

Appendix 8: Reference Check Requirements and Sample Questions

- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.
- Ask the same questions of each referee.
- When contacting the referee, identify yourself and your position, give the name of the candidate and the reason for your call.
- Before asking questions, describe the job and the competencies that you are seeking.

Questions that MUST be asked

- Are you related to the applicant? (Please note, if the person answers yes, you cannot proceed with this referee check and another referee needs to be obtained from the applicant).
- In what capacity have you known the applicant and for what length of time? (Please note, if less than 12 months another referee should be obtained from the applicant)
- How would you describe the personal character of the applicant?
- Would you have any concerns about this applicant working with or being in contact with children/young people?
- How does the person respond to supervision/oversight?
- In your time working with the applicant, was there anything that led you to believe that this applicant is not suitable to work with or be in contact with children/young people?
- To your knowledge, has this person ever been involved with the abuse or neglect of children/young people?

The panel should consider the validity of the referees by reflecting on the following questions:

- What is the relationship between the referee and the applicant?
- Has the referee known the applicant in a professional capacity and if so when and for how long?
- Is the referee able to provide relevant information about the applicant's work history and performance?
- Has the referee observed the applicant demonstrating the skills and knowledge required for the position?

Red Flags include, but are not limited to:

- A reluctant referee
- A referee who does not know (or appear to know) the applicant well
- Information that the referee will not provide
- Information that differs from the applicant's account
- Evasive or convoluted responses
- Referees that would not re-hire the applicant
- Referees that cannot be contacted
- Referees that were not informed they would be used.