues, should use application forms to collect information on each applicant which should be stored and retained in a consistent way.

More than one club, or league official, should look at the application forms to ensure a fair and equitable scrutiny is completed. It is very important clubs, or leagues, ask for identification documents to confirm the identity of the applicant, such as a passport or driving licence.

Meeting/interview

It is highly recommended club, or league, officials meet with all applicants prior to any recruitment decisions being made and that more than one official is present. The meeting/interview will enable the club, or league, to explore information provided

in the application form in further detail. Questions to ask the applicant should be prepared in advance and ensure the applicant has an opportunity to recount previous experiences and give examples of how they have handled, or would handle, situations.

Although it is important to gain information about an applicant's relevant technical capabilities, it is also necessary to explore attitudes and commitment to child safeguarding. Listed below are sample questions which could help discover this information:

- Tell us about your previous experiences of working with children
- Give the applicant a child-related scenario, such as: 'It is a winter evening, the training session has finished and a parent has not arrived to pick up their child'. Then ask the applicant what they would do in that situation
- Is there anything we should know that could affect your suitability to work with children? Have you ever been refused work with children?

References

At least two references should be requested from individuals not related to the applicant. One reference should be associated with the applicant's place of work and, if possible, one that demonstrates the individual's previous involvement in sport, particularly children's cricket. Both references should contain a statement relating to the referee's awareness of the responsibilities the post applied for requires. References should be followed up prior to any offer of appointment being made. If the references raise concerns, you are advised to contact the ECB Child Protection Team for advice and guidance (see the Kit Bag Sample Reference Form).

Vetting Procedures including Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Enhanced Disclosures

The vetting process is very important in determining if someone is suitable to work with children. It is appropriate to use an Enhanced CRB Disclosure when a person is appointed to a post within a club, or league, and that post brings the person into regular and direct contact with children which fits with the definition of Regulated Activity as defined in the the 'Safe Hands' document, 'ECB List of Posts Which Require Vetting Checks'.

If an applicant is from outside the UK, or has lived outside the UK within the last five years, then alternative vetting procedures will be required as detailed later in this section.

A vetting check tells the ECB about a person's recorded offences and whether or not they are on one of the barred lists. It can indicate that a person is not suitable to work with children if, for example, they have a history of sexual offending. It may also tell the ECB that further investigations are required, for example, if the person has a history of drug dealing or racist offending.

Volunteers and others in cricket need be assured the ECB will take into account the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and only consider offences relevant to the care, supervision and training of children.

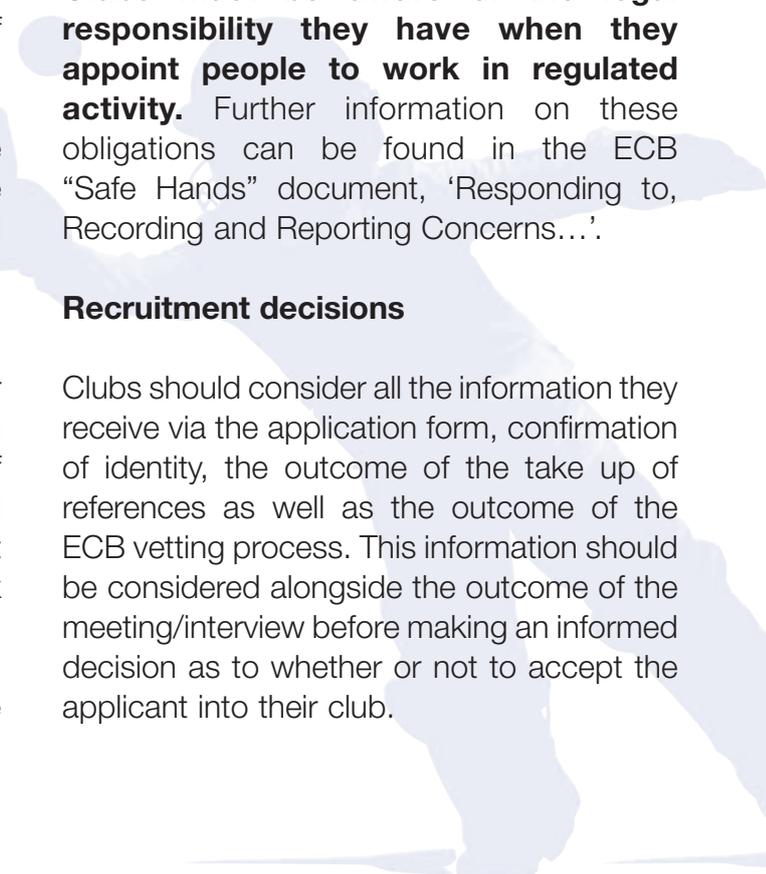
The ECB is not allowed to tell the club or County Board about the actual offending history so applicants are assured of confidentiality. The ECB will, however, tell the club and County Board whether or not the person is considered suitable to work with children.

Applications for vetting should be co-ordinated by the Club Welfare Officer.

It is vital for clubs to recognise that asking an individual to complete a vetting application form is the first stage of the ECB vetting process and that the outcome of the application must be sought from the County Cricket Development Manager, County Welfare Officer or the ECB Child Protection Team. It is possible for the vetting process to take several weeks. Please ask the individual to complete a vetting application form as soon as possible and advise them that they should not start the post/job until an outcome of the application is confirmed by the County Cricket Board or the ECB Child Protection Team.

If an applicant claims to have an ECB CRB Enhanced Disclosure, the club should seek confirmation of this from the County Cricket Board Development Manager, the County Welfare Officer or the ECB Child Protection Team.

Further information on the ECB vetting process can be found by visiting the ECB website.

Clubs must be aware of the legal responsibility they have when they appoint people to work in regulated activity. Further information on these obligations can be found in the ECB "Safe Hands" document, 'Responding to, Recording and Reporting Concerns...'.


Recruitment decisions

Clubs should consider all the information they receive via the application form, confirmation of identity, the outcome of the take up of references as well as the outcome of the ECB vetting process. This information should be considered alongside the outcome of the meeting/interview before making an informed decision as to whether or not to accept the applicant into their club.

Post recruitment

It is important that once a new volunteer has been recruited follow up action is taken, for example:

- Any qualifications should be substantiated, for example, obtain photocopies of coaching certificates
- New volunteers are made aware of, and sign up to, the club's child safeguarding policy and procedures, best practice guidelines and codes of conduct
- Any training needs are established and action taken to put these into place
- A statement of the roles and responsibilities of the new volunteer is prepared
- Initially, a period of supervision/observation or mentoring could be introduced to support the new volunteer

Umpires and scorers

Umpires and scorers are usually organised through a regional or league appointment panel. However, where a club is appointing an umpire and/or scorer for games involving children, it is the responsibility of the club to check the umpire/scorer:

- Is covered by relevant current insurance
- Is a member of the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ACO)
- Has been through the vetting process with the ECB to check his/her suitability to work with children in cricket
- Agrees to abide by the ECB Code of Conduct for Members and Guests at all times, especially when umpiring/scoring

Non-UK vetting

Clubs must recognise checks need to be undertaken on post holders regardless of nationality. Different countries operate varying methods for providing background checks and not all countries are able to provide this service. The CRB website provides current advice on which countries are able to provide a check and the applicable procedure. The ECB Child Protection Team is also able to provide some guidance on other countries. Non-UK vetting must also be undertaken on British passport holders who have lived abroad in the past five years. This Kit Bag has an ECB non-UK vetting form which must accompany any non-UK vetting check submitted to the ECB. Non-UK vetting checks must normally be organised before the individual arrives in the UK whenever possible.

Background checks are undertaken on any individual who works, either in a paid or volunteer capacity, with children.

It is important to note non-UK vetting checks are only done for the role being undertaken by the individual. All visitors to the UK coming through the Tier 5 cricket route of immigration must be vetted as part of the process.

If a visitor to the UK has come through an alternative immigration route but intend to offer coaching services (if allowed by their visa), they must also complete the vetting process.

Clubs should be aware the laws relating to Regulated Activity apply even if the individual is not from the UK.